

# OUR GLORIOUS LORD

SHORT PAPERS AND MEDITATIONS ON

THE PERSON AND WORK OF  
THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

BY

JOHN RITCHIE



KILMARNOCK, SCOTLAND

JOHN RITCHIE, PUBLISHER OF CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

AND THROUGH BOOKSELLERS AND AGENTS

### **THE BELIEVER'S MAGAZINE ;**

For Ministers of the Word of God and Tidings of  
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A Monthly Journal for all God's People.

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## INTRODUCTION

THE *Thirty-five* Papers, which compose this little volume, originally appeared in successive issues of *The Believer's Magazine* throughout a period of some five years. At the request of many of the Lord's people who read and profited by them, they are collected and re-issued in this handy form with a view to reach a yet wider circle of readers, and to use as an aid to study of and meditation on the Word of God on these transcendent themes, which concern the Person and Work of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in which all who know and love His Name, have a personal interest. The papers are brief and suggestive, rather than profound, and devotional rather than discursive or critical, their object being to lead *to* the Sacred Word, in which all fulness of teaching on these and kindred subjects is found, which, under the light and leading of the Spirit of God, never fail to yield "marrow and fatness" to the soul, whose meditations are of Him (Psa. civ. 34), of whose glories and excellencies the sacred Scriptures are resplendent. To young believers especially, entering on the homeward and heavenward journey, we commend the subjects here set forth as soul-feeding themes, for personal and prayerful study, and as seasonable subjects for united Studies in Bible Classes, at Young Believer's Meetings, and as themes for Assembly

Scripture Readings. The little volume may also be found seasonable as a Remembrance and Gift-book to fellow-believers, especially to those in need of comfort in sorrow, and cheer amid trial. May the living Lord Himself, of whom it tells in some of the glories of His Person and the Offices He bears, make its pages as a daily portion of freshly-gathered manna from His open hand, and as a rill of that living water that flows from the smitten Rock that " follows " the guided flock of God (Psa. lxxviii. 72) through all their wilderness journey, from the Cross to the Glory.

J. R.


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## THE LORD OF GLORY.



“HE Lord of Glory” is the title here given by the Spirit, to Him in whom all moral, official, and eternal glories shine in all their brightness. The words occur twice in the New Testament. First, in connection with the Lord’s rejection at the hand of the great ones of the world, the leaders of this present age, who, if they had possessed that wisdom which is of God, “they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (1 Cor. ii. 8). He was, and He is, the world-rejected and the heaven-accepted Christ of God. Although no one ever stood in this world so worthy of its homage, so wholly due its allegiance, the world gave “the Lord of Glory,”—not a crown and sceptre, but a felon’s cross and shame. He was in the world His hands had made, and in the nation that He came to bless and reign over. But His own received Him not, but cast Him out, disowning His claims. Heaven has welcomed Him to its highest seat, and acclaimed Him “Lord of all,” as it crowned Him “with glory and honour” (Heb. ii. 9) on His ascension day. So we learn that the Crucified Christ of Golgotha, is “the Lord of Glory” in heaven. Blessed it is to know it, and knowing it to own it and to confess Him our Lord, in this the time of His rejection by the world.

Of these glories of the Lord, the Word speaks to us particularly of three. There is His *Moral* glory,

the beauty and perfections of His character, which shone forth in all His words and works and ways, as He passed through the world among all conditions of men. It "could not be hid." The people said, "He hath done all things well." The demons owned Him "the Holy One of God." The Roman Governor testified, "I find no fault in this Man." The dying robber at His side testified, "This Man hath done nothing amiss." The "common people heard Him gladly" (Mark xii. 2) and confessed "He hath done all things well" (Mark vii. 37). Disciples attracted to Him, asked, "Master, where dwellest Thou?" They left "all" to follow Him. Stupid and "slow of heart" to believe all He had taught, and to follow on in the path along which He led, yet they would not go back to walk no more with Him, as mere professors did, who had no life link with Him. They could have left Him if they had wanted. But when He asked them, "Will ye also go?" they answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" Ah! that was it. He had no equal. He has none now. "Chiefest of the ten thousand" to His own, He has won their hearts and bound them to Himself. There was great attractiveness in "the Lord of glory" He drew to and kept around Him, men of different characters, of varied attainments, of great variety in social position. Common people, unlettered fishermen, men of culture and of education, peasants and priests were all drawn by the attraction of His Person. Is Christ the great attraction of our hearts? Can we say that thus it is with us, beloved? Or, are the world's attractions and its allurements gaining our love and claiming our esteem, while toward "the Lord of Glory" our love is waxing cold, and our devotion



half-hearted. If we find it so, it is time to call a halt, to search our hearts and ways, to examine ourselves, and find what evil suitor is gaining that place in us, which by right belongs to the Lord of Glory alone.

His *Official* glory as Redeemer, Shepherd, High Priest and Head, we are called to "consider" (Heb. iii. 1) and to own. His claims upon us as Redeemer, His care for us as Shepherd, His service toward us as High Priest, and His supply for us as Head and Source of all blessing, we surely need, and are called to so use Him. And the more we use Him so, the closer to Him we shall cling. Blessed be His Name, He is all ours, all for us, ever with us, never forgetful of us, no, not for an hour. Our glory is to have such a Christ, of whom we should be able to confess, heartily, joyfully, and always: "He is the chiefest among ten thousand"—"He is altogether lovely"—"I count all things loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."—"We see Jesus crowned with glory" (Heb. ii. 9).

