

# Seven "V" Papers

A SPECIAL TESTIMONY  
TO VITAL TRUTHS

CONCERNING  
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

"Who is over all, God blessed for Ever"

(Rom. 9. 5)

Edited by Hy. PICKERING.



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## FOREWORD.

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THESE "Papers" have been given rather than planned. Realising how the combined forces of evil—religious and reprobate—seemed to be centring their calumny upon "THE HOLY ONE OF GOD" (Luke 4. 34), and remembering a Conference held some twenty years ago when similar subjects were found to be confirmatory and stimulating, it was intimated that special issues of *The Witness* would be devoted to the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith.

Able ministers of the Word prayerfully undertook to supply papers, others graciously suggested additional subjects, thus we attained the perfect number found in this volume.

Issued monthly, they proved so helpful and induced inquiries for special numbers, or for the whole of the series, from readers in so many parts of the earth that the only way to meet the demand was the joint issue now sent forth in the confidence that they will "stablish, strengthen, and settle" (1 Peter 5. 10) the faith of young and old, and prove even more useful when read right through than when perused with intervals between.

Looking back we remember the time when

"By the mighty villified  
With a thief on either side,  
There the Lord of Glory died."

Looking forward, we rejoice with assurance that near that same sacred spot on which He died He shall sit upon the Throne of the Universe "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

HYP.

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each Subject.



## The Virgin Birth Of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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### A Very Early Witness.

Stop your ears when any one speaks to you at variance with the truth that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Virgin Mary, of the seed of David, but by the Holy Ghost.—*Ignatius, a companion of the Apostle John.*

### Not Beyond the Power of God.

God can form man in four ways: From a man and woman, as constant custom shows; from neither man nor woman, as Adam; from a man without a woman, as Eve; or from a woman without a man, as the Son of God.—*Anselm.*

### The Warp and Woof of Truth.

If regard to such a mystery as the Incarnation our part is to keep to the very words of Holy Scripture; and the language of Scripture is unequivocal and plain. As to His human birth, the Lord was "the Seed of the Woman." But it will be asked, how is that possible? The answer is supplied by Matthew 1. 20 and Luke 1. 35. The Virgin Birth was altogether miraculous. The truth of His Sonship as implied in the Virgin Birth is merged in the truth that He was the Son of God in a vastly higher sense; and that

great truth is in the warp and woof of every part of the New Testament.—*Sir R. Anderson, K.C.B., LL.D.*

### The Mystery Explained.

The blessed mystery of the Incarnation, how the Son of God should take on the human form and become man, is made known. It is a great mystery. "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee" means that the human nature of our Lord was produced in the Virgin by a creative act of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1. 18-20). And therefore He possessed an absolutely holy nature. "And the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee." This is not a repetition of the first statement. It means that the Son of God, who is the Most High, overshadowed the Virgin, uniting Himself with the miraculously prepared human nature. He is designated in His Being "that holy thing" because He cannot be classified. And because He is holy there could be nothing in Him, who was born of the Virgin, which is unholy. And beautiful is the submission of the Virgin to the will of God.—*Arno C. Gaebelin.*

### The Points at Issue.

"My statement publicly made and printed has never been confuted, that those who accept a full doctrine of the incarnation—that is, of a true entrance of the eternal Son of God into our nature for the purposes of man's salvation—with hardly an exception, accept with it the doctrine of the

Virgin Birth of Christ, while those who repudiate or deny this article of faith either hold a lowered view of Christ's Person, or, more commonly, reject His supernatural claims altogether."—*Professor James Orr, Glasgow.*

**Essential for Salvation.**

There are not wanting to-day servants of the Devil in the livery of Heaven to deny all this. But what does such a denial involve? It puts them in the company of those blaspheming Jews of old who, evidently familiar with the story of the virgin birth, had the baseness to insinuate the horrible alternative when they cried, "We are not born of fornication, we have Abraham to our Father;" as though they would intimate that He who said that in this special way God was His Father was but covering His mother's sin. In such company do they walk who deny the Scripture doctrine of the Virgin Birth. To still accredit them as Christians is to insult Christ Himself. They are to be reckoned in the camp of His enemies. It will always be found that with this base denial are linked the denials, equally base, of His true Deity, His vicarious atonement, the inspiration of His Holy Word and kindred truths.—*H. A. Ironside, American Teacher.*

**The Vital Fact for Every One.**

The Virgin Birth is not, as some would have it, a mere question as to whether I, as a scientific man, may accept such a doctrine, because no similar phenomenon has come within the experi-

ence of the human race in any authenticated instance. Indeed, if in rare occasional instances a virgin birth could be shown to have occurred, then the Scripture claim, as to Christ's divine descent would at once lose all value. Back of this much discussed subject, inseparably connected with it, lies the fundamental question whether God having made man, and seeing another way of saving him, could become his Redeemer by taking man's nature upon Himself, in order as the champion and new head of our race to meet and overcome man's great adversary. It is, in brief, after all, the question *whether God is in the matter at all or not.*

He who denies the Virgin Birth of our Lord offhand commits the gross logical error of begging the question, for he assumes at the outset as impossible that which is to be proved.—*Howard A. Kelly, M.D., LL.D., Professor at John Hopkins' University, U.S.A.*

### **Give up One Point, Give up All.**

"It is not merely the Virgin Birth of our Lord that is in question, it is also the doctrine of original sin, the sinlessness of Jesus, His bodily resurrection and ascension, the whole nature of the Atonement and Salvation. . . . Those who give up the Virgin Birth will be compelled by logical and irresistible impulse eventually to give up all of these."—*Dr. Briggs, Edinburgh.*

## The Virgin Birth.

By A. T. SCHOFIELD, M.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,  
Vice-President, Victoria Institute.

I DO not propose to discuss this question from a biological or a medical standpoint, fascinating beyond description though such a study would be. The times are too stern for trifling with a subject which is one of the essential foundations of Christianity. It is therefore as a Christian physician, a humble follower of St. Luke, that I would seek to set forth certain points in due order so as to prove the certainty of those things wherein we have been instructed. I do not seek to adduce any *a priori* argument as to the desirability, or indeed the necessity, of the Virgin Birth if we are to have a Saviour of the world. I only adduce Scripture evidence that bears upon the fact of the Virgin Birth.

### The Historian of the Event.

I would first of all call your attention to the perfect fitness of Luke the physician in being the historian of this event. We do not get the account from the pen of a woman, though none can doubt that the record in Luke is that given by the Virgin herself. We do not get it from the pen of an ordinary man—an ordinary evangelist—nor, remarkable to say, do we get it from the pen of a Jew, who might be thought to have some bias, for or against, in the matter. We get it from a

Gentile, a beloved physician, and all will understand the extreme propriety of the choice. We are not, therefore, surprised at the marvellous beauty, reticence, and, at the same time, accuracy of the description, telling us every small detail that we need to know, and advancing nothing that does not concern us, thereby contrasting so favourably with all the pseudo-gospels.

### Details only in Two Gospels.

The details indeed of the Virgin Birth are only given us in Matthew and in Luke, not in Mark or in John, and the reason, of course, is obvious. In the New Testament we have not so much four Gospels as one four-sided Gospel of Christ. Look at one side, that of Matthew, and you have a King, with His birth and genealogy; look at another side, that of Luke, and you have a Man, with His parentage and lineage; look at another side, that of Mark, and you have a Servant; but who wants a servant's birth or origin? Mark is therefore silent as to these. On the fourth side—that given in the narrative of John—we get the Son of God, whose existence is co-equal with that of God through all eternity. There is therefore no detail of birth or genealogy. It is thus left to Matthew and to Luke, the historians of the *King* and of the *Man*, to give us, in the one Gospel, a kingly descent, and in the other the ascent to Adam. The opening chapters of these Gospels are specially accepted by the critics as genuine. Professor Sanday considers them the oldest and

most obviously authentic parts of the New Testament. Their evidence may therefore be accepted without reserve, for the purpose before us.

The account given in Matthew may be called the exoteric or outside narrative. It is Joseph's story, and his genealogy corresponds to the genius of that Gospel. Luke's may be called the esoteric or inside story of Mary herself, and the genealogy corresponding with it is that of Mary and not that of Joseph, in accordance with the genius of Luke's Gospel.

### **The Genealogies Examined.**

First of all, then, let us look at the genealogies. There is one in Matthew and another in Luke. In Matthew it begins with Abraham to trace the kingly line of the Jews, and carries the genealogy through the kings down to Joseph. With regard to Luke, we must understand that no genealogy was allowed amongst the Jews to end with the female. There was no such thing as a woman's genealogy. If the line did end with a daughter, her husband's name was always inserted in place of her own, and the husband was described as her father's son. There are two instances of this in the genealogy given in Luke, to which I call your attention. You will find the first on comparing Luke 3. 27 with Matthew 1. 12. In Matthew, Salathiel is the son of Jechonias; in Luke he is the son of Neri. But in what sense could Salathiel be the son of Neri and of Jechonias? It is remarkable that the word "begat" in Matthew

is only employed in that Gospel, not in Luke. No doubt Jechonias actually begat Salathiel, and Salatheil was the actual son of Jechonias; yet in Luke he is called the son of Neri, and in each case *his* son is Zorobabel, showing it is the same Salathiel. I submit that this is a distinct instance of a son-in-law being called a son. Salathiel was not the son, but the son-in-law of Neri, but in Luke, since the succession cannot go to a woman, he is called the son of Neri.

The second instance is the case of Joseph himself. We read (Luke 3. 23) of Jesus "being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli." By this is meant that Joseph was the son-in-law of Heli, exactly as Salathiel, though called the son, was the son-in-law of Neri.

### **The Genealogy of Mary.**

The two cases are parallel, and both of them occur in the genealogy of Mary. There can be no reasonable doubt that this is Mary's genealogy. Now Christ was only heir through Mary, and therefore her genealogy must be inserted in Scripture if He were not the Son of Joseph; otherwise He would not be heir to the throne of David at all. There are many who would say that Christ only inherited the throne through Joseph. Such is not the case. If Mary had never married at all, Christ was the heir to David's throne through His mother, Mary, as I shall show later. This is the first point, relating to the respective genealogies.

My second point relates to Matthew 1. 16,



“And Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary.” It never says that Heli begat Joseph. The word “begat” is not in Mary’s genealogy at all, only in Joseph’s. Jacob begat Joseph, and it does not go on to say that Joseph begat Christ, but there follows this remarkable sentence, which to my mind it would have been impossible to have written had there been no Virgin Birth: “. . . the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.” Such a roundabout way of describing the birth of Christ is absolutely without meaning or sense unless Christ were born of a virgin.

### **The Virgin Birth Predicted.**

If this is compared with Genesis 3. 15, it will be found to be a fulfilment of that wonderful Scripture. It is a little startling to find, in the first book in the Word of God, the Virgin Birth predicted: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and *her* seed.” *Her* seed! Such a thought as a woman’s seed, as stated here, is not found elsewhere. Over a hundred times or more, when we read of the seed and seeds, of Abraham’s seed, and so forth, it is always the seed of the man. But the seed of the woman is a unique concept, and can only be interpreted as a foreshadowing of the Virgin Birth, and most remarkable it is that it should be found here. I submit that if our Lord had not been born of a virgin, it would be Adam who would be addressed, and *his* seed that would be referred to (Matt. 1. 18).

My next proof is in Matthew 1. 23: "A virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth—or bear—a son." But in Luke, when the account tells us of the birth of the Baptist, it runs: "Thy wife Elisabeth shall bear *thee* a son." The word *thee* is left out in Matthew, because Mary did not bear the son to Joseph, whereas Elisabeth did bear a son to Zacharias. That single word *thee*, omitted in the one case and inserted in the other, is worthy of our attention.

Next we have, in Matthew 1. 23, "Behold, a virgin. . . ." Now, it is most true and most interesting that the Hebrew word in the Old Testament, *almah*, does not necessarily mean "virgin," but the writers of the Septuagint took it to denote a virgin; for they translated it *parthenos*, which is "virgin." The fact of the word *almah* not necessarily meaning a virgin bears out the strong contention of Harnack and other scholars that a virgin birth was never predicted of the Messiah, and that it was never believed by the Jews that the Messiah would be born of a virgin. It was, therefore, not a belief fostered by Jewish credulity. At the same time, *almah* usually means a virgin, and Luther offered a hundred thalers for a single instance of its application to a married woman, "though," he adds, "God only knows where I can find the money."

If the idea of a Virgin Birth did not originate among the Jews, still less did it originate among the Gentiles. Weber says it formed no part of

the current Messianic expectation. It is all the more remarkable, therefore, that the Scripture should be quoted by Matthew as perfectly fulfilled in the birth of our Lord.

### **The Virgin Birth and the Throne.**

I now come to some evidence which I think will startle many readers. In Matthew 2. 2 we read: "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" Now, no woman could inherit. The throne of David might descend to Mary, but Mary could not inherit it according to ordinary law, and it would pass accordingly to the next male-of-kin. Therefore in any case, it seems our Lord could not be the inheritor of the throne of David, neither through Joseph, for He was not born of Joseph, nor through Mary, because a woman could not inherit it; and but for one remarkable circumstance it would be impossible for Him to be King of the Jews. In fact, the Virgin Birth in itself would appear to bar Him from the throne.

In the writers of the Bible, the compilers of this library of sixty-six books, we have, as it were, some fifty performers, and yet one may trace the Master Mind behind them all, making them all combine in one harmony, thus bringing out the oratorio of the Word of God. To find a solution as to why Christ could sit on the throne of David we must go back to Numbers 27. That is the only solution of this problem.

**The Case of the Five Women.**

Moses, as you know, had to settle thousands of disputes among the most disputatious nation in the world, the Israelites, during his forty year's trial with them in the wilderness. But of all the legal questions and quibbles that were brought to Moses only one is recorded for our instruction. That is given in the book of Numbers. It is a remarkable fact that here when five women came before Moses their very names are given—Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. These five women—their father Zelophehad being a very rich man who had died—ask why his name should be taken away because he had no son, as was the custom; because up to that time women could not inherit. In ordinary cases Moses could answer the questions put to him, but in this instance he felt the point of such supreme importance that he could not reply, but took it to God. God answered him as follows (v. 8): "And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die, and have no son"—as in the case of Heli, the father of Mary—"then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter." That law was there made for the first time, and if it had not been made, Mary could not have inherited. So that Christ's position, His inheritance of the throne of David, depends upon an ancient legal decision in the Pentateuch.

But that is not all, as we find on turning to Numbers 36. These irrepressible daughters come

up again the second time for our instruction, and on this occasion the question is, "The decision is all very well so long as we remain single, but what is to happen if we marry?" It would confuse all the tribes of Israel if women could bring their inheritance to men of another tribe. Moses' answer was (v. 6): "This is the thing which the Lord doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them marry to whom they think best; only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry." Therefore Mary was obliged to marry Joseph of the tribe of Judah. I submit that the references I have given in Genesis 3 and in Numbers 27, as connected with the birth of our Lord, must fill the reverent mind with awe, as it finds itself in the very presence of God, as the real Author of the inspired Word.

### **Two Supernatural Births.**

My next point is in Luke 1. 14: "And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth." This was spoken to an Eastern father, and those who know the East know what it means. This promise was made to Zacharias, but no such promise was made to Joseph. We have only got to ask why, and then we come up against the Virgin Birth. Compare again verses 18 and 27 of this chapter: "And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife is well stricken in years" (Luke 1. 18). "To

a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph. . . . And the angel came in unto her and said, Hail!" (Luke 1. 27). Both births, therefore, were supernatural, that to Elisabeth was because it was *too late*, that to Mary, because it was *too soon*. Both were supernatural. Hereby the Virgin Birth is supremely distinguished from all the bestial stories of heathen mythology, and all the records of Oriental and Egyptian kings, where there is no parallel to the Virgin Birth. All these are perversions of nature; *this* is supernatural. No wonder that it should be closely scrutinised. I maintain that critics are quite right in examining very narrowly and closely the evidences of the Virgin Birth, because it is absolutely unique. The resurrection is not so; it is not unique. A death on the cross is not unique. The Virgin Birth stands absolutely *alone*, and therefore rightly demands the keenest criticism, which I trust this study will help us to meet.

