

**“IF THAT’S
IN THE BIBLE
I’M LOST!”**



“ IF THAT’S IN THE BIBLE, I’M LOST ! ”



ONE quiet summer evening, on the road to a village in Lincolnshire, the writer of this paper saw, at a little distance behind him, two men, apparently returning from their daily toil in the fields. One of these, walking faster than either his companion or myself, soon overtook me, and a conversation commenced about the solemn concerns of eternity. It soon became apparent that this poor man, like thousands of others, alas ! was making a fatal mistake as to the way of salvation. He was seeking for rest and

peace in his own reformed life, instead of in Christ's precious sacrifice and death ! He recounted with evident eagerness and undisguised satisfaction, the story of his altered ways, and, like a clever artist, was making use of the wicked immorality of the past, as a dark background upon which to picture the moral worth of the present. He was now no longer a besotted drunkard, but a sober man ! Instead of oaths and obscene language filling his mouth, prayer-saying and Bible-reading had taken their place. Moreover, he was as regular now at a place of worship as he had previously been at the public-house.

“ So far so good,” was my response ; “ but is *that* all you have to rest upon for salvation ? ”

“ Well, I really *am* a praying man now ; and if you were to come to our village, and make inquiries about me, nearly every one would tell you what a sad character I once was, and what a different man I am now ? ”

“ I am, by no means, calling in question the truth of what you tell me,” I replied ; “ but a guilty past history has placed a most solemn question between your soul and a holy God—the question of *your sins*, I mean ; and what I wish to know is, whether or not this is *all* you have to say as to the settlement of it ? ”

“ Well, I can’t think of anything else ! ”

“ Then, I must tell you that there is one verse in God’s word which is a most serious one for

you to consider, and it is this :
' God requireth that which is past. ' ”

Just at that point in our conversation, we happened to be walking rather sharply down a steep hill, when suddenly I missed my companion from my side. Turning quickly round to see the cause, I found him standing perfectly still, and looking down to the ground, as if wrapped in thought, while marked concern was depicted in his countenance.

“ What is the matter ? ” I inquired, as he continued standing in mute meditation. And then there came from his lips a decided proof that this single line of God’s word had done its own searching work in his soul, and he said, “ *If that’s in the Bible, I’m lost !* ”

“ Well, it certainly *is* in the Bible, and it will be easy for me to let you see it for yourself.” So, drawing out my pocket Bible, I turned to the third chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes, and, pointing with my finger to each word, read, aloud and slowly, the last six words in the 15th verse ; “ *God requireth that which is past.*”

“ Then I’m lost ! ” he groaned.

Now, is it difficult to understand, dear reader, how it was that this solemn conclusion should have been arrived at by him ? Let us inquire. *Reformation* has only to do with bettering the *present* or the *future* ; it supposes, upon the very face of it, that the *past* is not right. But God’s requirements, as we have seen, *do* reach the past ; and who can change one jot of it ?

who can alter what has already been accomplished ? Therefore, instead of clearing you, your “ turning over a new leaf ” only condemns you ; for, if the past were satisfactory, there would be no need for a *new* start ; and if it be blotted with sin, then most certainly will God’s righteous requirements have to say to it, sooner or later.

Is it not clear, then, dear reader, that every “ new leaf ” you have “ turned over ” has been but a fresh clause added, by your own hand, to the indictment already against you—an additional seal of your condemnation ? You may have little dreamed of this, but it is none the less true ! There stands that solemn line in the living word of God—a truth as unalterable as your past conduct is undeniable—

“ God requireth that which is past.”

The marginal reading of the verse is: *“ God requireth that which is driven away.”* And is not this what men and women try to do? We would fain “drive away” from our memories the painful records of the past, for it is doubtless anything but palatable for the iniquity of our heels to compass us about, as David expresses it, Psa. 49 : 5. But what avails the driving of sin from our remembrance, if God still sees it at our door?

Then, it may be asked, is there no escape—no remedy, for the consequences of the past?

There can be only one answer. *There is NO ESCAPE*—none whatever, except it come through the meeting of God’s righteous re-

quirements. But, blessed be God, such an escape has been provided. The very God who said, "Without shedding of blood is no remission," Heb. 9 : 22, has also said, "The life of the flesh is in the blood : and *I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls* : for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul," Lev. 17 : 11. He can now say of the guiltiest, "Deliver him from going down to the pit : *I have found a ransom*," Job 33 : 24. Nor are we left to speculate as to who this "*Ransom*" is, that the God of all grace has "found." 1 Tim. 2 : 5, 6, will furnish us fully with the answer : "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, *the Man Christ Jesus ; who gave*

Himself a RANSOM for all, to be testified in due time." What unsearchable treasures of grace are enfolded in those two little sentences—" *I have found,*" " *I have given.*"—" *I have found a Ransom !*" " *I have given the blood !*" The renewed mind knows not which more to wonder at, the greatness of the provision, or the freeness of the gift ; while the more that is known of the *object* of such favour, the more does the wonder at both increase. " God commendeth His love toward us, in that, *while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,*" Rom. 5 : 8. And, through that precious shed blood, God can declare Himself righteous, while He clears from every charge of condemnation the feeblest believer in Jesus. Let me quote for you

the words of Scripture. "To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness; that He might be *just*, and *the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*," Rom. 3 : 26. For the true believer, therefore, it is no more certain that the requirements of God, as to all his sins, *must be met*, than that *they have been met*. "For Christ also *hath* once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God," 1 Pet. 3 : 18.

"Righteousness demands no more,
But mercy yields her boundless store."

It was truly pleasant, therefore, to tell this newly-awakened soul that though, if left to his own effort of amendment, he must be eternally lost, yet that the Son of man had come "to seek and to save that which was lost," and that He had

finished the work which the Father gave Him to do. God was now satisfied with the one settlement made at the cross, on the sinner's behalf, and that the only way to get the blessing was simply to believe on Him who made that settlement. For "*by Him ALL THAT BELIEVE are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses,*" Acts 13 : 39.

And now, my reader, what of *your* case ? If God, this night were to require your soul of you ; to call upon you for an answer for a lifetime of sin, could you meet such a demand ? You know that you could not. Like Job, you could not answer Him "one of a thousand." To stand upon your own merit would be to be eternally

lost. "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord," said David, "for *in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.*" But if, as a poor repentant one, you turn to Christ for salvation, there will be joy in the presence of the angels of God about you. God is gratified in beholding the feeblest longings for Christ in you, and He is satisfied with the finished work of Christ for you.

But I solemnly warn you, that if you persist in evading this vital question, and content yourself with the thought of mere moral reformation, either now or at a future time, then be sure of this, that the time is rapidly approaching when, as surely as that Lincolnshire labourer was pulled up, face to face with God's righteous demands, so will

you be. He was arrested in *time* ; take heed that your awakening does not come in *Eternity* ! Consider well, I entreat you, the solemn sequel of such a waking up ; and before you lay down this book, bow to God's righteous claims ; thankfully accept His gracious provision ; trust in the precious blood of Christ ; and then you will be able, with another, to record, thus your happy, thrice happy, experience :—

“ Sweetest rest and peace have filled me
Sweeter praise than tongue can tell ;
God is satisfied with Jesus,
I am satisfied as well.”

GEO. C.

STOW HILL BIBLE AND TRACT DEPOT,
2, Upper Teddington Road, Hampton Wick
Kingston-on-Thames.

Also obtainable at Bible & Tract Depots
14, Royal Arcade, George Street, Sydney, Australia.
62, Cooper Square, New York, U.S.A.

Made and printed in England