His *Eternal* glory,—"glory that He had with the Father before the world was," that essential, incommunicable glory which is His alone, which neither angel nor man can share. It we shall "behold" (John xvii. 24) and adoringly acknowledge (Rev. v. 11). But the glory given Him by the Father, we shall share (John xvii. 22; 1 Pet. v. 1). The church "arrayed in glory" (Eph. v. 27) not her own but His, will be presented faultless in the day of His coming. And when He returns in manifested power and glory to the world (Col. iii. 4), His saints will "appear with Him" in that glory as followers in His train (Rev. xix. 14). That glory His saints shall bear, and through

endless ages display (2 Thess. i. 10; Rev. xxi. 11) before all worlds.

It is the heart's occupation with Christ as Lord of glory, and Lover of the soul, that wins and weans from earthly things. The tinsel glory of earth, fades before the excellencies of the Son of God. The heart now won by the love and loveliness of Christ, will never find its rest or portion in things "under the sun." They have no glory, by reason of His glory that excelleth. If He is awanting, all is gone. With Him, the wilderness blossoms, and the homeward journey will be "as the days of heaven on earth."

It is to the sharing of this eternal glory (1 Pet. v. 9) that grace has already called all believers, and not the feeblest of the flock will be awanting there. For has it not been told us in the eternal Word that "whom He justified, *them* He also glorified" (Rom. viii. 30). Already it is so in the Divine purpose. And so surely it shall be in fact, and in the experience of all saints; in due time. The present grace and the coming glory are immutably linked, and no evil one can either sever the bond which God Himself has made, or thwart the great purpose He has formed—that Christ and His people are to be "glorified together."

# GOD'S MASTER-WORKMAN.

(PROVERBS viii. 30, Revised Version).



IN this glowing and mysterious passage, in which Wisdom is personified, the full answer to that which is here by the Spirit testified, is found alone in Christ. For who save He, answers to the claims here made? The apostle tell us in 1 Cor. i. 24 that "Christ is the power of God and the *wisdom* of God." All that God is manifesting of His might; in this season of His grace, is made known in Christ. And all that God is displaying of His wondrous resources and ways, is exhibited and displayed by Christ. The revelation here given, is of Christ, as "set up" in the eternal counsels, before the beginning of God's way, and before His works of old (ver. 22) as "daily His delight," and "always by Him." And this as a "Master-Workman" (ver. 30 R.V.), always ready to carry out the Divine decree and to fulfil the Divine purpose. What an answer is this to those who speak of our Divine Lord as being a "child of His time," with limitations in knowledge, and having His thoughts formed by the time in which He lived, while here among men. Here in the earlier Scriptures, the true Eternity, the full Deity, and the Supreme Power of our Lord is told out in such language and after such a manner as none can answer to, save He of whom it is testified in the later Scriptures; "In the beginning was the Word and the

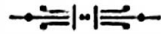
Word was with God, and the Word was God " (John i. 1, 2), who Himself claimed unity and equality with the Father (John x. 31; xiv. 1-10), and is acknowledged as God (Heb. i. 8) "for ever and ever"—words that can have no application to any save "He who is over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 5), "The only wise God our Saviour" (Jude 25), whose "goings forth have been of old, from everlasting" (Micah v. 2),—"from the days of eternity" (margin.) He is here brought forth as the One who was "set up" in the eternal counsels, as Executer of all the Divine decrees, in mercy and in judgment, God's "Master-Workman," to whose hand has been committed all that men and angels shall ever see of the Divine love and power and wisdom of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in accomplished fact. Here we are told that "He was ever by Him," always at hand, ready for action, as God might determine and command. How good it is to know, that all the Divine purposes are, therefore, sure of fulfilment, Nothing can fail. Man's sin may, for a season, hinder, but it can never cause to fall to the ground, one thing that God has promised. For the outworking of all these purposes is in the hand of God's all-wise and all-powerful Master Workman. And it has been through Him, "whose goings forth have been of old," that all we know of Creation and Redemption has been wrought. And "in Him" all stands secure, as the eternal Rock. The story of this working is told out through all the pages of the Sacred Word. As to *Creation*. It did not come into being by its own act. It was not "evolved" as modern Agnostics, who see no Divine hand in anything, assert. It was the work of God's "Master-Workman." For

an inspired apostle tells us that, "All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John i. 3, R.V.). And another apostle tells us that, "In Him were all things created, in the heavens and on the earth—all things have been created *through* Him and *unto* Him" (Col. i. 16-18, R.V.). Unbelievers allow that there is a "First Cause" in creation, but they deny to the Lord Jesus Christ the honour and the glory of God's Master-Workman, in the creation of worlds, although God has given the honour of this to His Son. Then, when sin came in, and man became a fallen creature, and creation a groaning ruin (Rom. viii. 22) in need of a Redeemer and a Restorer, this work was placed in the hands of the only One who could undertake the task. And it was at once announced that the Seed of the woman (Gen. iii. 15) should be the Bruiser of Satan, the Deliverer of sinners, and the Redeemer of men. The work of man's Redemption was thus committed to the hands of Christ, and in His hands its issues both in present Grace and in coming Glory, are secure for ever.