### **Holy Before Birth.**

My next point is Luke 1. 31: "Behold, thou shalt conceive"—literally, "thou art now conceiving"—"and shalt bring forth a Son." It is the historic present, and the proof of that is in verse 36: "And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she *also* hath conceived"—showing that with Mary herself the Word had already commenced to be "made flesh." It is "thou art now"—not "thou shalt" at some future time (after marriage).

Then in verse 35: "Wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy" (R.V.). There is one capital rule to be followed with regard to the Revised Version, which Bible students almost invariably respect, and that is this, that if a marginal reading is given, the margin should always be taken in preference to the text. Now in this case there is a marginal reading for verse 35, and it runs: "The holy thing which is to be born shall be called the Son of God." There are many who are holy after they are born. Christ alone was holy before. But in this is involved the whole mystery of the Virgin Birth of the God-Man. "That holy thing which shall be born." It is all destroyed by the text of the Revised Version; it is all shown in the margin, and in the Authorised Version.

**"The Son of Thy Female Slave."**

My next point is rather an interesting one, and to my mind very beautiful. In Luke 1. 38: "And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord." The word is *doulee*, literally, the female slave of the Lord. If we turn to Psalm 86. 16—one of those Messianic Psalms where the spirit of Christ is speaking—we read these remarkable words: "O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give Thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of Thine handmaid." There is no other such expression in Scripture which refers to any man as the "son of Thine handmaid," and thus we have the Virgin Birth shown in a beautiful



sidelight. In Psalm 116. 16, another Messianic Psalm (the same verse in both Psalms), we read: "O Lord, truly I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid." Who was the handmaid of the Lord? Only Mary. It is quite true that in the Septuagint this word "handmaid" in the Psalms is *paidiskee*, while in Luke it is *doulee*, but the two words mean absolutely the same thing—"the female slave;" so that practically the expression is the same, "the son of Thy female slave." To those who love their Lord and know to what depths He descended for our sakes, words like this will touch a chord in every heart. "The son of Thy female slave."

### **The Two Great Songs.**

The next instance I will adduce is Luke 1. 46, compared with 68. In the former we get the Magnificat, in the latter the Benedictus. Why? Has it ever occurred to us why we have two songs in the Christian Church, one called the Magnificat and the other the Benedictus, the latter by Zacharias, and the former, of all people in the world, by Mary? If we had the song of Zacharias and the song of Joseph we could understand it, for we know in the East how the father sings with joy when a man-child is born into the world, but it is always the father who sings, never the mother. But Zacharias does all the singing at the birth of the Baptist, and Mary all the singing at the birth of Christ. Joseph is absolutely



dumb; he does not sing a note. The father in the Holy Land is never dumb, for children are welcomed there; he is perhaps sometimes dumb with us, where children are not always wanted; but it is not so in the East, especially among God's chosen people. This fact is sufficient in itself to establish the Virgin Birth. Otherwise the songs are absolutely inexplicable. There is no way of accounting for them except that Joseph was not the father of our Lord, while Zacharias was the father of the Baptist. It is to my mind the strongest proof of an indirect nature. What need have we of further witness?

### **The "Journey" and the "Haste."**

Now we come to verse 39: "And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste." This also is difficult to explain unless the Virgin was going to become a mother. No woman was supposed to take a long journey by herself of some eighty miles, and above all no betrothed woman was allowed to do so on any account. Betrothal was looked upon as being as sacred as marriage itself. And why "haste?" Because Joseph had been informed by her friends of her condition, and she could find no solace for her bursting heart save by going to her only relative in the hill country of Judaea, who would comfort her: therefore she went to Elisabeth with haste. The Virgin Birth accounts both for the *journey* and for the *haste*.

My next point refers to Luke 2. 5, which tells

us that Joseph went down to enrol himself with Mary, who was betrothed to him. There was not the slightest need for Mary to go with Joseph to Bethlehem unless she was an heiress. It is only by virtue of her inheritance of the throne of David that she would require to go and enrol herself as we are told.

### The One "Who was Born."

I must now pass on to another class of passage, and begin with John 1. 13. We commonly say that John makes no reference to the Virgin Birth, but it is not improbable that he does. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name;" and then the passage proceeds, "*Who* was born"—that is, the One whose Name they believed in (not "*which* were born," but Christ Himself)—"not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." He was born of God, and then the passage continues, "*And* the Word was made flesh." By that "and" the 14th verse is linked on to the 13th. Lest any should think that the substitution of "who was born" for "which were born" has no authority, I may say that it was common in the Church until the fourth century, and has been held since then by such critics as Zahn. Among the fathers who held it were Justin Martyr (163), Irenaeus (202), Tertullian (230), as well as Hippolytus and Augustine. And in the Codex Veronensis, one of the most ancient

of the codices, the word is "*who* was," and not "*which* were;" also John 1. 51, "*Man*."

But there is another point. In 1 John 5. 18 we have, "Whosoever is born of God sinneth not." There "born" is in the perfect tense, whereas "was born" in John 1. 13 is in the aorist. When "being born" refers to the children of God it is in the perfect tense, being a common occurrence; when it refers to the Lord it is in the aorist, being unique. I do not lay too much stress upon this, but just mention it.

**"And Tabernacled Among us."**

In John 1. 14, "And the Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us:" the annunciation was given at Christmas, and this "tabernacling" would be on or about 29th September. The feast of St. Michael and All Angels occurs on that day, and it is very remarkable that the reason as to why the feast of St. Michael and All Angels is held on that day has been lost. The Angel Gabriel, we know, was appointed to announce the tidings to Mary, and Gabriel and Michael are the chief angels that are named to us in the higher hierarchy of Heaven. Gabriel announced the conception, and as a multitude of the heavenly host announced the birth, and all the angels of God worshipped (Heb. 1. 6), Michael and all angels were certainly there on that occasion. Canon Girdlestone has pointed out that at the end of September was the Feast of Tabernacles, and that in the unusual expression, "He taber-

nacled among us," there may be a play upon the word. The only time at which the census could be taken was when the harvest was over, and the people could return to their homes; and it is now, I think, very largely accepted that at the end of September Christ was born. That would involve the annunciation by Gabriel on or about Christmas Day, and therefore Christmas may be more than an arbitrary date, for it was then that the Word was made flesh.

### **Heaven and Earth in Unison.**

If the birth was, as I believe, in September, then over that cave, that stable in the inn where our Lord was born, there would be standing in the Heaven the sign Virgo of the Zodiac. The sun was in Virgo in that year in September, and if you will read the first six verses of Psalm 19 you can have little doubt that the Spirit of God garnished the heavens. This Zodiac was certainly prehistoric, and must have a great significance in this case. This Virgin in the skies which stood over the Virgin in Bethlehem has in her uplifted right hand a branch. There are twenty different Hebrew words for branch, but the word for branch in the Zodiac has always been *tsemach*, and *tsemach* is the word used four times over for Christ, and Christ alone in the Word of God. Jeremiah speaks of the righteous Branch, which is Christ in His birth, and *tsemach* is the branch in the sign of the Virgo in the Zodiac that was over Bethlehem.

In the other hand the virgin in the Zodiac has hanging down to the ground a bunch of corn, and in that corn one grain is the wonderful star Spica, of the first magnitude, dropping into the ground, and signifying Christ's death: "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die." But that is not all. Each sign of the Zodiac has three constellations, and one of them circling round this particular sign of the Virgo is another virgin with a child in her arms. This child has been alluded to by Shakespeare in *Titus Andronicus* (4. 3): "Good Boy in Virgo's lap."

There can be little doubt that here was a representation in the heavens of what was taking place down on earth. If we look at Luke 1. 78: "Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring (or shoot or sprout) from on high hath visited us," we realise that the "dayspring" is the branch. There it was up in the sky, and the Branch had come to visit them down in Bethlehem. Here then again are transcendent mysteries in the heavens, and pictures there of the wonderful ways of God with which we are but scantily familiar.

### **The Epistles and the Birth.**

In Rom. 1. 4 the Lord, of the seed of David according to the flesh, is declared to be the Son of God with power. That is the heavenly birth, and I submit that shows He was born of a virgin.

Gal. 4. 4: "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman."

Once again I suggest that the emphatic “born of a woman” testifies to the Virgin Birth.

1 Tim. 2. 15: “She shall be saved in *the* child-bearing” (R.V.) A woman when her hour is come is in sorrow, but she shall be saved—why? *Through the child-bearing.* The Virgin Birth is the one Child-bearing.

Heb. 1. 5: “Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee”—the begetting was at Bethlehem, the declaration of it with power was in resurrection.

### “My Mother’s Children.”

Psa. 69, which is the last reference I will bring before you: “I am become a stranger unto My brethren, and an alien unto My mother’s children.” Why not “My father’s children?” (Gen. 49. 8). “Neither did His brethren believe in Him.” There is no other passage in Scripture where the mother’s children are spoken of except in the one case of Jacob, when the father himself was speaking. Otherwise this is a unique expression in the Word of God, and I believe is another indirect evidence of the Virgin Birth.

I close with this statement: “That the only solution of the problem of the Virgin Birth, to any logical and candid mind, entirely apart from all *a priori* arguments, and as a result of the investigation of these passages, is THAT IT ABSOLUTELY DID OCCUR.



# The Virtuous Life Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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## **Irrespective of All Time.**

He said not before Abraham was, I was, but, I AM. As the Father useth this expression I AM, so also doth Christ, for it signifieth continuous being, irrespective of all time.—*Chrysostom.*

## **Christ Contrasted with Others.**

I have read in Plato and Cicero sayings that are very wise and very beautiful; but I never read in either of them 'Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden.'—*Augustine.*

## **The Express Image of God.**

As the print of the seal on wax is the express image of the seal itself, so Christ is the express image—the perfect representation of God.—*Ambrose.*

## **The First True Gentleman.**

The best of men that ever wore earth about Him was a sufferer—a meek, patient, humble, tranquil Spirit—the first true Gentleman that ever breathed.—*Thomas Dekker.*

**The Glory of His Humanity.**

The light of Divine wisdom in the greatest works of nature holds not the proportion of the meanest star unto the sun in its full strength, unto that glory of it which shines in this mystery of God manifested in the flesh, and the work accomplished thereby.—*John Owen.*

**The Most Perfect Man.**

The most perfect being who has ever trod the soil of this planet was called the Man of Sorrows.—*James Anthony Froude.*

**Christ's Life Our Copy.**

The master doth not only rule the scholar's book for him, but writes him a copy with his own hand. Christ's command is our rule; His life our copy. If thou wilt walk holily, thou must not only endeavour to do what Christ commands, but as Christ Himself did; thou must labour to shape every letter in thy copy, action in thy life, in a holy imitation of Jesus.—*William Gurnall.*

**The Centre of All History.**

Christ is the great central fact in the world's history. To Him everything looks forward or backward. All the lines of history converge upon Him. All the great purposes of God culminate in Him.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

**The Supreme Ideal.**

Eighteen centuries ago a vision of human perfection, a revelation of the hidden possibilities of



our nature, broke upon the world in the person and life of Jesus Christ.—*Principal John Caird.*

**The Holy One of God—yet Man.**

He was most truly and properly a Man—the child of His virgin mother; and as such, too, He is called the Son of God. He was the Son of God who had actually taken human nature into His own Person, who was perfectly and really a Man as much as any of us; but a Man without sin, yet holy, and not merely innocent. Adam was innocent; Jesus was holy. Holiness does not mean a mere absence of evil, but inward power according to God, and so power to withstand evil.—*Wm. Kelly.*

**The Picture of Perfection.**

What a picture—the Lord of Glory among His creatures, enduring reproach, the object, too, of bitter hatred on the part of some, yet seeking the everlasting welfare of perishing, sinful men. Hatred and opposition displayed towards Him. Love and patience with His opponents displayed by Him—*C. E. Stuart.*

**The Perfect Manhood of Christ.**

The Manhood of Christ is to be studied not in the abstract, but in its actual, absolute, necessary harmony with His Deity, under His Divine Personality. Had the Manhood sinned, the Christ would have sinned in His Manhood; the highest moral impossibility.

In this subject we are reduced to the acceptance of revealed phenomena as yet, at least, imperfectly harmonised to our thought. Our

blessed Lord was really tempted. Our blessed Lord could not sin.—*Dr. Handley Moule.*

### **The True Manhood of Christ.**

The eternal Son of God became partaker of flesh and blood; He became a Man, a *true* Man, but absolutely free from every taint of human corruption. Begotten by the Holy Spirit, of the Virgin Mary, born into this world a little Babe, He grew in stature, and in wisdom, and in favour with God and man. He became truly Man—God and man in one Person.—*J. R. Caldwell.*

### **A Unique Personality.**

The Bible contains a *Personality* which, by the confession of friends and enemies alike, Pagans, Jews, Turks, and Infidels, is so unique that all men bow down before that Personality, though all men may not adopt the Christian creed—the Personality of the Man Christ Jesus.—*Dr. A. T. Schofield, London.*

### **The Only Perfect Saviour.**

A merely divine Saviour could not be a Saviour for me. A merely human Saviour could not be a Saviour for me. But a Saviour in whom Deity and humanity meet, a Saviour who is at once God and Man, is just the Saviour I need, and the Saviour that you need, a Saviour that is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him.—*Dr. R. A. Torrey.*

## **The Virtuous Life**

### **Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**By L. W. G. ALEXANDER.**

**I**N the days of His flesh the Lord Jesus Christ was a real human person. The incarnation was not a mere theophany, a mere appearance of the Divine in human form. By His being born of a woman He took unto Himself our humanity, never to discard it. When we gaze upon Him and consider His life upon earth we gaze upon a real man and consider a truly human life. This consideration gives to the record of our Lord's life upon earth a peculiar charm, an endless fascination.

We are justified in regarding a human life as partaking of

#### **Four Distinct Stages.**

These are clearly marked in our Lord's earthly history. In the Gospel by Luke four different words are employed by which these stages may be marked. He is there referred to as a Babe, a Child, a Boy, a Man. There is no human experience before that of a babe; there is no human experience on earth after that of a man. These four stages cover the entire stretch of human experience. This shows how truly and how fully human our Lord was. There is no stage of human experience possible to man which He does not know.

#### **As a Babe**

He is first brought before us wrapped in swaddling

clothes. Trust, perfect trust, is the characteristic of the babe, hence, "Thou didst make Me trust when I was upon My mother's breasts" (Psa. 22.9). Trust in God is the foundation grace displayed by any human being, and He, the perfect One, displayed perfect trust. Witness the words of Hebrews 2. 13, so comely in the lips of men, "I will put my trust in Him." This is the true and becoming attitude of man toward God. It is the basis upon which rests all that can be well-pleasing to God in human life. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him," said one of old (Job 13. 15). There should be nothing extraordinary in such trust; it should be man's normal attitude toward God.

When He is spoken of as a Child we get but a passing glance of Him. He is brought by His parents to the Temple to accomplish the will of God. What impressions were then made upon the opening consciousness of that Child we can never know, but it is clear that His parents were first honoured in bringing Him visibly into touch with the will and way of God.