In the language of the *Types*, as in the predictions of the Prophets, all that is there foretold "in all the Scriptures of things concerning Himself" (Luke xxiv. 27); He will as surely work out to God's satisfaction as God has said it. And the blessings *secured* by His work, and *ensured* in His person to all who believe, are inviolable: they cannot be lost or marred. Blessed be His Name! Let the peace, the assurance, and the enjoyment of them be ours, without the shadow of a fear or a doubt. For whatever is entrusted to the hands of God's Master-Workman can never be shaken,

nor can the hand of man undo that which He has wrought. The Cross and its conquests is past, the Resurrection and its triumphs His people already share, and the Coming of the Lord, with all that it is to bring of grace and glory to the redeemed, is as sure as the Word of Promise. For "I will come again and receive you to myself" (John xiv. 3) is as sure as the Word that declares it. The glory to follow (1 Pet. i. 11), in the saints of the heavenly calling, the regathering of the scattered house of Israel, the bringing into subjection to God and under the rule of His kingdom of all Creation, and the final triumph of the glorified Lord over all His foes, until "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" Him Lord (Phil. ii. 11), to the Glory of God the Father, will as surely come as the Hand of the Victorious Lord can bring it, and as the Word of the eternal God has spoken it. All is sure, because all stands in the eternal counsels of the Triune God, and all is committed to the hand of God's Master-Workman.

## JEHOVAH'S SERVANT.



HE inspired words of the prophet Isaiah (Chap. xlix. 1-4)—who by the Spirit, spake of the Christ who was to come, as Peter tells us (1 Pet. i. 11; 2 Pet. i. 24)—here describe Him as the Servant of Jehovah, whose mouth was made like unto a “sharp sword.” He is said to be hid in the shadow of Jehovah’s hand, ready for His use, and as a “polished shaft in His quiver,” ever at hand, always fit to be used by Him in mercy or in judgment. This place of high honour belongs to the Lord Jesus, Jehovah’s perfect Servant, alone. He only of all the sons of men, God calls us to “Behold,” for His alone was a perfect service, as His was a faithful witness-bearing (Rev. i. 5). Everywhere and always, He was well pleasing to God. For in that service of His, He was always “upheld” by His God, and in Him; and in it whose it was, God ever had His infinite delight (Isa. xlii. 1).

This is wonderful. Men might and did slight His service. His kinsfolk might say He was “beside Himself” (Mark iv. 21), and His enemies attribute His works to Satanic power (ver. 22), but to God it was ever a “delight,” and all His doings were well-pleasing unto Him (Matt. iii. 17). So far as men could see, its present results were small indeed. According to man’s reckoning He had “laboured in vain,” and spent His strength “for nought.” Yet we know from

ten thousand witnesses that "whatsoever He did prospered" (Psa. i. 3), as a heaven filled with ransomed sinners—the fruits of His toil—will yet gloriously proclaim to wondering worlds. Yes, Christ was the Perfect Servant, ever at hand and ever ready to be used by God, in the fulfilling of His purposes of grace and in the execution of His counsels of mercy among the sons of men. For He was always ready, always fit, as a "polished shaft," ever hid in Jehovah's quiver for His use. And He is the same ready Servant still. While there is a convicted sinner to be saved, and a needy saint to be supplied, the Christ of God, the glorified Son and Servant, is ever at God's right hand, and ever available to be used by God in such ministry as His children and His Church require, all the way, and all the days of their sojourn here. And as it is God's delight to use Him, and His delight to be used in such service, so let it be our constant habit and the attitude of our souls, to look to Him, to receive from Him that which He well knows how best to bestow, and through what channels to allow it to reach us. For as Servant and Source of supply, He delights to be used, to meet all His people's need. And this same perfect Servant is His people's Exemplar, their Pattern to copy. If the believer yields himself up *to* God, and lays himself out in service *for* God, he must be found in the right place, "hid in the shadow of God's hand," and in the right condition, "hid like a polished shaft in His quiver," always ready and always in condition, fit for God to use. Be this the attitude and this the condition of all who seek and expect to be sent on God's errands and used in His "honourable and glorious" (Psa. cxl. 3) work among the sons of men.



And be it ever remembered, that a right spiritual condition and a place of nearness to God, are of greater account in heaven, and for service in the kingdom; or the Church of God, than any great measure of gift and high attainments in knowledge. For it is an "open secret" to all who stand in God's counsel, and are familiar with His ways, that the saint who abides under the shadow of the Almighty (Psa. xci. 1), the servant who makes it his chief business to watch at His gates daily (Prov. viii. 34), ready to run at His call, and in condition as well as at hand to fulfil His Lord's commandments, and so approximate to the character and example of God's perfect Servant, the Lord Jesus Christ, will be often employed in the Royal Service, and honoured by his heavenly Master in His workings here.

## THE DESPISED AND REJECTED ONE.



**I**T was foretold by the prophet Isaiah, long years before the coming of Christ, that when men saw Him in lowly form and grace, they would find nothing in Him that would cause them to "desire" Him, but that He would be "despised and rejected of men" (Isa. liii. 3). "Despised," He was, because of His lowly form and lack of that "majesty" which is held in honour among men. "Rejected," because He stood apart from the ways of men, neither receiving their proffered honours (John vi. 15), nor acting as arbitrator in their personal (Luke xii. 13-14) or national disputes; but ever witnessing for God and His Truth (John viii. 40; xvi. 37). And because of His faithful testimony, which exposed the sin of man, and brought the claims of God to bear on the conscience, the Son of God was "rejected of men." This was not by some, but by all classes and conditions of mankind. Around His Cross, priests, scribes, and soldiers stood mocking (Matt. xxviii.), rulers and people deriding (Luke xxiii. 35). And as Acts iv. 27 informs us, in the reckoning of God and of heaven, whether at or absent from the last great tragedy of Calvary, "Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and people of Israel," are held to have been "gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ" on that day, taking sides with the powers of hell, in the murder

of the Lord of Glory. Nor is this all. For after His resurrection from the dead—and the seal of God had been set on His witness and His work—and His ascension to heaven to sit on the right hand of God had been verified, His rejectors sent the insulting message after Him—as in the parable of the Nobleman (Luke xix. 14)—“We will not have this Man to reign over us.” And this decision, the records of the rejection of Christ’s ambassadors and their message, surely confirm. And the world is the same Christ-rejecting world still. It has not changed its attitude toward the Christ of God one whit. True, that part of it called “Christendom,” has assumed His Name, and is now called “The Christian World.” It professes what it calls “the Religion of Jesus Christ,” but it has as little place for the despised Nazarene, whom God has made “Lord and Christ” (Acts ii. 36), as it had when it hurried Him to the Cross. And this is the world in which the redeemed of the Lord now are. It is here, in the midst of those who despise and reject their Lord and Lover, that they are called to live their daily lives, and bear their daily witness to His truth. Need they wonder; if they meet the same hatred as their heavenly Lord and Master met? They need not, for He told them they would (John xv. 18, 19). If they do not, the change must be in them. But is it so in fact and experience? Is it so with us, with thee, O my soul? Surely the fine gold has become dim in many, who bear the great Redeemer’s Name. Compromise has been at work. The clear-ring testimony to the world of its sin and coming doom, has been muffled. The clean-cut path of separation, marked out in the Book of God for the followers of

the earth-rejected Christ, has been made broader, and a Christianity, to which the world can give its countenance and the devil his patronage, has come to be popular. But what does God think of all this? His estimate of His beloved Son can never alter, can never change. Nor can His attitude toward that world and its rulers who crucified His Christ, has persecuted His people, and seduced His witnesses from the path of separation, in which He has called them to walk and witness for an earth-rejected Christ, to become world-reformers and world-lovers (2 Tim. iv. 10). For has His Word not testified, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him" (1 John ii. 16)? And does He not tell His people in no uncertain sound "that the friendship of the world is enmity with God, whosoever, therefore, would be a friend of the world, maketh HIMSELF AN ENEMY OF GOD (James iv. 4, R.V.).

## THE PATTERN WORKER.



**W**E cannot read the Four Gospels, in which the Spirit, through the four Evangelists, sets before us the activities of the Lord throughout the period of His public life and service, without being impressed with how fully all His days and hours were filled, in His "Father's business." Serving and giving filled up each day. There was no loitering in His path. His activities, in the midst of human woe and need, were ceaseless. He sought no ease, no relaxation for Himself. When He retired to a "desert place," it was to have converse with His disciples, apart from the multitude. If He sought the solitudes of Olivet and Gethsemane, it was to pray. When He went into company, whether the crowd without, or the social circle within, as Luke vii. 36, it was to meet with sinners and win them to God. His remaining in one place or His going to another, was not determined by ease or comfort, or from love of friendship and society, but wholly at His Father's call, and in furtherance of His work. Hungered Himself, He feeds the multitude, working a miracle to meet their need, but never for His own. Perfect in all His works and ways, Jehovah's pattern Servant, as well as His obedient Son, He stands before us without equal, our Exemplar to be copied, as well as our Lord to be obeyed. The service of all who work in His Name and for His kingdom is to be after the pattern He has left to be followed. The tendency is

to copy others, good men it may be, but liable to err. And to repeat their foibles and frailties is easier than to excel their virtues. Occupation with Christ, tracing His steps, hearkening to His Word, taking our directions direct from Himself, gives not only the right pattern, but power to reproduce it, in some measure at least. The Perfect Servant has had His reward. Ours is yet to come. And it will be, when it does come, according to the measure in which we have conformed and ordered our service after the example He left us, and according to the Word He has given us. This is especially "truth in season" for the saints and servants of God of this hour. There is an ever-growing tendency to engage in the Lord's work in ways that the Lord left us no pattern of, and gives no directions in His Holy Word, to follow ways that in many instances are neither according to the spirit or principles of Scripture, ways copied from the world—borrowed from their religious systems—and supposed to be an improvement on "the right way of the Lord." But God honours His own designs, and not the distortions of them, created after man's device. The Holy Spirit honours the Pattern given by Him in the Word. And as the path of the Perfect Servant was always well-pleasing to God, because it was always according to the Father's will (John viii. 29), so will be the path of the Lord's servant, who sets the Lord always before him (Psa. xvi. 8), and seeks to pursue his way steadfastly, according to the Word of God and the example of Christ.

To follow Thee, in Thy blest path,  
To serve in Thine own way,  
Be this our aim, our daily joy,  
In our brief service-day.