When He is next brought before us He appears

### **As a Boy of Twelve.**

Again He is seen in Jerusalem, and His zeal for God is exhibited in the fact that when His parents returned to their home He remained in the Temple. The law of God was thus early His delight, and the company of the teachers of that law was His choice. In Him, at this early age, the truth of

the first Psalm is beautifully exemplified. But never before had these Doctors of the Law encountered such a boy. Amazement possessed them. His understanding and His answers confounded them. Thus we know that His earliest years were years of communion with God and diligent study of the Law of God. Withal His beautiful humility is displayed in that in the presence of His elders He takes the place of the learner and is found hearing and asking questions.

If trust in God is the basic grace in a human soul surely the ear devoted to God in hearing His voice may safely be placed second on the list. Isaiah had prophesied of Him, saying, "The Lord God wakeneth mine ear to hear as they that are taught" (Isa. 50. 4). The perfect listener was the perfect man! The knowledge of the will of God which He had learned in these youthful years likewise taught Him the becoming grace on the part of a boy of godly subjection to parental authority; for we read that He went down to Nazareth with His parents, and that He **was** subject unto them.

Eighteen years of His life are then passed over

### **In Silence and Obscurity,**

except for the suggestive statement: "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2. 52). How much may legitimately be deducted from these words! We see the boy of twelve developing, both physically and mentally, affording to His parents (if indeed

His reputed father was long spared to witness it) a joy that cannot be surpassed. And if, as is probable, in the course of those years of obscurity the shadow of death at length entered that humble home in Nazareth as, alas, it does sooner or later all earthly homes, we can with certainty imagine the comfort and strength He must have proved to His widowed mother's heart. Withal He, Himself being human, thus early in life experienced the pangs of sorrow and partook of human woe.

Next, at the age of thirty, in the

### **Full Vigour of Manhood,**

we behold Him entering upon His public ministry, and on the threshold of that ministry three outstanding events arrest us. These are His baptism, His anointing, and His temptation. The first was public; the second was seen only by John the Baptist; the third was never witnessed by man. In baptism we find Him fulfilling righteousness and identifying Himself with the nation and race He came to redeem, owning that these were under the judgment of God. In His anointing He was marked out by God as the promised Deliverer and Israel's Messiah, the Son of God. In His temptation He was alone. No human arm could aid.

The greatest victories won by men are ever gained in the secret conflict of their own souls, in secret conflict with the powers of Hell. Not until this battle has been fought—and won—is a man fully equipped for the service of God. Rarely is the battle a single one. The assaults are often



renewed and the triumph has to be repeated. It was so with the Lord. The Devil left Him for a season, and when he came again, as at the first, he found nothing in Him.

The Lord's perfect trust in God and His tested dependence upon God as a man are beautifully displayed in these

### **Forty Days and Nights of Fasting.**

How easy for Him to have supplied His human needs! But no! As a Man He humbly bowed to the will of God. And the Devil's fiercest assault was delivered when hunger gnawed and mere natural strength was clearly insufficient. How gloriously His previous knowledge of God and acquaintance with His Word enabled Him through present trust in God to triumph. As a Man He fought, as a Man He triumphed. Then in the power of the Holy Spirit He comes forth from that testing and conflict to enter upon those wondrous years of ministry described by Peter thus: "Jesus of Nazareth,...who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil" (Acts 10. 38).

The Lord's was not the life of a recluse. He was ever in the forefront of the conflict with sin and the battle for righteousness. He was ever in touch with the throbbing heart of a needy world. His wondrous life is a perpetual rebuke to all forms of spurious separation. The man who cannot live for God when rubbing shoulders with his fellows will not live for God in obscurity.

The Christian who cannot walk with his brethren will not walk with God.

**The Lord Went About Doing Good.**

He preached, it is true, as never man preached, but what the Spirit emphasises through Peter is His doing, His acts. Luke, in the opening of the Acts, refers to all that Jesus began to do and to teach. His doing ever recommended His teaching. His life ever commended His doctrine. He Himself was ever the perfect embodiment of all He ever declared man ought to be. He left us an example that we should follow His steps (1 Peter 2. 21). Did He teach humility? Who so humble as He? Did He enforce forgiveness? Who so forgiving! Did He inculcate sympathy? Who so sympathetic! Did He enjoin love? Who so loving! Did He ask men to pray? Who so prayerful! Did He tell men to withstand evil? Who so fearless! Did He enjoin self-sacrifice? He gave Himself! In everything He stands before us as the perfect example of all graces and virtues with which a man can be adorned; and in Him is exhibited a moral portrait, the beauty and perfection of which must ever be the admiration of men.



## The Vicarious Sacrifice Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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### **Incarnation and Expiation Vitally Linked.**

The two doctrines which are most opposed by human reason are the doctrines of the *Incarnation* and the *Expiation*. Is it not strange that the doctrines which show most clearly the marvellous, inconceivable, infinite love of God to poor, sinful humanity should be the very doctrines rejected by men?—*Dr. Adolph Saphir*.

### **The Theme of the Apostles.**

You take the great doctrine of Substitution out of the preaching of Paul, Peter, John, James, Philip, and all these holy men, and you take out all that they preached. So that there does not seem to be one ray of hope for the man that ignores the blessed subject of Atonement by Blood.—*D. L. Moody*.

### **The Virtue of Christ's Death.**

The Divine history records the death of the Lord Jesus Christ in few words; the homilies and epistles of the apostles preach the fruit of that death in many. The word, *to sleep*, is never employed concerning the death of the Saviour,

but *to die*, which verb expresses the truth, the gravity, the brevity, and the virtue of Christ's death.—*J. A. Bengel, Author of the "Gnomon."*

### **Christ Must Pass Through Death.**

Whenever you see an attempt to connect a *living* Christ before death and resurrection with *living* sinners, be sure there is error. It unites sin with the Lord from Heaven, and it denies that its wages is *death*. Had Christ delivered Himself, as the rulers, with the people, said in derision, He would not have delivered us. He must pass through death and take a higher place, even in Resurrection, and there He takes us. For the incarnation cannot bring life and redemption to those who are dead in trespasses and sins.—*John Nelson Darby.*

### **The Essential Truth of the Bible.**

The Atoning Sacrifice of Christ is the essential truth of the Bible. We must ever be careful to make the Atonement the centre of all our thoughts, life, and hope....Whether or not we can fully understand all the various aspects of truth connected with the death of Christ, the soul can bow in adoration before God, and say, "Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2. 20).—*Dr. W. H. Griffith-Thomas.*

### **Everything Depends on the Cross.**

Bear in mind that the Person on whom we venture our all is a Man that was hung, over nineteen hundred years ago, as a felon. He was

not a felon, but He was numbered with felons. We ventured everything in the conviction that He who was hung nineteen hundred years ago as a felon is the Person who sustains creation, who made all things, and is the only-begotten and well-beloved of the Father.—*Wm. Lincoln.*

**“Amen” to the Judgment of God.**

There were mysterious elements in Christ's sufferings in the Garden and on the Cross which showed that it was not death only as an outward fact which He endured, but death with all the darkness and horror, the separation from the comforts of God's presence, which belong to it as the wages of sin (Mark 14. 33-36; 15. 34). Entering into His experience there went up from His innermost soul an “AMEN” to the Judgment of God upon our sin, which had in it all the elements of a true and perfect Atonement for mankind, and was accepted by God as such.—*Professor James Orr.*

**The Present Aspect of the Sacrifice.**

“Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from the present evil world” (Gal. 1. 3. 4). Please note the words “gave Himself,” and the object for which He did so is declared to be that He might take us out for Himself from this present evil age. How present the object! This present evil age with its evil principles and evil practices to take us right out from them all, and in doing so He gave Himself up to the will of

God our Father. Is there any one of us who would like in any degree to oppose the Will of God our Father? Is this object being realised in each of us?—*W. J. Grant, B.A.*

**The Practical Aspect of the Sacrifice.**

Maclaren, of Manchester, tells us that he once heard of a man of very shady character, but who was sound on the Atonement. But what is the good of being sound on the Atonement if the Atonement does not make *you sound*? Any one who reads his New Testament, or understands the essence of apostolic Christianity must understand that a mere theoretic acceptance of the Atonement, unaccompanied by a penetration of the life and character of the principles of the Lord Jesus Christ, is of no value whatever. The Atonement is not a mere formula for assent; it is a life principle for realisation.—*Dyson Hague.*

**A Clear Personal Testimony.**

We do not shrink from acknowledging that the Word has proved a veritable searchlight, revealing, alas, within a state of ruin and evil such as human reason could never have discovered and human pride would never have acknowledged. But equally and joyfully do we testify to the glorious light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; the peace which flows from His received atonement; the bliss of realisation in Him our Saviour, as none other and none less than the Eternal Son of God manifest in the flesh.—*Lord Polwarth.*

## The Vicarious Sacrifice Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

By C. H. HINMAN, New Zealand.

**W**E fear that many of God's people regard the work of atonement in a superstitious and mysterious way, almost afraid to look into the Scriptures concerning it, hence they have no clear thoughts as to the Lord's expiatory sufferings. If these are seen and grasped as the Book presents them, comfort, gratitude, and satisfaction will, we believe, be the result; but if these are not understood, confusion must inevitably be our portion.

It is because present-day modernists and destructive critics fail to see the enormity of human guilt, and the measure of its mischief, that they speak as they do concerning the work of atonement. Coupled with this, too, the infinite holiness of God seems to be beyond their ken, hence they grope about in the dark like night birds.

A leading Professor of Theology in New York has lately said, "Christ is not our Mediator; there is no Mediator necessary." If he had at all known what sin is in the sight of infinite holiness this would never have proceeded from his mouth or pen, and because of this lack of knowledge humbler folk stumble in the darkness and become the prey of the enemy.

Let us, therefore, see if we can let in some scriptural light on the subject.

If we wish for

### **The Historical Account**

of the Lord's sufferings and death we go to the four Gospels for it. Here, from four different viewpoints, it is detailed before us. But if we wish to know the real soul-experiences the Lord passed through we go to the Psalms. Here again, however, the view is from different positions, and different objects are before His vision. In Psalm 69, *e.g.*, His enemies are around Him, and He is occupied with them. "They that hate Me without a cause are more than the hairs of Mine head: they that would destroy Me, being Mine enemies wrongly, are mighty." And again, "They that sit in the gate speak against Me; and I was the song of the drunkards." This is also true in Psalm 22, where He speaks of the "Bulls of Bashan," the "dogs," and "the Assembly of the wicked" and their work. But when we reach Psalm 88 His enemies are lost sight of, they are not at all before Him, as He is there suffering vicariously under the hand of God. Perhaps we may speak of

### **The Lord's Sufferings as Fourfold.**

*First*, He suffered here as the righteous One in the midst of unrighteousness. As the Holy One of God He was pained with everything outside of, and contrary to, the perfect will of God.



Nothing here in the Devil's kingdom found any response in Him, hence this caused constant pain.

*Secondly*, He suffered **anticipatively**, as He knew from the beginning that the Cross stood at the end of His pathway. The words in John's Gospel, "Mine hour is not yet come," three times repeated, prove that the Cross was ever before Him. Then finally, "The hour is come" (chap. 12. 23), when the climax was reached. All this caused constant suffering by anticipation, hence we read of Him in the language of the prophet, "A Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53. 3).

*Thirdly*, He endured **actual physical suffering** at the hands of men. In the barracks of the soldiers violence and indignities were heaped upon Him until we read, "His visage was so marred more than any man" (Isa. 52. 14). That is, His blessed face was so disfigured by human cruelty and violence as to be almost unrecognisable as a man. All this was unspeakably dreadful, and brings out to the full the malice and wickedness of man and his master the Devil. But even this stops short of

*Fourthly*, His **supreme suffering**, as brought before us in Psalm 88. Here the Jews and Roman soldiers are not in view at all; He is alone with God in "THE DAY OF HIS FIERCE ANGER." This is the awful moment to which He had looked during the days of His ministry, when He who loathed sin should be made sin for our sakes; when He who had ever dwelt in the light and in



perfect fellowship with the Father must needs go into darkness, distance, and alienation. This was the dreadful experience from which His holy soul shrank. "Numbered with the transgressors;" "His soul made an offering for sin" (Isa. 53. 10, 12).

We need hardly say that we are not saved through what the Lord suffered at the hands of men. This was severe and terrible, possibly the worst that man could inflict. His submission to it, too, was part of that implicit obedience in His perfect life, but this suffering

### **Does Not Expiate Human Guilt**

or meet the claims of holiness in connection with its judgment. Expiation is only met by the voluntary, vicarious suffering of a holy Being whom God could accept in our stead. Hence the deep and supreme importance of Psalm 88 from every point of view. God demanded this in order that a righteous basis might be laid on the ground of which He could act; and we need this omnipotent work of atonement, this divine propitiatory, to give complete satisfaction to conscience and heart.

God, who before the Cross dwelt in the thick darkness, behind an unrent veil, shut up in His own holiness, can now come out and righteously meet us at the altar—THE CROSS. His standard does not need to be lowered, and as a matter of fact could not be, for "justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne" (Psa. 89. 14).

In coming out to us God rent the veil, hence it

was He who put His Son to death. The veil typifies "Christ's flesh" (Heb. 10. 20), and it was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. It was torn from *above*, not from beneath, as though done by human hands. This is a matter of immense importance. Our blessed Lord did not die as a martyr to His cause, because His teaching was ahead of His day and surroundings; neither did He die by human compulsion. He died "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God the Father" (Acts 4. 28), as the Antitype of all the Old Testament victims the last sacrifice put upon the altar, to expiate human guilt, to put away sin (Heb. 9. 26). Yea, to open the way for God, as God, to come out to us in righteousness and mercy.

If most people were asked the question,

**"Who Put the Lord to Death?"**

the answer would be, "The Roman soldiers or the Jews," yet neither would be strictly correct. The Jews rejected Him, in spite of perfect evidence as to who and what He was, and they, of course, are charged with His murder (Acts 3. 15); while the Roman soldiers actually nailed Him to the tree, but He was "cut off" by a divine hand.

It was a usual thing for one put to death by crucifixion, the Roman method, to live from two to six days on the cross; their death being brought about by starvation, exposure, and by other external causes; but our Lord, who was a perfect Man, with no disease in His body, lived only six

hours on the Cross. This proves that He was consumed by something apart from what man could inflict. The nails did not kill Him, neither did the Roman spear, for then He was "already dead."

He died, then, a substitutionary death under the hand of Jehovah, an absolute necessity if sin was to be atoned for; yet at the same time a voluntary offering in the perfect will of God. "He died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15. 3), and "He loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2. 20).

### **Jonah, the Type of Christ,**

was actually put overboard by the mariners, yet from within the fish he says, "THOU hast cast me into the deep" (Jonah 2. 3). He looks past the mariners to God Himself; while the Lord in Psalm 88. 6 looks past Jews and Roman soldiers, and says, "THOU hast laid Me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps." We were in the pit, so He had also to go there, and He was put there by Jehovah. He had said, "I delight to do Thy will" (Psa. 40. 8), but here He says, "*Thy wrath lieth hard upon Me.*"

God also had said, "My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mark 3. 17). Yet we also read, "*It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him*" (Isa. 53. 11). Here we have

### **His Vicarious Sufferings:**

His sinking under the wrath of God; His suffering Jehovah's "terrors," and by the same being "cut

off out of the land of the living" (Isa. 53. 8). This may appear paradoxical, yet there is nothing incongruous in it. He was the delight of the Father; in Him He ever found joy, satisfaction, and repose; yet for our sakes He must bear the stroke. "For the transgression of My people was He stricken—the stroke was upon Him." Hence we may say, "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." Yea, He was "stricken, smitten of God and afflicted."

If these things are intelligently apprehended those three hours of darkness, with all that it meant Godward and manward, will stand out before us as never before realised. His piercing cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Psa. 22. 1) will be understood to indicate distance and alienation for our sakes.