# THE BRUISED CHRIST.



THE celebration of the Lord's Supper in its sacred simplicity, as set forth in the Word of God, has as its chief object the fresh presentation of a Bruised Christ, under the Spirit's ministry, to the hearts of the saints. "This *do in remembrance* of Me," is the Lord's own request for His peoples' keeping of the great feast of commemoration. "Ye do shew the Lord's *death* till He come," is the Spirit's own comment on love's response in the redeemed, to love's request by the Redeemer. Our meditations and our remembrances are to be centred especially on a Bruised Christ, who for our sakes "endured the Cross," and by way of its sorrows and sufferings passed up into the glories that were to follow, as the prophetic Scriptures (1 Pet. i. 11), and His own words concerning them, in Luke xxiv. 26 inform us. Very profitable it surely is for the saint, to muse and meditate on the Lord, as thus bruised, yet victorious, suffering yet triumphant, brought into the dust of death in order to gloriously rise above and beyond it, so securing to all His own that freedom from "fear of death" (Heb. ii. 14), and victory over it (1 Cor. xv. 55-57), in which they even now rejoice, and on which they will enter in richer and fuller measure, in the hour of resurrection or change, so sure and near.

The first mention of the Bruised Christ is found

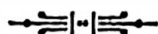
in Gen. iii. 15, after the entrance of sin and the fall of man. The remedy provided by God for the ruin, and the way of redemption and deliverance, are declared to be by the Seed of the woman bruising the destroyer's head, and in the conflict having to suffer the bruising of His own heel. The Conqueror was to become victorious through death, and the way of deliverance was to be through suffering. Through the ages that followed, this bruised Seed of the woman, this victorious though wounded Redeemer, was exhibited to faith in the types and shadows of the law. The dumb victims slain on Jewish altars, the sacred incense bruised and beaten small, to give out its virtue and impart its fragrance for acceptance with God, kept alive in men divinely taught, the meaning of the Eden prediction, that through the bruising of the Redeemer, the great redemption was to come. Later, the prophet's words in Isa. liii. 5, speaking the language of faith, and bringing what was still in the future, into present view of the soul, "He was *wounded* for our transgressions, He was *bruised* for our iniquities, and with His stripes we are healed," tell how, through this age of Gospel grace, one and another of the ruined race pass in single file through the door (John x. 9) of a personal appropriation of Christ, into the possession of a present and known redemption (Eph. i. 7), and a victorious deliverance from the power of Satan (Acts xxvi. 18) into the kingdom (Col. i. 13), there to share (Rom. viii. 37) the triumphs of the Son of God. Yes, blessed be God, the Bruised Christ is the sinner's Saviour, the saints' Object, and the Song of all who know the virtues of His redeeming work, while they await in joyful hope the hour of His final triumph



over Satan, in which the great adversary is to be bruised under *their* feet (Rom. xvi. 30). It will be a sight of the Bruised Christ, as He appears in His glory (Zech. xiii. 10), with the marks of the Cross in view, that causes repentant Israel to own Him King, and repeat in faith's own language the words of Isa. liii. In the overpowering scene of glorified saints depicted in Rev. v., where the beloved John weeps because no man is found worthy to claim the title to universal sovereignty and the right to redeem the inheritance, when the great silence seemed to indicate that earth's long cherished hope of redemption and liberation was to fail, then "a Lamb as it had been slain," bearing the marks of the Cross, stands forth in the midst of that circle of glorified beings, and by right of the very bruises, that as Sacrifice and Redeemer He bears, claims His right, and asserts His title to reign, while heavenly hosts acclaim Him "worthy," and sing His praises as "the Lamb that was slain." And so throughout the eternal ages, in ways which are as yet to us but dimly traced, will God reveal and display the glories of His Son, as bruised yet conquering, as slain yet triumphant, through whom, and in virtue of whose wondrous Cross, God will fill the heavens with a redeemed and regenerated people whose song shall eternally be of their victorious Christ. May it be ours now, in ever-increasing measure, to become acquainted with, and meditate on this Bruised Christ, and to sing in the deep joy of the heart—

I stand upon His merit;  
I know no other stand,  
Not e'en where glory dwelleth  
In Immanuel's Land.

# JESUS, THE IMPERISHABLE NAME



JESUS — Jehovah the Saviour — the Name given before His birth by the angel to the Virgin's child (Matt. i. 21), is the Name honoured by perpetual mention under varied forms, throughout the Book of God, from the first revelation of it in grace in the opening of the Gospel of Matthew, chap i., to its final celebration of it in glory, in the Book of Revelation. It was the Name enshrined in the promise of the Woman's Seed. It was embedded in the sacrifice on Moriah, of Abraham's day. It was foreshadowed in a thousand forms in the types and symbols under the law. It was echoed along the whole line of the prophets. And at the opening of the New Testament, the honoured Name is uttered over the "child born" the "Son given" (Isa. xi. 6), the Virgin's babe who lay in the lowly manger at Bethlehem (Luke ii. 11, 16). Wondrous indeed it is to find "Jehovah the Saviour" there. God was indeed manifest in flesh. The Word had become flesh, and "tabernacled among us" (John i. 14). And although the world knew it not, angels celebrated the event in the ecstatic joy of heaven. The Lord's passage through the land of Israel as Saviour, Healer, Deliverer, and Dispenser of God's salvation in a world of ruined sinners, proclaimed Him "Jehovah the Saviour." His death on Calvary, and the Name written in shame upon His Cross, was the witness of

man's rejection of Him, while His resurrection from the tomb was heaven's broad seal of acceptance on His work, and God's full attestation of His satisfaction from it, and of His well-pleasedness in it. In the Acts, "Jesus" is preached as "Lord and Christ," and in His Name remission is held forth to "whosoever believeth" (Acts x. 43). His Name has the power of salvation (chap. iv. 12), which is found in no other name. In the Epistles, the Name of Jesus as Saviour and Lord is "highly exalted," and His Church here (1 Cor. xii. 3) is to bear and honour it in all corporate relations (1 Cor. iv. 4) and in all individual service (Col. iii. 17). In the Apocalypse, His Name is celebrated in heaven, by saints and by angels, and is owned and honoured through all regions of redeemed and renewed creation.

"JESUS" is the imperishable Name, unchanging and unchangeable. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." His is the one Name which abides in perpetual bloom and freshness; the unfading Name whose efficacy and virtue can never cease. Time and memory will cause other names, whose praises have been sung, to fade and be forgotten, but eternity will do nothing with the Name of Jesus but celebrate it in realms of glory. Throughout it is "the same Jesus," Immanuel, God with us, Jehovah the Saviour; the Son in the bosom of the Father, the Sacrifice on the altar, and the Lamb that was slain, glorified above all heavens. His Name and His Person invest His work with an infinite value, and the offices He fills with an abiding dignity. His is the Name of imperishable value, and His the theme of heaven's eternal songs.

It is in the Name of Jesus that the Divine life is conveyed to the believing soul (John xx. 31), that remission of sins is assured (Acts x. 43) and that the prayer of faith receives its answers (John xiv. 13, 14). In the Name of Jesus the mighty works of early days were wrought (Acts iv. 10), and that Name has lost nothing of its ancient power. It is the gathering (Matt. xviii. 20) Name as it is the uniting Name (1 Cor. i. 10) of the church in all ages and throughout all time, and the more simply and closely saints cling to, own, and honour this peerless Name, the closer will they be found to Him, and each other.

Solely Thine own no more, but given  
To me, O Christ, Thou now art mine,  
My life, my joy, my hope, my heaven,  
And I for ever wholly Thine.

# ALL IN CHRIST: CHRIST IS ALL.



IN infinite grace, God has given to mankind the gift of His Beloved Son. More He could not give. Less would not have met our need. As sinners in unregenerate years, we needed a Surety, a Sacrifice, a Saviour, a Deliverer. As saints, ready to stray, liable to stumble, actually failing and falling, we need a Shepherd to lead, a High Priest to succour, and an Advocate to restore and to help. All these combine in the Christ of God, who has been given to us as ours. All excellency and all fulness are in Him. He satisfies all the Divine claims in the excellency of His Person. He meets all human need by the virtues of His work. Christ is all to God, and everything to us. In receiving Christ (John i. 12), we receive Him in all His fulness, become accepted in all His virtues, stand before God in the full value of His work, and become vitally and spiritually "joined to the Lord," henceforth to be regarded as "in Christ Jesus" (Eph. i. 1). Higher than this none can rise. Nearer than this none can ever be. Dearer to God than to be loved by Him with the same love wherewith He loves His Son (John xvii. 23), is impossible. And all this is always true of all who belong to Christ, who are Christ's, and in whom Christ is, always and everywhere. And there is no distinction, no difference. But this amazing grace, this marvellous gift, has to be received in all confidence, realised in all enjoyment, and used in all conditions. All is in Christ, and "Christ is all," to His believing people. But He is to be received in all the excellencies He

holds, and used in all the offices He bears. This is faith's prerogative. It receives Him as Saviour. It commits itself wholly to Him as Preserver and Keeper (2 Tim. i. 12). It confides in Him as High Priest, and joyfully owns "we have such a High Priest" (Heb. viii. 1). It draws from and uses the "fulness" that is in Him (Col. ii. 9). It learns and joyfully owns His Lordship, and bows in loving loyalty and obedience to His Word. It finds its all in Christ. It asks for nothing more, and seeks for nothing different, for it finds its joy in Christ, and knows no other portion. God has given His all, in giving Christ. And the business of a lively faith through the whole course of earthly life is, to discover what is stored in Christ for present use and enjoy it in the soul, in ever-increasing fulness. Eternity's blest employment will be, to still more fully discover what is ours in Christ. Not so much in ceaseless, fresh gifts and new resources, but in God discovering to and revealing in His glorified sons and saints, all that is theirs in the Christ He has long ago given, whom they welcomed in simple faith, and delight even now to own as "Altogether lovely," for whose sake they gladly renounce all earthly gains, accounting them as "refuse," "for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 8), their Lord. How joyous, calm, and free should be the lives, and how steady, full and bright the path and the testimony of those who find their all in Christ, to whom Christ is all and everything, everywhere and always.

It is this feeding on Christ, living by Christ, and living for Christ that makes the Christian's life, as heaven on earth.

# CHRIST, A STRANGER ON EARTH.



HE Lord from heaven—as the apostle speaks in 1 Cor. xv. 47—was a Stranger here. He was “in the world,” which in its Paradisical condition, was the work of His hands, but “the world knew Him not” (John i. 10). It had “no room” for Him at His birth in Bethlehem; no home for His infant days in the land of Abraham, or city of David, so He had to find a shelter from Herod, the Edomite king, in Egypt. There was no ear to hear His words of grace and truth in its Nazareth synagogue, the place of His upbringing; no eye to see His “mighty acts” in Capernaum, “His own city” (Matt. ix. 2; xi. 23); and no place for Him or His doctrine in His “Father’s House” (Matt. xxi. 12; xxiii. 38), the temple at Jerusalem. So He passed along on His solitary way, a Stranger here. He would not, although often invited, enter as an arbitrator of His nation’s wrongs (Luke xii. 13). He refused to interfere with its politics (Matt. xxii. 17), or to contest its claims, even when they were unjust (Matt. xvii. 25). He endured all wrongs and yielded to all demands, silently and meekly passing along the path appointed for Him by His God. He knew what the world was, and how it would treat Him, before He came. But its coldness wrought no change in its love for men, nor could its opposition and hatred divert Him from the work He had come to do. He stood amid the ruin