In Psalm 102

### Three Figures are Used

that should make us pause and consider. A little time is needed perhaps to let it sink into our souls. Here the Holy Spirit through the Psalmist says, "I am like *a pelican* of the wilderness; I am like *an owl* of the desert. I watch, and am as *a sparrow* alone upon the house top." This was not true of the writer of the Psalm, but it was true of David's Lord. The *pelican* is the symbol of misery, melancholy, and solitude. They dwell far from the habitations of men, and sit for hours without moving. The *owl* is a night bird, found amongst rocks and tombs, utters a low wailing

note, but seldom moves; and both these birds are unclean (Lev. 11. 17, 18.) Here we have the crucial point. These unclean birds symbolise our beloved Lord when He was *numbered with the transgressors*. Uncleanness cannot be spared, hence *He must suffer*.

The mariners tried hard to save Jonah with themselves, but *they could not*. If they were to be saved he and his disobedience must go overboard into the boiling sea; and if we were to be saved our blessed Lord, *with our disobedience*, must go beneath the waves of Jehovah's wrath. How awful was that hour when He who knew no sin was made sin for us! When the righteous wrath of God consumed the victim and the wood, the divine offering and human guilt, in order that the Father's face of radiant grace might shine in light upon us.

As to the third of these symbols, the *sparrow*, this is not our common, cheeky, chirpy bird, but the blue thrush of Palestine, which always dwells alone and sits upon the house top for hours together. This bird brings out or suggests

### **The Loneliness of the Heavenly Stranger**

while incarnate here, and especially on the Cross. The only One of His order, understood nowhere, One who left the homage, joy, peace, and tranquility of Heaven for that forsaken place outside the northern wall of Jerusalem, called Golgotha. Oh, my soul, behold Him there!

Thank God, however, He is not there now. The

clouds and darkness are now past, the sacrificial sufferings are all over; Heaven is satisfied and Hell defeated, for sin has met its utmost due in a Divine Person who was God's fellow, God's equal; hence there is now a clear sky overhead and perfect peace within. To Him who sits upon the Throne be praise eternal!

Let us then calmly view these vicarious sufferings of our adorable Lord as they are unfolded in the Scriptures of Truth, and let us meditate upon them until we are humbled into the dust, because of their necessity, yet at the same time filled with gratitude that infinite love should be so lavished upon us. "Unto Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in *His own blood*... unto Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. AMEN."

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### **A Common Objection.**

THE doctrine of a Substitutionary Atonement, it is said, is immoral, that Christ suffered in order that guilty man might escape from sufferings richly deserved. Is this teaching immoral? Then the constitution of the human race, ordained by God, is immoral, for, since its ties are those of sympathy and love, human beings are constantly suffering that others may escape sufferings richly deserved. Then sympathy is immoral, for this is what it does. Then the best persons are the most immoral, for they do this oftener than others.

The objector does not maintain that the doctrine of a Substitutionary Atonement has equally produced immorality wherever it has been proclaimed. He does not venture to test this charge by

**An Appeal to History.**

The appeal would be fatal. For nineteen hundred years the only great moral advances of the human race have been brought about by the preaching of a Substitutionary Atonement. "A tree is known by its fruits." It is impossible that a doctrine essentially immoral should be the cause of morality among men.—*Professor Franklin Johnson, Chicago.*



# THE Victorious Resurrection Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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## **The Resurrection—Extraordinary.**

He who has never felt that, with the message, "CHRIST IS RISEN," something quite extraordinary, all but incomprehensible to natural experience, has entered into the history of the world, has not yet rightly understood what it is to preach the Risen One.—*Prof. F. Loofs.*

## **The Resurrection—Cannot be Denied.**

The fact of the actual and literal Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead cannot be denied by any man who will study the evidence in the case with a candid desire to find what the fact is, and not merely to support an *a priori* theory.—*Dr. R. A. Torrey.*

## **The Resurrection—An Absolute Necessity.**

It is frankly admitted at once that if the sincere inquirer after truth is convinced by any kind of evidence, or facts that may be reasonably ascertained, of the continuance of Jesus in the grave beyond the third day subsequent to His crucifixion, he is bound to disregard and despise every word of the Bible, and every argument by which its friends would seek to win his faith and obedience.—*Dr. Jas. H. Brookes.*

**The Resurrection—And Early Traditions.**

“HE IS RISEN.” Such is the voice of all preceding ages—the voice of the whole Christian people from the days of the Apostles—a voice invariably precise, clear, and unhesitating. We have listened to all the traditions of ancient times to ascertain whether one discordant sound might reach us from within the compass of the ancient Church, and we have been able to perceive none.  
—*Prof. Gaussen.*

**The Resurrection—A Straightforward Story.**

Simple earnestness, fidelity, painstaking accuracy, pure love of truth, are the most patent characteristics of the New Testament writers concerning the Resurrection, who evidently deal with facts, not with fancies, and are employed in *relating a history*, not in *developing an idea*. They write that we “may know the certainty of the things which are most surely believed” in their day. They “bear record of what they have seen and heard.” I know not how stronger words could have been used to prevent the notion of that plastic, growing myth, which Strauss conceives to have been in apostolic times.—*George Rawlinson, Distinguished Oriental Scholar.*

**The Resurrection—The Hope of Humanity.**

The Resurrection of Jesus stands fast as a fact, unaffected by the boastful waves of scepticism that ceaselessly through the ages beat themselves against it; retains its significance as a corner-stone in the edifice of human redemption; and holds

within it the vastest hope for time and for eternity that humanity can ever know.—*Professor James Orr.*

**The Resurrection—No Fact Better Proved.**

I have been used for many years to study the history of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great sign which God has given us, that Christ died and rose again from the dead.—*Dr. Arnold, of Rugby.*

**The Resurrection—The Great Test Question.**

The Apostle lays the foundation of his argument in the historical fact of the Resurrection of Christ. But he does not altogether *assume* this fact. He deals with its *evidence* in relating minutely the various appearances of the Lord after His Resurrection. Then the *proclamation* of Christ's Resurrection as the great fact attending the preaching of the Gospel is set against the denial of the Resurrection by some of them, and it is subsequently shown that the two hang together, so that they who denied the one must be prepared to deny the other. In 1 Cor. 15 the apostle is showing the historical certainty and the vital importance of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.—*Dean Alford.*

**The Resurrection—A Weighty Testimony.**

To me the central point is the Resurrection of

Christ, which I believe. Firstly, because it is testified by men who had every opportunity of seeing and knowing, and whose veracity was tested by the most tremendous trials, both of energy and endurance, during long lives. Secondly, because of the marvellous effect it had upon the world. As a moral phenomenon, the spread and mastery of Christianity is without a parallel. I can no more believe that colossal moral effects lasting for 2000 years can be without a cause than I can believe that the various motions of the magnet are without a cause, though I cannot wholly explain them.—*Lord Salisbury.*

**Resurrection and Revelation.**

“The spiritual meaning of the Resurrection is very full and comprehensive. The Resurrection vindicated our Lord’s character (Acts 2.24). It also sealed and certified God’s acceptance of His atoning sacrifice as the assurance that that sacrifice was sufficient for the sins of the whole world (Rom. 4.25). The Resurrection is the Divine means of our holiness, for we receive the risen life of our Lord into our lives, and are enabled to live the resurrection life of holiness and righteousness (Rom. 6. 4, 11; Col. 3. 1-3). The Resurrection guarantees and pledges our own resurrection, our Lord being the firstfruits of them that are asleep. Thus the Resurrection enters into every part and aspect of the Christian revelation in its relation to our personal life.”—*Dr. W. H. Griffith Thomas.*

## The Victorious Resurrection Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

By HY. PICKERING, Glasgow.

“**N**OW IS CHRIST RISEN” (1 Cor. 15. 20).  
Words of deepest import to every child of Adam’s race! Words on which hang the salvation, the peace, the assurance, and the hope of untold myriads of the human family! Words which convey the statement of the grandest fact or the greatest fraud of the Ages!

Infidels rightly emphasise the vital importance of the Resurrection of Christ. STRAUSS calls it “that crowning miracle,...that touchstone of Christianity itself.” BAUER says, “In the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, Christianity acquired a firm basis for its historical development.” KEIM declares “the whole fabric of Christianity is built upon an *empty* tomb,” meaning that if the greatest miracle has happened, then everything else lies within the bounds of possibility.

The Resurrection is interwoven in the whole Divine fabric. The Old Testament pictures it, “from whence he received him in a figure” (Heb. 11. 19). Christ asserted it, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2. 19). His biographers attest it, “He is not here, but is risen” (Luke 24. 6). The Epistles emphasise it, “Declared to be the Son of God...by the Resurrec-

tion from the dead" (Rom. 1. 4). Revelation rounds up the Bible with "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore" (Rev. 1. 18), and its closing seal is a risen, living Christ, saying, "Surely I come quickly."

In considering this great subject let us first carefully examine the *negative* side and look at it as

### **THE GREATEST FRAUD**

of the Ages. The charges of unbelievers may be summed up under five heads.

#### **I.—The Fraud Theory.**

It is said by "certain fellows of the baser sort" that the story of the Resurrection which has gained almost universal credence for 1900 years was a deliberate imposture foisted upon the early followers by the too incredulous disciples of Christ.

That a company of men could be got to go forth among all nations and teach a religion of the purest morality and most consistent uprightness; that they could endure the loss of home, country, kindred, friends, for the propagation of fraud; that they could face the torture of the tar-posts, the crouching lions of the Colosseum, the faggot, the stake, and the flame for a fraud; that the very men who were telling lies should urge others to "lie not one to another" (Col. 3. 9), and sum up the judgment of God with "all liars shall have their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire," is not now accepted by any sensible infidel, much less introduced before any intelligent audience.

The fraud lies with the inventor of the theory!



**II.—The Swoon Theory,**

or, as it is sometimes called, “the naturalistic theory of the Resurrection.” First introduced by Paulus, it is claimed that the Lord did not really die upon the Cross, but only fell into a swoon, from which He recovered by the cool air of the tomb and the fragrance of the hundredweight of spices. After being resuscitated He moved about, and in due course died a natural death.

Consider the events preceding the Crucifixion, the agony in the Garden, the ordeal of four trials, the scourging, the Cross-bearing, the hanging on the Tree from the third to the ninth hour; then according to this theory, picture a weak man, after tying up the napkin, crawling from the tomb, moving the “great stone” from its door, getting past sixty guards who slept so long and so sound that they failed to stop their half-dead prisoner. Next imagine Him entering into the city a physical wreck, palming Himself off upon His followers as a risen rather than a resuscitated man. Hearken to such a One uttering these words, “All power is given unto Me, in Heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28. 18).

Invented by infidels this theory is rejected by many infidels. Even STRAUSS, the most remorseless of critics of the Resurrection, is credited with giving its death blow to the swoon suggestion.

As one well said of this theory, “I prefer the supernatural to the ridiculous.”



## III.—The Myth Theory,

invented by STRAUSS, implied that a belief in the Resurrection gradually grew like the myths that gather round the names of William Tell, Robin Hood, and other characters; or it developed like the mythology of the Greeks and Romans.

Now most myths have taken years and ages to develop, but this "fact" was definitely accepted by the disciples three days after it occurred, and within three weeks of the event, by thousands of men and women near the spot where it took place.

Then as to the product or practical benefit of myths to mankind compare others with this "Majestic Myth" which has belted the globe with the Good News, erected the most stately buildings in the world, enchanted the brains of the greatest painters, poets, and authors; sent into the regions beyond tens of thousands of men and women loyal and true; built immense hospitals and orphanages. We might prolong the list pages upon pages, but can only sum it up in the words of a patriarch who, surveying its achievements, exclaimed, "Roll on, *majestic myth*; roll on throughout the Ages!"

## IV.—The Vision Theory,

or, as RENAN puts it in his Frenchy style, "Divine power of love! Sacred moments in which the passion of an hallucinated woman gives to the world a resurrected God!"

This theory partakes more of the nature of a

“fantasy” than of “resurrection.” Remember the disciples did not expect to see the risen Lord, yet it is distinctly asserted that He was “seen” of Peter, of the twelve, of above 500 at once, and by others, on various occasions.

Now is it usual for a woman in one place, a man in another, two on a road, seven on a lake, eleven in a room, twelve disciples at one time, and 500 “brethren” at another time, to have the *same vision*. Moreover, He spake several addresses of considerable length, and amongst those who saw and heard were impetuous Peter, unbelieving Thomas, a Jewish taxgatherer—Matthew, men not likely to be smitten by the “hallucination of a half-frenzied woman.”

Fantasy has its laws, but they do not operate in this strange way. The demand is really to give up one miracle and substitute 534 in its place!

### **V.—The Spiritualistic Theory**

of KEIM asserts that what the Lord’s followers really saw was His spirit. Thus the issues of life and death to millions is based on a mere apparition or ghostly visitor from the other world.

It is almost incredulous that persons who cannot believe in the resurrection of the body, however clearly established by unimpeachable authority, should be prepared to believe in ghosts or spiritual visitants from the unseen world. Yet such are to-day being enmeshed by the thousand in the coils of Spiritism.

This theory is pithily summed up in the remark

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of a king to a sceptic: "Queer fellow; you believe in any kind of ghost but the Holy Ghost."

Such are the varying objections to the Resurrection of Christ. Accepted yesterday, rejected to-day, revived to-morrow. No amount of evidence will convince the determined unbeliever, but any one who really desires to know the truth and obey it (John 7. 17) is bound to come to the conclusion that the Resurrection of Christ is an historically proven fact.

The examination of the vagaries of objectors leaves the way clear to the only other hypothesis viz., THAT THE GREATEST FACT OF THE AGES ACTUALLY HAPPENED. Therefore, we proceed to examine with equal care the *positive* side, and look at this vital subject as

### **THE GRANDEST FACT.**

of all Ages. A claim of such magnitude, on which hangs such momentous issues, demands the most convincing proofs. The evidence may be taken along five leading lines.

#### **I.—The Revival of Hopes.**

See the disciples at CALVARY. The most forward of all trembles before a simple maid; His acquaintances and friends beheld the Crucifixion from "afar;" all the disciples forsook Him and fled; Joseph rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre "*and departed*" (Matt. 27. 60); two downhearted disciples, with all hope gone, are returning home to Emmaus. Everything at His

death speaks of dejection, gloom, and disappointed hopes.

Behold the same disciples three weeks later at PENTECOST. Notice their boldness. Peter, the denier, becomes Peter the bold confessor. Standing in the midst of the very murderers he says: "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life, whom *God hath raised from the dead*; whereof we are witnesses." The eleven "stand" with him in his outspoken proclamation (Acts 2. 14; 3. 14, 15). The "boldness of Peter and John" before the High Priest's court becomes visible, and they dare to question their would-be judges "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than God, judge ye" (chap. 4. 13, 19).

What had changed these men from being arrant cowards at Calvary to be valiant heroes at Pentecost. CHRIST HAD RISEN, they had seen Him, heard Him, "ate and drank with Him" (Acts 10. 41), and been endued with the power of a risen Christ. That same power has changed cowards innumerable into heroes brave, as century after century has rolled by. Truly the blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the Church.

## **II.—The Continuity of the Church.**

In the days of His flesh Christ had declared, "Upon this Rock I will build My Church; and the gates of Hades *shall not prevail against it*" (Matt.

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16. 18). After His Resurrection that structure began to visualise. The 120 in the 1st of Acts becomes 3000 in the 2nd, 5000 in the 3rd, multitudes in the 5th, and "myriads" in the 21st chapter (v. 20, R.v.).

Churches at Corinth, Rome, Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, and hundreds of places far apart sprang up at His command. The attractive power of the risen Man in the glory drew so many to His side that all the power of imperial Rome and all the terrible persecutions of the Neros could not obliterate them; nay, it turned out as of old, "The more they were afflicted the more they *multiplied* and grew" (Exod. 1. 12).