sin had made, pure and spotless. His eye looked forth with compassion on the uncared-for multitudes, His hand of "healing" was laid on the sick and the suffering; He spoke words of mercy and of grace to the sinful, and blessed the babe which He held in His arms. But He made no friends among men of the world. He received no compliments from those whom He blessed. Only the humble dwellings of disciples were hospitably open to Him, and He never intruded even there. The "desert place," far from the city crowd, was His place of retreat. The groves of Gethsemane were His frequent resort for quietude, and the slopes of Olivet His dewy couch by night. Yes, the Lord of Glory, was a Stranger here. And now from His heavenly home, the land to which He has gone to "prepare a place" for His own, He points to the path trodden by His own feet, and says, "Follow thou Me"; "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me"; "I have given you an example." And an inspired apostle, writing to the saints whom he addresses as "strangers" (1 Pet. ii. 11), says of the Lord in His earthly path, "leaving us an Example that we should follow His steps." So, as He was a Stranger here, His people are to be "strangers and pilgrims" (1 Pet. ii. 11) on the earth, not citizens or rulers in it, as if their calling were to earth, either to renovate or to govern it. It is not that the Christian is to be heedless of the world's need, or deaf to its cry; indeed, he cannot be, for the groan of creation without, finds its response in the experience of his spirit within (Rom. viii. 22, 23). But he knows that creation's deliverance awaits the "manifestation of the sons of God," in that hour when the glorious Lord,



accompanied by His glorified saints, will take over its government, and rid the scene of its great Oppressor and all his host. Till then, the pilgrim path is his portion, and a place "without the camp," bearing his Lord's "reproach," his glory. He is content to be accounted as the "offscouring of all things," fit only to be "cast out" (John ix. 34), like his Lord, and to be ostracised as "beside himself," or pitied for his "narrowness of vision" by the worldly wise. Be it so. It is the path of honour, in which the One whom we know as Lord walked, as the heavenly Stranger here. No doubt, to "the many," whose love is waxing cold, another and more popular path will have its lure and its attractions, and they will be able to find reasons to satisfy themselves, that it is the way of influence and of success. There are many voices raised in advocacy of this more "up-to-date" way of life for the Christian, in our time. The path of "stranger-ship" is to be exchanged for that of "citizenship" in the earth. And what our Divine Lord and His earliest followers took no part in, we are supposed to share, as if the transformation of a ruined world, and not the rescue of a people out of it (Gal. i. 4), were the Gospel's mission and its object. But in the true heart who finds its bliss in "following the steps" of Him who was the Stranger here, there will ever be the unfailing, joyful assurance, that the path of identification with Christ is the way of blessing, as it is of true success.

"The path where my Saviour has gone  
Has led up to His Father and God,  
To the place where He's now on the throne,  
And His strength shall be mine on the road."

# CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES.



HERE is a vital, yea, an inseparable link between the Word Incarnate and the Word Inspired, between Christ and the Scriptures. "In the beginning was the Word," is the great opening declaration of the Fourth Gospel. Before there was a bright angel in heavenly courts above, or a living creature in the fair earth below, He, the Eternal Son, the Word at whose fiat all things came into existence, was there. And it is of Him eternal, uncreated, possessed of full Deity, then incarnate, obedient, sacrificed, and now glorified, that the inspired Word, the Sacred Scriptures, breathed from God, tell. The inspired Word, from first to last, is full of Christ, and Christ, throughout the entire path of His obedience, service, and suffering here, was full of the Word. He was the supreme Believer in and Lover of the Book of God. He received it in its entirety as He found it, in the full confidence that it was the Word of God, and He called it so (Mark vii. 13). He was the Man whose delight was in the Law of the Lord, and He meditated therein "day and night" (Psa. i. 2). His ear was awakened morning by morning to hear as a disciple (Isa. l. 4, R.V.), so that He knew well how and what to speak, as a word in season to the weary. And the Word of God was His constant study. It was "His custom" to read it for Himself and to others in the synagogue at Nazareth, His village home for thirty years (Luke iv. 16). Little wonder if "doctors" of the law in Jerusalem were

astonished at His knowledge of the Book, and the answers He could give to their questions on its contents, when a boy of twelve (Luke ii. 42, 47). He had more understanding than all His teachers, because He meditated on God's testimonies (Psa. cxix. 19). And when the great adversary in the days of His temptation thrice assailed Him, and was thrice foiled and discomfited, it was because He lived by every Word that proceeded from the mouth of God, and had the right word at the right moment, as the "sword of the Spirit," to meet him with (Matt. iv. 3-11) on his own ground. Yes, blessed be His peerless Name, our Lord was the Man of the Book, and esteemed its words more than His "necessary food" (Job xxiii. 12). In His public ministry He spake to the people "the Word of God," and they "pressed upon Him" to hear it (Luke v. 1). He had no questions, such as are raised by some in our time, as to its reliability. In the last hours of His agony and untold sufferings on the Cross, it was to "fulfil" the Scriptures that He asked for the vinegar to drink, and at last bowed His head in death. Blessed Redeemer, who would not love and reverence and obey the Word Thou did'st love and own and honour so well? And on that bright Easter day's journey toward Emmaus, after He had come forth from the grave a Conqueror, it was the Book as it were anew in His hands, that He expounded to the two sad fellow-travellers on the road that Lord's Day afternoon, "*in all the Scriptures* the things concerning Himself." What a Scripture reading that was, to be sure, with Christ Himself as Expounder and Theme, and "all the Scriptures" the text book. Little wonder their heart "burned within them" as