DE ROSSI, one of the greatest authorities on the Catacombs, "calculates from carefully gathered data that the total length of all the galleries known to exist in Rome is 590 miles." It is estimated that these galleries contain seven million graves. As the Romans burned their dead, almost every one of these tombs is a witness to faith in the Christ who died, was buried, and rose again the third day.

Included in the continuity of the Church are the three perpetual memorials, the Lord's Day, the Ordinance of Baptism, and the Breaking of Bread. Blessed trio of triumph of the Lord we love.

We rightly sing:

"Crowns and thrones may perish,  
Kingdoms rise and wane;  
But the Church of Jesus  
Constant must remain."

### III.—The Apostle Paul.

The wildest blasphemer or stoutest denier has never raised the question of the historicity of the Apostle Paul. Hence he is a living proof of the Resurrection of Christ.

Space forbids elaboration, but consider his *conversion* on the highway at noon; what he *lost*—fortune, friends, fame, and all; what he *gained*—poverty, hunger, stripes, imprisonment and death; what he *wrote*—fourteen epistles unexcelled in all literature; his *end*—the Roman dungeon and the executioner's axe, then tell me what imagination, nightmare, or spirit visitant could have carried a man through these life and death trials? He must have seen, he *did* see, "I AM JESUS," and his life was revolutionised (Acts 9. 5; 26. 13).

### IV.—The Teachings of the Master.

"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16. 15) was the commission of their Risen Master. "The Gospel" is defined as "Christ *died* for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was *buried*, and that He *rose again* according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15. 1-4). A handful of unlearned and untutored men, inspired by the fact of the death, burial, and resurrection of their Master, went forth with the Glad Tidings. It made a little Heaven below at Jerusalem, it worked miracles among the heathen, it amazed the barbarians of Melita, it cheered the dull Cretan, it brightened the polished



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Athenian, it liberated the slave in the dungeon, it captivated the hearts of the nobles of the royal households of Caesar, it triumphed over all the persecutions in early days, it has covered the five continents with its victories, it rides forth to-day "conquering and to conquer" (Rev. 6. 2).

Sceptics of the older and vulgar school, sceptics of the newer and refined "criticism" of to-day, all admire "the ethics of Jesus," and whilst rejecting the Divine Teacher would retain His delightful teachings. But if the doctrines of Christ are not based on a substitutional death and supernatural resurrection they would long ago have been blown to the winds like autumn leaves before a storm.

### **V.—Individual Testimony.**

Every living Christian is an evidence of a living Saviour. Think of the lives of Peter, Paul, Augustine, Luther, Wesley, Spurgeon, Moody, and saintly men whose names are legion. Think of the martyrs, Huguenots, Waldensians, Covenanters, and others who have laid down their lives for the Lord they loved. Think of the missionaries evangelists, teachers, visitors to hospitals, infirmaries, prisons, slums, and dens of sin. Think of the men and women *you* know who are living sober, straight Christian lives "in the power of His Resurrection" (Phil. 3. 10). Then remember that sixty generations of noble men and women in the past have pillowed their *dying* heads on the One who was "crucified in weakness," yet "raised after the power of an endless life" (Heb 7. 16).



In the light of these weighty considerations tell me if there is any other conclusion than this that there is a Living Man in the Glory, "able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him."

Having surveyed the Resurrection of Christ from the standpoint of foe and friend, it is now a pleasure to recount for our heart-comfort some of the truths connected with the triumph of His Resurrection, rightly named

### **THE MOST GLORIOUS VICTORY**

of the Ages. In his great resurrection chapter, the fifteenth of 1st Corinthians, the Apostle sums up the vital imports of the Risen Christ. His argument is, "If there was no such thing as resurrection, then Christ is not raised. If Christ is not raised then there is no resurrection of the dead." These were his postulations:

1. "If Christ be not raised"

#### **Preaching is Vain**

(v. 14). All the preaching of all the ages has only been a matter of beating the air. Certainly the preaching of the Cross was to the Greeks foolishness and to the Jews a stumbling-block, but behind the preaching was an innate power which silenced all philosophies, extinguished fires on heathen altars, dethroned "gods many," who fell before its power as Dagon before the Ark of the Lord.

The proclamation of a dead Christ could never have effected such changes, and made the moral wastes of the world to blossom as the rose, and the

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desert of millions of lives to bloom as the garden of the Lord. Hence he rightly assumes that "NOW IS CHRIST RISEN."

2. "If Christ be not raised"

### **Faith is Vain**

(v. 14). Faith in a dead Christ is an empty faith, but faith in a living Christ brings forgiveness of sins, gives peace in life, joy in death, and the assurance in glory of "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

Yet soon thousands who had been dead in trespasses and sins, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, having no hope and without God in the world, through faith in "Him who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4. 25; 5. 1), were made nigh, became fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. Thus was it in early days, thus has it been ever since, as the toiling and heavy laden in many lands have responded to the invitation, "Come unto Me" (Matt. 11. 28), and found rest for their souls. Such can only be accounted for by the fact that "NOW IS CHRIST RISEN."

3. "If Christ be not risen"

### **Ye are Yet in Your Sins**

(v. 17). In chapter 6 of the same epistle he makes clear the characters of many of his hearers before their faith in Christ. "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with man-

kind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. *And such were some of you.* But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 6. 9-11). What worked such a transformation? Was it not that they had experienced what many of us have realised to-day, that

" A dying, risen Jesus,  
Seen by the eye of faith,  
At once from sin releases,  
And saves the soul from death?"

Christian experience in all ages is a reality which only a Risen Christ can explain and sustain. Power is demonstrable, hence the power "of His Resurrection" (Phil. 3. 10), manifest in the changed lives of all sorts and conditions of men, visibly declares, "NOW IS CHRIST RISEN."

4. "If Christ be not raised"

**The Dead have Perished.**

Their own Christian friends who had died in faith had only followed the line of the sensualist, the idolater, and the unclean. The holy lives of their Christian brethren, their victory over the world, their crucifixion of the flesh with the lusts thereof, their triumph over "that old serpent the Devil," all, all was of no avail if the dead rise not. The fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus, the horrors of the Colosseum, the ignominy of the Catacombs, the terrors of the last enemy in a thousand forms then and for the last two millenniums have all been in vain.

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"If Christ be not raised," mother, you shall never again clasp your loved babe to your breast; father, you shall never greet the boy who lies in a warrior's grave; husband and wife shall not meet again on the Golden Strand. Each of us are reduced to the level of the wretch who, following his mother to the grave, repeated the materialistic creed, "As dieth the dog, so die all mankind."

But, praise God, as every age has its typical translation or resurrection:

ENOCH in the Patriarchial: Gen. 5. 24; Heb. 11. 5;

ELIJAH in the Prophetical: 2 Kings 2. 11; Matt. 17. 3;

MOSES in the Levitical: Deut. 34. 6; Matt. 17. 3;

LAZARUS in the Evangelical: John 11, 42, 43, so of the Central Figure of the age of Grace we exultingly exclaim, "Now IS CHRIST RISEN,"

5. "If Christ be not raised" then the saved are

**"Of All Men Most Miserable,"**

instead of being the people who are most joyful.

Instead of being "miserable" the Christian is the only person on earth who has a right to be happy. Unregenerate persons, however wealthy, famous, or favoured, are only happy when they *forget* the great facts of life, death, and eternity. The regenerate on the contrary are most happy when they *remember* that they have "eternal life" (John 5. 24), may never die but be "caught up to be for ever with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4. 17).

The early Christians renounced the present world in the hope of the world to come, they

sacrificed the real present for the unseen future, they forfeited the pleasures and pomps of Rome, Corinth, and other cities for lives of poverty, slavery, bondage, and a death of torture and cruelty. Did they solicit pity? Were they miserable? Are their records full of complaints and sadness? Listen! "Believing, ye *rejoice* with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1. 8). "*Rejoice* inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings....If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, *happy* are ye" (1 Peter 4. 13, 14). "In all these things we are more than *conquerors* through Him that loved us" (Rom. 8. 36, 37). Listen again to the dying testimony of the Apostle. Lying in a Roman dungeon, awaiting the axe of the executioner, he whines—nay, he rejoices: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness" (2 Tim. 4. 7, 8, R.v.).

So with the "happy people" all through the ages. So with every truly "born again" person walking in fellowship with God, for whatever may be his trials, sorrows, and difficulties, he can rejoice that

1. He has received the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1. 7).
2. He has received power to overcome sin (Rom. 6. 18; 1 John 5. 4).
3. He has access to the Father with all the riches of glory at His disposal (Rom. 5. 2; Eph. 2. 8).

4. He has seen numbers of men made new creatures in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5. 17).
5. He knows that such come not from a dead man in Joseph's tomb, but from an exalted Prince at God's right hand (Acts 5. 31).

In his very soul rings clear the message "Now IS CHRIST RISEN."

Now of the things which we have spoken concerning the Resurrection of our Lord

### **THIS IS THE SUM.**

By the changing and contradictory theories of the opponents; by the revolution wrought in the lives and characters of the early disciples; by the perpetuity of His appointed testimony in a living Church, with its visible remembrances of His death and resurrection; by the life, labours, and writings of the "chosen vessel;" by the beauty and power of the teachings of the Master; by the pure lives of the myriad host of the saved; by testimonies from independent witness in various lands, which could be multiplied an hundredfold; by the Word of God, "which liveth and abideth for ever;" by the Holy Spirit, in His manifest attestation to a Risen Christ in the lives of men; by all that is pure, true, holy, and sacred, both in this life and the life to come, we have the verification of the vital truth of the Christian faith—THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST FROM AMONG THE DEAD.

## The Veritable Presence Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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### **The Friend that Abideth.**

There is a limit to every friendship in this world; but there is One that sticketh, even Christ. Before I used to read my Bible, I was taught that I was to stick to Him—that I was to hold on, and not leave go. That was very good; but there is something I have found out since, and that is that *Christ sticketh to me*. He will never leave me, neither shall any pluck me out of His hand.—*Henry Moorhouse*.

### **The Presence and Profession.**

It is a solemn thing to be joined, in profession even, to the people of God. God dwells among His people; and as another has said, "He cannot endure evil where He dwells, less than where He does not dwell." It was in the midst of His people, and not outside in the world, that Ananias "wished to have credit for devotedness;" but God could not endure what His Spirit had not created, and the result was the awful manifestation of His power against it.—*J. Denham Smith*.

### **The Joy of His Presence.**

There is such an infinity of blessing for us in Christ that the more we apprehend it, the less we have apprehended it. The more we taste of the



reality and fullness of His love, we shall be able the more truly to say, It passeth knowledge. There are breadths and lengths, and depths and heights, which we can never comprehend. And there is such joy in His presence, that even while we are enjoying it, the heart so yearns for greater nearness that it feels, comparatively, as at a distance.—*Andrew Miller, of "Church History."*

**The Presence—True Partnership.**

We are called to be sharers with Him in His rejection by the world, His sorrows and sufferings upon earth, and also hereafter in the glories of His coming Kingdom. The Church may be likened to a firm with many partners, and Christ is the head, who is to direct, and control, and supply the means, and then at last the profits are to be shared by all. All the unsearchable riches of Christ are thus ours, made ours by His work for us on the Cross.—*John R. Caldwell.*

**The Presence—Our Warrant.**

Our confidence is founded not on feelings, nor on any frame of ours, but on the written Word of God alone, which says, "I am with you," and which warrants us to say, "Thou art with me."—*J. Denham Smith.*

**The Presence—For all Times.**

"I am with you alway," was one of our Lord's last words to His disciples. It is impossible to conceive words more comforting, strengthening, cheering, and sanctifying than these. No words could be more suited to the position of those to

whom they were first spoken. No words could be imagined more consolatory to believers in every age.—*Dr. J. C. Ryle.*

**The Presence and the Commission.**

“Lo, I am with you” (Matt. 28). “Truth, Lord”—perhaps ye will still say—“this pledge to be with us to perpetuity is indeed cheering; but may there not be intervals of withdrawal, to be followed, no doubt, by seasons of certain return, but enough, in the meantime, to fill us with anxiety, on whose shoulders Thou art laying the whole weight of Thy cause in the earth?” “Nay, have ye not marked those words of Mine, ‘Lo, I am with you,’ not only to perpetuity, but *all the days*”—without any break—“even unto the end of the world.”—*Dr. David Brown.*

**The Power of His Presence.**

No reasonable man can learn to know and love the Apostle of the Gentiles without asking himself the question, “What was the principle by which through such a life he was animated? What was the strength in which he laboured with such immense results?” Nor can the most sceptical inquirer doubt for one moment the full sincerity of Paul’s belief that “the life which he lived in the flesh, he lived by the faith of the Son of God, who gave Himself for him.”—*Conybeare and Howson.*

**The Presence—Rest and Strength.**

The presence of Jesus, our divine Lord, will

make our lives not only solemn, but also strong and vigorous. It will quicken and sustain every energy. We need never be lonely and faint. In all the meditations of our hearts, in our intercourse with men, in our silent and secret sorrows and struggles, in our public words and actions, we are with Him. His presence is our rest and strength.—*Dr. Adolph Saphir.*

### The Presence and the Fullness.

The believer's practical experience of "all the fullness of God" (Eph. 3. 14-19), *i.e.*, of all that which, being in Him, is communicable as holiness to His regenerate creature, is there connected with the "Coming of Christ to dwell in the heart." And this is connected on one hand with the work of the Spirit, "strengthening" the Christian "in the inner man;" and on the other hand, with the Christian's "faith," obviously as the result of that Divine work.—*Dr. Handley Moule.*

### Emmanuel—God With Us.

The presence of the Spirit is the effect of the presence of Christ—and the presence of Christ is part of the gift of all power—the effect of the well-pleasing of the Father. So that the mystery of His Name, Emmanuel, is fulfilled. God is with us—all the (*appointed*) days—for they are numbered by the Father, though by none but Him. Unto the end of the world, literally, the completion of the state of time. After that He will be no more properly speaking *with us*, but we *with Him* where He is.—*Dean Alford.*

## The Veritable Presence Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

By HAROLD F. G. COLE, Southend-on-Sea.

THE Lord has gone; the Lord will return. The Lord is *absent*, and yet He is *present*—precious paradox—in a very real sense during all the time of His absence. May the Holy Spirit help us ever to realise and to respond to the reality of that veritable presence!

### I.—THE REALITY.

“I go away,” the Lord said, and we know that He went—by the way of the Vicarious Death and the Victorious Resurrection and Ascension. “He was received up into Heaven, and sat on the right hand of God,” and it is blessedly true that His present position is that indicated by the words, “Now to appear in the presence of God for us” (John 14. 28; Mark 16. 19; Heb. 9. 24).

But there are other Scriptures which prove it to be equally true that He, who is both God the Son and the risen glorified Man, is also present with us here. He who said, “I go away,” and “I will come again” (John 14. 3), also said, “I am with you alway,” and His presence with His people is indeed a glorious reality.

### A Promised Presence.

Any promise depends for its fulfilment on both the truthfulness and the power of him who makes it. Some promises are broken because the

promiser is unwilling to keep his word; others because, though willing, he is unable. But we are dealing now with the promise of One whose power and truthfulness—ability and reliability—cannot be disputed.

He who has said, "I am with you alway," and "I will never leave thee," is the "Faithful and True," the One to whom "all power is given," the Son of God. There can be no doubt about the reality of the presence promised by One so able and so reliable.

### **A Personal Presence.**

The Lord in His risen and glorified body is verily present in the glory; but the Lord is also in a very real sense present with His people here. He is there for us, yet He is here with us, for He has said, "Lo, I am with you" (Matt. 28. 20).

He is present when His people meet in His Name, for He has declared, "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18. 20).

He is present also with each one of His people, for He has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13. 5).

Mark well His words, notice the "I" in each case: "I am with you," "there am I in the midst," "I will never leave thee." He Himself is present—not His power and influence only, but Himself. It is a real, veritable, personal presence.

### **A Perpetual Presence.**

"I am with you alway, even unto the end of

the age," the Lord said. He is with us "always," "all the days," all day and every day. From sunrise to sunset and through the night hours, in the light and through the darkness, on the mountain top and in the dark ravine, in triumph and in trial, there is a presence ever with the believer. It is the promised, personal, perpetual presence of Him who has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Matt. 28. 20; Heb. 13. 5).

## **II.—THE REALISATION.**

But realities are not always realised; and, alas, how frequently the Lord's people fail to realise that He is present! We do not doubt the reality of His presence, but is it not sadly true that often we have no realisation of it? And, in failing to realise His presence, we have deprived Him of much that He desires, and have robbed ourselves of untold spiritual wealth. Oh, that we might have an increased and ever increasing realisation of that blessed presence!

### **A Protective Presence.**

It is the presence of the good and great Shepherd with His sheep, the presence of the Sovereign Lord with His servants. The language of the twenty-third Psalm, with its expressions of confidence and of freedom from fear and care, may well be used by us when we realise the protective presence of the Lord, with His love, His knowledge, His power, His guardianship, His guidance, and all the evidences of His shepherd care, the



rod, the staff, the healing oil, the reviving water from the brimming cup.

Realising His presence our fears are dispelled, and we are assured of perfect protection and provision, and we have courage and confidence. Fear of famine, or of foes, or of the future cannot exist when we fully realise His protective presence. He will provide, "I shall not want;" He prepares a table even in the presence of my enemies. He will protect, "I will fear no evil," even in the valley of the shadow. He is with me, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

### **A Preventive Presence.**

The preventive effect of the Lord's realised presence may be gathered from the exhortation in Hebrews 13. 5, 6, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have, *for He hath said*, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Here again is the truth of the protective presence which dispels fear: "He hath said, I will never leave thee,...so that we may say,...I will not fear." But here also is the additional truth of the preventive presence, the realisation that He is with us prevents covetousness and discontent. "Without covetousness...content,...*for He hath said*, I will never leave thee." Well may we be without



covetousness and without discontent when we realise that He is with us!

But these two things are only examples of the many faults and failings which would be prevented by a proper realisation of the presence of our Lord. How many unkind words would be left unsaid, how many unprofitable deeds would be left undone, how many unedifying places would be left unvisited if we fully realised His purifying, preventive presence!

### **A Productive Presence.**

The "I am with you" promise was given by the Master to His servants in connection with work, missionary work, the work of witnessing. "Go ye," said He, "and, lo, I am with you." And when "they went forth," as He commanded, they found "the Lord working with them," as He had promised (Matt. 28. 19, 20; Mark 16. 20).

What work the realised presence of the Master produced in those days! Consider the case of Paul at Corinth: "I am with thee," said the Lord to him, and, realising that presence, how mightily he worked in that city. Consider the case of Paul before Caesar: "The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me," he says, and his next words tell us something of the effect produced by that realised presence, "that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear" (Acts 18. 10, 11; 2 Tim. 4. 17).

And the presence of the Master is as real to-day as in those days. If we do but realise more and

more of His presence, and rely more and more upon His strength, we shall find that it is in very deed a productive presence, and, as we are "strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3. 16), much that we do not now attempt will be both attempted and accomplished to His glory.

### **III.—THE RESPONSE.**

Thus, as we have seen, the realisation of the reality of that perpetual presence will bring about a response in our attitude and actions. In our Christian warfare the realisation of that protective presence will make us valiant amid surrounding foes. In our Christian walk the realisation of that preventive presence will make us vigilant to discern and avoid all unbecoming ways. In our Christian work the realisation of that productive presence will make us vigorous to do the Master's will in His strength.

But we must ever remember that the Lord desires something more than our loyalty and labour, something without which both loyalty and labour would quickly flag and fail. He desires our love, our thankful and trustful love. He who never leaves us is the Saviour who laid down His life for us, the One who has redeemed us to God by His blood, the loving, lovable Lord, and He desires that we should so realise His presence, and so recognise Him, that our grateful and adoring hearts cannot but go out to Him in loving acknowledgment and response.

Without doubt, the heart of our loving Lord rejoices when His blessed presence makes "our hearts burn within us," as did the hearts of those two with whom He journeyed along the Emmaus road on the Resurrection day. Without doubt, there is gladness in His heart when His realised presence makes us glad, as the disciples were made glad when He appeared in their midst on that same ever-memorable day. Without doubt, He finds joy in every whole-hearted response to His gracious companionship, and is made glad by the responsive love of His loved ones.

How clearly He has expressed His desire for our companionship, and His willingness to accept that which our grateful hearts may prepare for Him! Plainly, this was His loving purpose when He said, "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him." What gracious condescension is this! He, who presences Himself with us, will be our Guest, He will partake of that which our hearts prepare for Him, He will "sup" with us—meagre though the fare may be.

He deigns to receive from us that which our love provides in response to His recognised presence; yet we ever find that, even while receiving from us, He gives bountifully to us, for when the Lord says of a man, "I will sup with him," He also says, "and he with Me."

When we recognise His presence, and gladly provide for such a Guest, we find Him acting as Host and liberally supplying all that is choicest

and best for us. But He is Guest also, for in His great grace He willingly partakes of that which we provide.

At Bethany, long ago, three grateful ones "made Him a supper;" and shall not we, who also owe Him so much, do likewise? Shall not we, realising His presence by His Spirit, make Him a supper in the guest-chamber of the heart? Shall not all the heart possesses, of joy, of gratitude, and of loving adoration, be spread before Him?

So may it be; but, even while we thus give to Him, He will be giving too, and each responsive heart will say, to that great Guest and Host, "Thou preparest a table before me."

With what gratitude should we realise continually the veritable presence of our peerless, precious Lord! With what gladness should our love respond increasingly to His measureless, matchless love! Surely, as we realise His presence, and receive His assurance, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," each one of us should respond—trustfully and thankfully—"I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

So let it be, beloved brethren; now, and ever, as we hear Him say to us, "I am with you," let each of us reply, with glad and grateful heart, "Thou art with me." Amen.

## The Valid Advocacy Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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### **The Advocate—His Efficiency.**

The infinite dignity of Christ's Person and the value of His redemptive work combine and unite in His effective intercession.—*Prof. W. G. Moorehead.*

### **Our Representative in Heaven.**

Our eyes are wistfully bent on Heaven, whither our Forerunner, even Jesus, hath gone. Yet it is as our Representative He has gone, for it is not more certain that He took our place on the Cross than that we shall take His place on the Throne.—*Dr. Anderson-Berry.*

### **An Advocate with the Father.**

When you sin, your position with God is unaltered. You have no advocate with God. It would be sad indeed if you had—it would imply matters were not settled. Matters between the believer and God are irrevocably settled. But we have "an Advocate with the Father." A father has naughty children sometimes; but they are his children still. We have an Intercessor with God, to lift us up to where He is; but we have an Advocate with the Father.—*Wm. Lincoln.*

### **The Mighty One and Little Things.**

We think of Him as the Mighty One, who has ascended up to the Throne of God, as the One who

made all things, and "by whom all things consist;" we think of His greatness, His power, His glory, and we say, "Can He be concerned about my little affairs, and troubles?" Hear the answer: "We have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities."—*John R. Caldwell.*

### One Who Takes All Our Business.

Men know what it is to have in court a man of business, worthy of all confidence in what they might compromise through many causes, and what would certainly be for them a source of the greatest possible perplexity. We have One that takes up all our business, One that acts for us where we could not, One that thoroughly enters into our case with the Father.—*William Kelly.*

### The Advocate who Understands.

Every believer realises by experience that Christ is the only perfect sympathiser (Heb. 4. 15). "I'm not perfectly understood," says everybody in fact. But if you are a believer you are perfectly understood. Christ is the only One who never expects you to be other than *yourself*, and He puts in abeyance towards you all but what is like you. He takes your view of things, and mentions no other.—*James Smetham.*

### The Advocate—Tried and Tempted.

God did not appoint the Lord Jesus to be the High Priest before He had tried Him. Whenever we see the Lord in trial or temptation, He was in probation for the priesthood. He was a "tried



Stone.” God gave Him the sheep because He died for them.—*H. W. Soltan.*

**Our Advocate on High.**

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that has passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. It is strictly “*through* the heavens,” *i.e.*, the heavens that are under sentence of dissolution. He has passed through these; but the Heaven that is worthy of Christ, and alone worthy to be called Heaven, is God the Father’s house, where He displays the brightness of His glory.—*R. C. Chapman.*

**An Advocate for Every Believer.**

The high priest of old bore upon the shoulder of his strength and upon his breastplate the name of each of the twelve tribes of Israel; so the weakest, the feeblest believer in the Lord Jesus is borne upon the shoulder of strength, and upon the bosom of changeless love of our great High Priest.—*T. B. Miller.*

**The Advocate—His Qualifications.**

After showing how the Lord Jesus fulfilled all the requirements of priesthood, being chosen from among men and called of God, and how in the garden of Gethsemane He entered into the lowest depth of human weakness and obtained the victory in the severest test of faith, the Hebrews are reminded that Christ Jesus, being made perfect, both by the obedience which He learned by the



things He suffered, and by His resurrection and ascension, was addressed by God as High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.—*Dr. Adolph Saphir, Hebrew Christian Teacher.*

**The Advocate—Ever Active.**

For failing saints the Lord Jesus Christ is the Advocate. To help feeble and tempted ones, lest they should turn aside, there is His present service as High Priest. Men would often say, "Go and confess to the priest." The written Word teaches that we have to do directly with God, even our Father, and to Him to confess, remembering that the Advocate has already taken up our cause on the ground of His atoning sacrifice. How full indeed is the provision for us.—*C. E. Stuart.*

**The One who Died, now Lives.**

He is by the fact of His session on the Throne our sure channel of eternal blessing, unworthy that we are. Do we need assurance during the sufferings of this present time that through them all the invincible hands of Christ ever clasp us with untired love? We look upon the covenant of our acceptance and life in Him who died for us and who lives for and in us, and we meet the fiercest buffet of these waves in peace.—*Dr. Handley Moule.*

## **The Valid Advocacy**

**Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**By J. B. WATSON, London.**

### **The Gospels and the Ascension.**

**E**ACH of the four Gospels conducts the reader to Christ risen, but only Mark and Luke lead as far as Christ ascended; whilst Christ ascended and seated is testified to by Mark's Gospel alone. "So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into Heaven and *sat on the right hand of God*" (Mark 16. 19), a fact in keeping with the theme of this Gospel, Christ as the Perfect Servant, for we see Him now seated as the "Minister of the True Sanctuary" (Heb. 8. 1, 2).

### **The Acts and the Ascension.**

In his second treatise Luke amplifies his former account of the Ascension in words dear and memorable: "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight" (Acts 1. 9).

"*While they beheld,*" not while they dreamed, or imagined, or were hypnotised, but while they were open-eyed and wide awake, a group of sane, matter-of-fact men saw Him rise on high from their midst far into the blue, till He made a cloud His chariot and passed from the ken of their

steadfast upward gaze. Since that moment His people have been assured that only a cloud divides them from the glory-vision of their living Lord in Heaven, a cloud that at times wears so thin that through it they catch glimpses of Glory before the time.

“We did not mark the chosen few,  
When Thou didst thro’ the clouds ascend,  
First lift to Heaven their wondering view,  
Then to the earth all prostrate bend;  
Yet we believe that mortal eyes  
Beheld that journey to the skies.”

Yea, we believe and are sure He is on high, for brethren of ours saw Him take His journey thither. Sure also are we, for our martyr-brother, Stephen, saw Him there afterwards (Acts 7. 55); Saul of Tarsus, sometime our apostle, heard Him speak thence later (Acts 9. 4); the exile of Patmos, our brother and companion in tribulation, both saw and heard Him later still; and a great cloud of witnesses, down to our own day, affirm that the living Christ has made Himself known to them also.

### **The Epistles and the Ascended Christ.**

The earliest mention in the Epistles of the Session at God’s right hand of the ascended Saviour is that contained in Romans 8. 34: “It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Here is a word that unveils the fact of the heavenly ministry of Christ and indicates its general character. He is not

yonder with folded hands, but with hands uplifted for us. He who died for us long ago serves us still.

As we go further into the Epistles of the New Testament, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the first Epistle of John open up two of the chief phases of the ministry in Heaven, dealing respectively with Christ's High Priesthood and Christ's Advocacy. The first of these is dealt with in a detailed, exhaustive revelation occupying several rich chapters; the second is brought before us in a single glowing passage, every word of which is weighted with the comforts of God to trusting souls: "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. And He is the Propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (1 John 2. 1, 2).

### **Hebrews and 1 John.**

The writer to the Hebrews, and the Apostle John in his first Epistle, deal with divine truth from differing and characteristic view-points. For instance, the prevailing view of sin in the Epistle to the Hebrews is that of pollution, whilst John's Epistle looks upon sin rather as lawlessness. Hebrews teaches that as pollution it is the great hindrance to approach to a Holy God; John's Epistle, on the other hand, views sin as the barrier to the enjoyment of fellowship with the Father.

The believer, as viewed by the Hebrews' Epistle, is a member of a holy, pilgrim

people, called from earth to heaven, and to the worship of the Living God. The believer, in John's Epistle, is rather regarded as a member of God's family, having privileges in intimacy of fellowship and filial love proper to such a place.

The Hebrews' Epistle gives prominence to the truth that the Cross has made purification of sins with a view to worship, while John's Epistle emphasises the truth that propitiation for sins has been made by the same great Sacrifice, by which propitiation alone purification is made possible.

### **High Priest and Advocate.**

The Hebrews' view of the present ministry of Christ in Heaven as High Priest is therefore in fullest accord with all the correlative truth of that Epistle; whilst the Advocacy of Christ is the phase of that ministry dealt with by John as being consonant with his general purpose in writing.

The High Priesthood is based upon the one offering that has made purification for sins: the Advocacy rests upon the propitiation for sins rendered in that same offering. The High Priest ministers help suited to the infirmities of pilgrims and sustains the saints in their worship in the holiest-of-all; the Advocate secures the family privileges of the children of God; and, when these have been intruded upon by the allowance of sin, makes provision for restoration to their

enjoyment. In a word, High Priesthood sustains, Advocacy restores.

### Advocacy and Fellowship.

The Apostle John, in the passage preceding the Scripture under consideration, has laid down the alone basis upon which the fellowship to which the believer is called can be enjoyed. Severe censure is uttered against the presumptuous folly which either (1) allows known sin in the life, (2) ignores the fact of sin in our nature, or (3) denies the commission of sins in practice. In contrast with such truth-traversing, self-deceiving and God-dishonouring profession, he shows that it is possible to enjoy the fellowship which brings fullness of joy only upon the ground of the blood of propitiation and of the personal Advocacy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### An Analysis of 1 John.

The analysis set out below will illustrate the drift and purport of the passage—1 John 1. 6 to 2. 1—

#### If We Say

FALSE PROFESSION.	DIVINE ESTIMATE.
1. That we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness.	We lie, and do not the truth (chap. 1. 6).
2. That we have no sin.	We deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (chap. 1. 8).
3. That we have not sinned.*	We make Him a liar, and His word is not in us (chap. 1. 10).

\* "NOT SINNED," *i.e.*, for so long a time: a week, a day, an hour, etc. The perfect tense stands for what is true in the past up to the present.



**But if****THE EXPERIENCE.**

1. We walk in the light  
as He is in the light.

2. We confess our sins.

3. Any man sin.

**THE ASSURANCE.**

We have fellowship one  
with another, and the  
blood of Jesus Christ, His  
Son, cleanseth us from all  
sin (chap. 1. 7).

He is faithful and just  
to forgive us our sins and  
to cleanse us from all un-  
righteousness (chap. 1. 9).

We have an Advocate  
with the Father, Jesus  
Christ the Righteous (chap.  
11. 1).

It will be seen that the fact of the Advocacy is set over against our failure to walk apart from conscious sinning, and is the encouragement to every believing soul in such case, that the way to the Father in confession is open, and that forgiveness is certain because of Him who ever represents us yonder in the strength of righteousness and the power of propitiation.

**Advocacy Implies Activity.**

Some have interpreted the Advocacy as meaning simply that the presence of Jesus Christ the Righteous yonder on the Throne is the sinning believer's assurance of non-rejection. Blessed indeed it is that He is there, and the guarantee of our safe arrival in the Father's House at the counselled moment; yet the Advocacy is something more than the fact of His presence on high. The Scripture already cited in Romans 8. 34 makes this plain: "Christ,...Who is even at the right hand of God"—that is the fact of His presence on the



Throne; "Who *also* maketh intercession for us"—that is the additional fact of the Intercessory Ministry He is carrying on from His place "*with the Father.*" "These last words," says Westcott, "mean not simply in the Father's presence, but turned towards Him, addressing Him with continual pleadings." They remind us, too, that though the Father's heart has been grieved by our sin, yet He is still our Father, and that though we are sinning children we are still His children. As lost sinners we found forgiveness for all trespasses, first and last, when first we sought refuge at the Cross from the penal consequences of our sins (Col. 2. 13). That forgiveness is ours once for all, and is complete as the atoning work of Christ. As children of God, however, we need a Father's forgiveness when we sin, need to be restored to the sense of His presence and smile, need that the cloud which then obscures the sunshine of fellowship with Him should be dispersed so that we may again enjoy the light of His countenance. And for this our Advocate serves and pleads.

"Christ at God's right hand unwearied  
With our tale of shame and sin,  
Day by day and hour by hour  
Welcoming each wanderer in."

### The Advocate or Paraclete.

As is well known to every student of Scripture, the word translated Advocate is *Paraclete*, the same word as is used in John's Gospel to designate the promised Holy Spirit in His ministry to us as

Teacher, Guide, and Comforter.\* Is the Holy Spirit *actively* engaged in fulfilling this gracious ministry?—then just as surely is the Paraclete on high active in the service He has been “called to our side” to render from His place with the Father. He is not there in mere passive presence; He is as actively serving us now as during His earthly lifetime. His deep, deep love for His own whom the Father gave Him out of the world is as surely the spring of His heavenly service for them as it was of His sacrifice of long ago.

“ Jesus, the One unchanging,  
Thy love we know;  
We remember Thy Cross and Passion  
Of long ago.  
Of old on the Cross not deeper  
Than now it is deep,  
Nor sweeter in innermost Heaven  
Than when we weep.”

### Advocacy Implies Unceasing Activity.

Weigh well the great words of our passage: “If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father.” Note the individual application of the truth—“If *any man* (that is, any believer) sin;” this is a word that singles us each out, separates us from the crowd, and sets us down solitary before the presence of the Father-Judge with our own

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\*The Paraclete above is with the Father for us: the Paraclete sent down from above is in us from the Father. Both advocacies are necessary for our practical cleansing. This is illustrated in Numbers 19 in the Red Heifer ordinance, where the ashes (the remembrance of the sacrifice) and the Living Water (the Holy Spirit) are put together to be sprinkled on the defiled Israelite for his cleansing.

personal sin. It removes the Advocacy from the realm of the general to that of the particular and personal. The Advocacy is mine if I sin. Yet it is mine in common with every member of the family, for the pronoun that follows is in the plural, "*We* have an Advocate."

The late honoured R. C. CHAPMAN, commenting on the High Priesthood of Christ, remarks that the Scripture had been comforting had it only said, "*There is* a great High Priest," but that it is vastly more so since it says "*We have* a great High Priest." The same holds good of the inspired language as to the Advocate. We have Him. He is what He is for us. He is doing all for our blessing. He represents us.

Note also that the words are not "If any man repent," nor "If any man confess," but simply, "If any man *sin*." Let it be repeated—the Advocacy is mine if I sin. It does not pause, suspended, awaiting my repentance and confession; it is immediately, uninterruptedly mine. Indeed, it is the sin that necessitates the Advocacy, it is confession and consequent restoration that results therefrom. The truth may be stated thus: the necessity for Advocacy is found in the fact of the believer's sinning; the aim of the Advocacy is the restoration of the believer's interrupted communion. Note, too, that there is no thought of our having to pray to the Advocate that He will plead our cause with God; that is not what the Scripture is urging. Rather the force of the passage is that because He is actively, unceasingly

carrying on His ministry of intercession for us with the Father, we may go in confidence to the Throne, knowing that for His sake confession of sin will be certainly answered by the Father's forgiveness, and our communion be thereupon restored.

This being so, how solemn a thing it must needs be to forbear or neglect to go to the Father in confession of any sin that is weighing upon the conscience! Such a course is adding sin to sin; it is grieving the Spirit; it is refusing the Advocacy; it is backsliding; it is inviting the stroke of the Father's rod of correction. Let every believer watch against its beginnings and seek to preserve a tender conscience in this great matter of the soul's fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

### **Advocacy Implies Prevailing Activity.**

C. H. SPURGEON says: "His intercession must be prevailing. It is not supposable that He can plead in vain. He is no petitioner at a distance, who with moan and sigh, asks for what He deserves not. His intercession fails not, but is potent, triumphant, prevailing." This witness is true, as the words of our Scripture confirm if they be considered awhile.

Two great and sufficient reasons are therein stated why the Advocacy cannot fail; two solid pillars revealed on which Advocacy rests. *First*, the integrity of the Man who is with the Father on our behalf, "Jesus Christ *the Righteous*;" *second*, the fact of His propitia-

tion. "He is the Propitiation for our sins." In this Scripture, then, three things are predicated of Jesus Christ: He is the Advocate, He is the Righteous One, and He is the Propitiation; and the first rests with all its weight upon the other two.

### **Jesus Christ the Righteous.**

The Righteous One is with the Father for us. The One in whom there is no sin stands yonder on behalf of sinning, stumbling, failing saints. With regard to His High Priesthood, the second chapter of Hebrews insists much on the necessity of His being made *like* unto His brethren in full and proper humanity. Here the insistence is rather on the necessity of the Advocate being *different* from those He represents in His unstained, flawless, righteous Manhood. The sinning believer is represented above by the One who is for ever and utterly righteous. This carries with it the guarantee that His intercessions are, like Himself, righteous. It is not conceivable that an unrighteous plea can be made by the Righteous One. Nor is it imaginable that a righteous plea made by the Righteous One can be rejected by the Righteous God. The Advocacy of "Jesus Christ the Righteous" must needs therefore prevail.

### **The Propitiation.**

The question arises, How are His pleas based on righteousness when they have to do with the sinful lapses of unrighteous men?

The Righteous One pleads righteously because it is also written that "He is the *Propitiation*." Here is the sure foundation of the Advocacy. Of these wonderful words the late Dr. HANDLEY MOULE has written with true insight, "The Propitiation—we know what that is. It has but one meaning in Greek or in English. It means *sacrificial pacification of an offended Power*. And then, 'He is the Propitiation'—observe what that says. It is not 'it,' but 'He;' not merely a thing done, but a Person who has done it; not merely suffering, but the Sufferer; not merely obedience, but the Obeyer; not merely death, but the Lamb of God slain. It is a phrase in which we see merit, profound, mysterious, valid, prevailing; merit such that the sinner before the Father-Judge is an accepted child still, not for His own sake at all, but for this merit's sake; a merit all the while lodged (as all merit must be) in a Person; prevailing not merely because such and such things have been done, but because they have been done and borne by Him."

Yes, the Christ at God's right hand is Himself the Propitiation, not for our sins alone, but also for the whole world. There is in Him who bore the Cross such

### Inexhaustible Merit

as is sufficient to give the "Judge of All" satisfaction in view of a whole world's offence against the Eternal Throne.



The atmosphere that surrounds our planet has supported all past generations of living beings, yet to-day is able to support moment by moment all the multitudes of living creatures that dwell on earth, and that without sign of impoverishment. There is and has been no sign of any diminution of its ability to do this. No one lives in fear of failure of the supply of air.

So the Propitiation of Christ is as full of power to-day as when He first stood in Heaven with its fresh fullness newly presented. Yea, if all the human race were to cast itself in faith and repentance thereupon at this moment, the Propitiation would be found triumphantly sufficient and availing for all. Anticipating it, God forbore for thousands of years with a sinning race; upon the basis of it He still waits in long-suffering, and treats with a world that deserves judgment, in mercy and grace.

In a near and peculiar sense, however, is the Propitiation ours who have believed in Christ to the saving of our souls. Whilst sufficient for all, it is efficient for us who believe. His merit now avails in the presence of the Father for all the offering children of the heaven-born family. He is their Surety. Upon Him the Father looks, and for His sake we are accepted, forgiven, restored.

### **Advocacy Founded on Propitiation.**

The Advocacy then, is founded upon the Propitiation. By reason of the Propitiation the Righteous One exercises His unceasing, prevailing



ministry of intercession with the Father for failing, sinning saints. Upon the same ground is the Father faithful and righteous in allowing the Advocate's pleas on our behalf; faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and make us clean again from our acts of unrighteousness. Therefore we may walk in the light with Him, enjoying the portion of children; not ignoring the fact that such fellowship cannot coexist with sin allowed, not affirming that sin's root has been eradicated from our nature, nor alleging that we have reached immunity from sinning, but humbly rejoicing that One is ever with the Father representing us, our Advocate, whose blood cleanseth such as walk in the light from every sin.

### **Our Advocate All-Sufficient.**

No other Advocate do we need. No apostle, no saint, no virgin-mother, no pope, no priest. This office is filled, and filled completely by the Lord Jesus Christ. Every human pretension to stand between our soul and God to obtain or mediate forgiveness is hereby rendered superfluous, invalid, and becomes worse than an impertinence. The Intercessory Ministry of the Enthroned Christ sets our soul free from every such presumptuous interference with its clear right-of-way up to the Throne. To any and every such intruding interloper we say, "Stand out of our sunlight! We *have* an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, Himself, and not another."

# The Verity of the Coming Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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## **The New Testament Prophecy.**

The Second Coming of Christ is the great and indeed the only prophecy of the New Testament.—*Dr. Nathaniel West.*

## **Absolutely Nothing.**

May we each learn our place and true attitude, and look for nothing, absolutely nothing, ere He comes; but be on the watch for our Coming Lord.—*Wm. Lincoln.*

## **Immediately.**

God would have us to entertain such a faith and expectation concerning the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ that we would be looking upon it as going to happen immediately.—*J. R. Caldwell.*

## **Any Moment.**

The first thing He is to do at His Coming is to take His Church out of the world. The trump of God may be sounded, for anything we know, before I have finished this address.—*D. L. Moody.*

## **Looking and Longing.**

For Him we long, looking for Him to come

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again, "This same Jesus, in like manner as He went up into Heaven."—*Dr. Handley Moule.*

### **Imminent.**

The personal Second Coming of Christ is distinctly and repeatedly taught throughout the entire Scriptures; it is declared to be imminent.—*Dr. A. T. Pierson.*

### **Most Important.**

The doctrine of the Second Advent is the most important one which should be prominently urged upon the attention of the Christian.—*Lord Shaftesbury.*

### **The Danger.**

Much weakening of spiritual impulse and strengthening of worldly-mindedness have come from the Church's comparative neglect of the inspiring, patience-producing, world-conquering hope of His Coming.—*Dr. Alexander M'Laren.*

### **Not the Same Event.**

The Coming of Christ to take His Church to Himself in the clouds is not the same event as His Coming to judge the world. The deliverance of the Church is one thing, the judgment of the world is another.—*Dean Alford.*

### **Increasingly Important.**

How increasingly important the doctrine of the Second Advent has become as the ages are running to their close.—*Dr. Horatius Bonar.*

### **Nothing Before.**

There is no predicted event between this

passing moment and His Coming into the air, but much remains to be fulfilled before He comes to the earth.—*Dr. J. H. Brookes.*

**Himself.**

The precious One whose Coming we are so anxiously looking for at the present time.—*Earl Cavan.*

**The Holy Spirit.**

The age ministry of the Holy Spirit terminates with the return of Jesus Christ; it will continue until He returns.—*Dr. A. J. Gordon.*

**The Pinnacle.**

The Second Coming is in the New Testament the great event that towers above every other.—*Dr. John Ker.*

**A Second Conversion.**

When the truth of His Second Coming and the glory to be revealed in connection with His pre-millennial advent dawned upon my soul it was like a second conversion.—*Dr. W. P. Mackay.*

**Sudden.**

Christ is Coming back again. The whole Bible bears witness to this. The Coming will be sudden to the world and to the children of God.—*R. Murray M'Cheyne.*

**In a Moment.**

It may come, I repeat it deliberately, after thirty-five years of as close study of the Scriptures as I am able to give them, in a *moment*, and the sooner the better. "Come quickly, Lord Jesus."—*Dr. C. I. Scofield.*

**Before Judgment.**

I am well satisfied that the next Coming of Christ will be a coming, not at the final judgment, but to precede and usher in the Millennium.—*Dr. Thomas Chalmers.*

**Pre-Millennial.**

I do look for His pre-millennial advent, and expect He will come here again.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

**Waiting for Fifty Years.**

To one who has been living in the prospect of this Hope, as in my case, for nearly half a century, it seems as if the Bible is full of this subject from beginning to end.—*J. Denham Smith.*

**An Incentive.**

The hope of the Coming of the Lord is the paramount motive given us in the New Testament for earnest, holy service here.—*J. Hudson Taylor.*

**Ignorance or Neglect.**

The Lord's Coming is not merely the true Hope of the Christian life, but it is of such central importance in the New Testament that ignorance or neglect of it leaves the Scriptures open to sceptical attacks.—*Sir Robert Anderson.*

**On the Eve.**

We know that we are on the eve of our Lord's Coming to the air for His waiting Church to remove her suddenly from this present condition of things, and to leave behind all who do not belong to Him as their Saviour and Lord.—*Dr. R. M'Killiam.*

## **The Verity of the Coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**By WALTER SCOTT,**

Author of "Exposition of the Revelation," etc.

**"SURELY I COME QUICKLY."** "Amen,"  
say we. "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus,"  
is the answering cry of the Church.

What is said and written of God by the forty writers of the Sacred Volume constitutes a subject of profoundest interest, but the spoken utterances of God Himself, His own very words, necessarily possess a significance and greatness commensurate with such an August Speaker. God has spoken to man.

The first Divine utterance on record is contained in the Mosaic account of creation, "God said, Let there be light." This first expressed fiat of the creation has elicited many a note of admiration from friend and foe of Divine Revelation.

In the fourth book of the Pentateuch we meet with more of the very words of Jehovah than in any other book of Scripture.

### **The Final Message from Heaven.**

The last direct message from Heaven is contained in Revelation 22. 20: "SURELY I COME

QUICKLY." Who is the speaker from yonder glorious heights? Our much-loved Lord and Saviour. Heaven has kept silent for nigh 2000 years. Next time the voice of the Saviour is heard it will be in the air, calling from earth, from grave, and from sea His blood-bought beloved people, raising the dead and changing the living.

Gloom and darkness are settling down on the guilty world and apostate church, but His voice breaks in upon the darkening scene, "SURELY I COME QUICKLY." Here we have the blessed assurance and strong assertion that the Lord's Personal Advent is the powerful and immediate Hope of our hearts.

Fellow-pilgrims look up through blinding tears and earth's shadows to the Man Christ who sits at God's right hand. There is a Man, thank God, glorified, whom God has made strong for the deliverance of the agonised creation, and strong, too, for the great triumphs awaiting His Coming. For this *very thing* may every believer pray and pray till the glad shout, THE LORD HAS COME, fills Heaven and earth with exuberant joy.

### Three States or Conditions of Life.

These states vary in character and degrees. The second is an advance on the first, while the third is greatly superior to the second.

1. **Our present condition** is one in which we groan being burdened (2 Cor. 5. 2). Our ardent spiritual desires, our loftiest and holiest aspira-



tions, are checked by evil in us and around us. We would mount, we would fly, but that strong trinity of evil, the flesh, the world, and the devil, are powerful in their unceasing efforts to thwart and impose limitations on the new nature in its desires and activities.

**2. The Disembodied State**, that middle condition of being between death and resurrection. The spirit is with Christ, the body in the grave. Certainly this is a state of bliss in advance of the life enjoyed here. The apostle terms it "gain" (Phil. 1. 21). Death is no loss to the Christian; he is a gainer thereby. But the fullness of bliss is not reached even with Christ in Paradise. There cannot be perfection till the risen state is reached. The spirits of our departed are not said to be glorified.

**3. The Risen State** gives the acme of blessedness. Here we touch the infinitudes to be glorified with Christ, to be His bride and eternal companion. Christ the Centre of the Universe, and we with Him resplendent in the glory of God is our eternal destiny. For a creature there can be nothing higher, nothing holier, beyond this! At last we have reached the rest of God. Perfection is gained and enjoyed.

Glorified with Christ in the Resurrection Morn is the one supreme Hope of the Church, and of each believer on the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Death and the Coming Contrasted.**

Surely "coming" and "going" are distinct

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actions. Death ushers us into His presence. We go to Him. He neither comes to us nor for us at death. Christ in us, for us, and with us is true from the moment of our conversion. He does not *come* to us at death. He came when He saved us and ever remained with us. We again repeat when we die we go to Him in Paradise. Death and the Coming are contrasted events.

We go, He *comes* is a simple statement which the least instructed believer can verify for himself. There are hundreds of passages in both Testaments referring to death, but not in one instance can it be maintained that at death the Lord personally comes. There are hundreds of texts in both Testaments which treat of the Personal Coming of our Lord, but not in one passage is that Coming said to be death. Death and the Coming are contrasted events, the former being of everyday occurrence, the latter yet future.

### **The Coming Intensely Personal.**

The terms in which the "Gospel" and the "Coming" are expressed are stated in words so simple, so easy to be understood that misunderstanding is almost impossible. Our hope is centred *on* a Person, not in a place, be it Heaven, Paradise, or the Kingdom (1 John 3. 2, 3, R.V.). It is for *Him* we long, for *Him* we wait, for *Him* we pray, for *Him* we watch. It is Christ *Himself* that absorbs our affections.

We hang with ever increasing delight over the Divine announcements of His Personal Return

from Heaven. The grandest event in human testimony is His PERSONAL COMING. Can you measure the combined sweetness and strength of these testimonies? "I come again, and will receive you unto Myself" (John 14. 3); "The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven" (1 Thess. 4. 16); "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven" (Acts 1. 11); "Surely I come quickly." Need we add to the foregoing glorious statements?

Christ will soon fill the universe with His excellences and glories. But flashing gems and glorious worlds leave the heart unsatisfied. It is the beauty of the Saviour which will light up the countless orbs ever travelling in immeasurable space with a splendour not their own.

May God cast a ray of the infinite glory of Christ Himself into our indolent hearts, and thus rouse us up each one to cry aloud again and again, "Come, Lord Jesus, COME QUICKLY."

### **The Midnight Cry.**

For the first 300 years of this Church and grace dispensation, the Personal Return of the Lord from Heaven constituted the Hope of the Christian. It was the great sanctifying power of holiness. It formed the incentive to deeds of heroism. The Lord is Coming was the sustaining strength of the martyr in flame, in dungeon, and in the torture chamber of the terrible inquisition. It is ever the repose and strength of the soul

amidst trial and discouragement in home and foreign service.

The Church flourished in the *shade*; she sunk under the *sun* and smile of Constantine, the first of Christian (?) emperors. The emperor lavished his gold and favours, and the Church sunk her heavenly testimony to the world-rejected Lord and Saviour. The Lord's Coming as her immediate Hope faded from heart and memory. The Church and the world were locked in one embrace. The world poured its gold and honours into the lap of the Church, while the Church in exchange religionised the world. The ruin of the Church is an accomplished fact. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God" (James 4. 4).

But our God, rich in resources, ever knows how to lift up His testimony and glory out of human chaos and utter ruin. The long lost Hope of the Church with her eternal association in the fullest glory with Christ has been revived. The midnight cry, "BEHOLD THE BRIDEGROOM," is breaking in upon the darkness settling down upon Christendom. It is a startling cry to some; it is a welcome sound to others. There never was a moment like the present for intense and thrilling interest. The *true* Church and Christians everywhere are being roused up as never before. In the dreamy East, in the energetic West, in the cultured South, and in the inhospitable North, the cry has gone and is going out, "BEHOLD THE BRIDEGROOM!"

We are on the very eve of the Lord's Personal Return from Heaven. We listen in eager expectation to His footfall, and our cry, "Come, Lord Jesus," is just about to be answered.

**The Spirit and the Bride say "Come."**

To whom is the call addressed? To Christ or to the sinner? To Christ assuredly. There are four members in the text of Revelation 22. 17. The first two refer to Christ exclusively; the third and fourth refer to sinners only.

In the previous verse (16) the Lord in Heaven announces Himself as "the Root and Offspring of David, *and* the Bright and Morning Star." The first title is in relation to *Israel*; the second is in relation to the *Church*. All prophecy centres in Him. He was born King of the Jews. He died King of Israel. He shall yet reign King of the Jews. As Divine, He is the *root* of all Davidic prophecy and promise. As Man, He is the offspring of David—David's Lord, yet David's Son. But to the Church He sustains a relationship far more dear and personal, "The Bright and Morning Star."

Before the day breaks in resplendent glory for Israel and her land Jesus appears to His waiting Bride. She has waited in patience during the long dark night of His absence; the blessed Lord has put *this* grace to her account. By the presentation of Himself He creates bridal affection and longing for His

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return and presence. The only answer to such love is expressed in the cry,

“COME!”

But neither the Spirit nor the Bride has yet uttered the call “COME.” Till the Spirit’s work in the Church and in the world is over, till His ministry in gathering out souls is complete how can He say to Christ, “Come.” Christ’s fellow-heirs in glory, His loved and eternal companions, must be made up—a completed company ere the present work of the Spirit is finished, *then* He will say, “Come,” and the Lord will instantly respond and come to claim His blood-purchased Bride.

Nor has the Bride yet uttered its Come to her Heavenly Bridegroom. “Let *him* that heareth say “Come.” Individual believers are waiting and crying and sighing for His return. But the Bride as a whole is not ready to say Come. Need this present a difficulty? Surely not! At any moment God could send a wave of holy longing for Christ into and across the bosom of the Church of God, then in conjunction with the Spirit the united cry Come is uttered, the thrilling call is heard in the heavens, and Christ comes for His own—the full complement of Old and New Testament saints. The Lord’s

### Threefold Object in His Return.

1. The Lord Himself may descend from Heaven at any moment. His first act in the great series of coming events **concerns His**



own, for He will raise His sleeping, holy dead, change the living saints into His own likeness, and translate *all* into the air where He has appointed to meet them.

2. He then inflicts a **series of providential judgments** under seal, trumpet, and vial, closing in personally executed wrath on His and Israel's enemies.

3. He then **assumes the reins of universal government**. All His heavenly saints share His glory and reign, but in lesser or greater degree according to individual faithfulness now. It is the time of rewards. The meditorial kingdom exists for 1000 years. But the reign of the saints is eternal, marked by the very character of God Himself as light and love. He first comes as Saviour and Bridegroom, then He judges the rebellions of men and angels as Son of Man, and finally reigns as the glorious and universal Monarch—KING of kings and LORD of lords. Amen.

### The Meeting in the Air.

The blessed Lord has made an appointment with His people. He has arranged to meet them in the "air." He comes down from Heaven, we go up from earth. No building beneath the sun could hold the innumerable company of the Redeemed. *The Lord has withheld the exact date of the meeting*, but is giving ample sign and intimation that the moment is at hand. *This*, the most interesting event in



history, save the Cross, is thus announced, which we quote in full:

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the Coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thess. 4. 13-18).

In this exquisitely beautiful passage two classes of saints are in view: (1) the dead; (2) the living. The Lord Himself, no other, no cherub, no seraph, no angel, but *Himself*. The angelic hierarchy attend the Lord when He comes in Person to judge the world. But His Coming *for* His people must be carefully distinguished from His Coming *with* His saints. The passage before us treats of the former; Revelation 19 refers to the latter.

In the Lord's descent from Heaven to the air His majesty and mission are attested by “shout,”

“voice,” and “trump.” What a thrilling moment! The shout arrests the living; the voice reaches the dead; the trump is the assembling signal of departure from the earth.

### The Holy Dead

in grave, in valley, in mountain, in cave, and in sea instantly respond to the voice of the Lord and rise in bodies immortal, in glory, incorruptible, in power, raised in spiritual bodies. In all respects the new body will resemble the body of our Lord now glorified save in Calvary's marks and scars which He bears for ever. We trust 1 Corinthians 15, Philippians 3. 20, 21, and 2 Corinthians 5 may be read and studied with increasing interest.

“I am the Resurrection (to the *dead*) and the Life” (to the *living*), said the Lord. Hence the *first* action of the Lord when He comes is to raise the dead; His *second* great act is to change the bodies of the living. “The dead in Christ shall rise first,” *i.e.*, before the living are changed; the *third* distinguished action is caught up in the clouds—Heaven's royal carriages for our conveyance.

The “dead in Christ” comprehends every saint from Abel on to the Rapture—all of Old Testament times, and all of this dispensation are embraced in the translation of 1 Thessalonians 4. 17. Not one is left behind or forgotten. Every saint without exception will be raised to eternal glory, to everlasting bliss. What a prospect!

**“Alive and Remain”**

is the twofold description of believers alive at the Coming; see also John 11. 25 for the dead; verse 26 for the living.

The body of the believer is mortal and corruptible, as saith the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 15. 53, 54), but while this is true of all, believers are immeasurably superior to others, inasmuch as they are delivered from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8. 2). They may and do sin, but not necessarily so. Were believers walking and living habitually in the presence of God they would not. Unbelievers can but sin. We are also freed from the law or necessity of death. “We shall not all sleep,” or die. Many will be alive at the Coming, and in their case death will be arrested.

God shall quicken our mortal (dying) bodies (Rom. 8. 11) at the Coming. Then every trace of mortality will disappear. Our *now* mortal bodies, marked by disease and pain, will *then* be rendered immortal and incorruptible, beautified, and fashioned like His body of glory (Phil. 3. 21). What a change! What a transfiguration! From humiliation and weakness to glory and strength! The risen or changed body is of God, eternal and in every respect adapted to heavenly scenes and circumstances (2 Cor. 5. 1). Eternal life in glory will then reign in the bodies of the saints of God. When the Lord comes, instantly the great change takes place. We shall be like

Him as He is. Spiritually (1 John 3. 2), physically (Phil. 3. 21), like the glorified Saviour. The first sight of Him and at once the transformation is complete.

Now, the dead raised and the living changed, what remains?

### **Caught Up in the Clouds**

to meet the Lord in the air the pre-determined meeting takes place. Both classes in one bond of union, one life, one common joy. Satan has scattered the saints into 1300 differing sects and parties. The Wolf (Satan) has scattered. Christ in the glad resurrection morn gathers His own in one eternal gladness.

The plural pronouns "we" and "them" (1 Thess. 4. 17) are meant to emphasise the truth that saints as such, and not the Church as a corporate body, are embraced in the Rapture. It is nowhere said that the Church is caught up, which would shut out from the blessing Old Testament believers who were not and never will be in the Church. The saints of old times, with their brethren of this dispensation, are together caught up in the clouds to meet their Lord. Now listen to the triumphant shout of the departing hosts, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15. 55).

It only remains to add that while the *order* of these great events are clearly indicated, yet all is accomplished like a flash, in a moment, "in the twinkling of an eye."

### The Church and the Great Tribulation.

The great Tribulation is distinct in character and time from the ordinary troubles of life. Its agony and exact duration to a day are foretold in the prophetic page of prophet and apostles, and we may add by the Lord Himself (Matt. 24. 15-28). The coming Tribulation in intensity of sorrow far exceeds anything ever experienced in human history (Mark 13. 19).

But from this believers of the present age are delivered. The Tribulation runs its course while the Church and saints are in Heaven. The Church is heavenly in character and destiny, and this does not come within the sphere of judicial judgment on the earth. We unhesitatingly assert that no saint of this dispensation, be he faithful or unfaithful; no part of the Church, be it faithful or unfaithful, shall have to enter into the Tribulation and undergo its horrors. No one has nor can define the measure of faithfulness which exempts from the Great Tribulation. We fear those attacks upon Divine grace, and from what we have witnessed of its effects, we recoil with ever increasing pain from theories advocated in certain quarters and by otherwise pious men.

The Lord Jesus has *already* delivered us from the wrath to come, be it governmental or eternal (1 Thess. 1. 10).

There are six passages which directly refer to the coming Tribulation. Four of these concern the Jewish people, Palestine, and Jerusalem.

The severity of the Tribulation is especially felt in the Holy Land owing to Jewish rejection of her Messiah (see Jer. 30. 7; Dan. 12. 1, 11; Matt. 24. 15-28; Mark 13. 14-23).

One text, Revelation 3. 10, expressly exempts the Church *from* the hour of trial. The promise is not to preserve the Church *in* the Tribulation, but *from* it. She shall never enter into it.

The remaining passages directs us to the interesting fact of a vast crowd of Gentiles who had come out of the Great Tribulation (Rev. 7. 14, 15). The Church is in Heaven while the countless throng of Gentile believers emerge out of the Tribulation. Heaven and earth are the respective points of view in Revelation 7.

The saints in the risen state and in heavenly glory will witness the Tribulation and other scenes. The battlements of Heaven will be a grand and secure place from whence we survey the rebellions and sufferings of earth. We shall say it *then*, we say it *now*: Our God is true and faithful in all His Words, ways. and acts.



# Back to the Bible.

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Words and Music by Dr. J. MOUNTAIN, Tunbridge Wells.

---

"**B**ACK TO THE BIBLE, from cover to cover!"  
God's revelation—"the Scripture of Truth."  
Light in the gloom, sweetest comfort in sorrow,  
Staff of the aged, the beacon of youth.

Praise we the Lord for so priceless a treasure!  
Fain would the angels its marvels discern:  
Radiant with beauty its pages are gleaming;  
"BACK TO THE BIBLE" with love we return.

"BACK TO THE BIBLE!" Inspired and inspiring;  
Each book receiving its Truth from the Lord.  
Holy its teaching, Divine is its purpose—  
Christ shall be welcomed, be loved and adored.

"BACK TO THE BIBLE!" The Law, Psalms, and Prophets,  
Christ hath accepted, and stamped with His seal;  
Praise God! the Gospels and holy Epistles  
Fully and final the Truth now reveal.

"BACK TO THE BIBLE!" It tells of His cleansing  
Sin-stains of scarlet, or guilt crimson-red;  
Christ hath redeemed us, and now freely offers  
Pardon and peace through the Blood He hath shed.

"BACK TO THE BIBLE," in holy contention!  
Hands off! ye sceptics, from Christ and His Word!  
Firm will we stand, and surrender will never:  
"Back to the Bible"—the Truth of the Lord!

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