they walked. It is the Christ of the Scriptures, Jesus, our Lord and Lover, Jesus as Sacrifice, Redeemer, Saviour and Lord, we go to the Book of God to find, to see, to adore, and to worship. And none ever go to the Sacred Book, subject to the guidance and teaching of the Spirit, with a true desire to find Him there, in vain. Nor will any true lover of the Lord, who reveres His person and owns His claims, ever neglect or lightly esteem that Word, which was His delight, and which He has left to be the Guide and Counsellor of His people "all the days," till they see His face in glory.

To neglect the Sacred Word as the food of the soul, and the subject of daily meditation, is to lose sight of Christ. And to miss seeing Him, is to lack the true motive for all real Christian life and acceptable service.

### THE PERSON AND THE WORD.

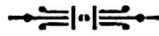
CHRIST is the Everlasting Word,  
Incarnate, and Divine,  
Through whom the Father is declared,  
In whom all virtues shine.

To Him the Spirit ever leads,  
Of Him He witness bears,  
And faith receiving of His own,  
All grace in fulness shares.

The written Word, from first to last,  
All perfect and inspired,  
Unfolds the virtues of the Son  
By Christ-won hearts desired.

And gazing on His beauty there,  
Transfigured day by day,  
They walk and talk of Christ Himself,  
Along the heavenward way.

## THE CHRIST OF GOD.

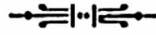


**I**N the presence of ever-increasing denials of the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, how good it is for the souls of the saints to reassure themselves of the fact that He whom they worship and confess as Redeemer, and own as Lord, is indeed "the Lord of Glory" (1 Cor. ii. 8); "He who is God over all, blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 5, R.V.), and "our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ" (Titus ii. 14, R.V.). He never was, never will be, never can be, anything other or less than Son of God, and God the Son. It was such a confession of His Name that His question, "Whom say ye that I am?" as He stood in the midst of His little band of His first disciples, drew from Simon Peter in the glowing answer, "The Christ of God" (Luke ix. 20), and later from Thomas, His once-doubting follower, the words of adorning worship, "My Lord, and my God" (John xx. 28). It must be well-pleasing to God to hear His Name confessed, His claims rehearsed, and His glories extolled by the lips of saints on earth, where once He was "despised and rejected of men," and where, for claiming equality with God, men "took up stones to stone Him" (John x. 31), and at last crucified Him as a blasphemer (Luke xxii. 70, 71). God seeks a full confession of His Deity, His Eternal Godhead before all worlds (John i. 1), when He lay as an infant on His mother's breast, as He lived among men in the form of a servant, as He rose from the dead in victorious

power, and as He now lives enthroned in majesty on the eternal throne as "Jesus the Son of God" (Heb. iv. 14). For He who became flesh (John i. 16), is now, and ever will be Man—sinless, spotless, and unblemished Man—yet He never ceased or could cease to be God, or relinquish any part of His Deity. Who always was and is God, as well as Son with the Father. He is ours as such, for ever. And in Him is our Life. He is our Lord, Head of the Church His body, and Head over all to the Church. In whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Col. ii. 9). He is God's and ours (1 Cor. iii. 23), as we are His, to be loved and led, to be cherished and fed, all the way and all the days, until we see Him as He is. Of Him let us sing to God, and testify to man the full-orbed confession of our faith in His eternal, full, and absolute Deity, His equality with God, His true and perfect Manhood, and His perfect wisdom and knowledge. Weeping at Lazarus' grave, in token of His sympathy with the sorrowing sisters, calling, with the voice of His Divine power and majesty, the dead man back to life. And at last, rising from His own tomb as Victor over death and hell. Who can doubt His Godhead or deny His power, in the face of an empty sepulchre and an occupied throne? Let us thank God for a Divine and perfect Redeemer and Saviour. And let us sing with heart and voice, in heavenly chorus, in the very face of the devil's latest denials of our Lord's Divine glory and His excellent majesty—

In Him most perfectly expressed,  
Tho Father's glories shine,  
Of the FULL Deity possessed,  
Eternally Divine!

# THE TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS.



THE most wondrous event this world has known, or ever will know, was, when the Son of God—God manifest in the flesh—bowed His head in death on Golgotha's Cross. To that hour, all events in the eternal past led up. All the purposes of God had it in view. The counsels of the Triune God were framed in anticipation of it. Creation's acts were only preparations for it. Providential and permissive dealings with mankind, all looked toward it. The histories, lives and deaths of men, the types and shadows of a bygone age, forefigured and foreshadowed it. It was the expectation of faith and hope in patriarchs, prophets, and psalmists. They saw it, spake it, sang its virtues, and relied on its values. It is the Centre of two eternities, on which all eyes meet. Every line of patriarchal and prophetic testimony converged toward it. Every truth proclaimed by evangelists and taught by apostles, diverges from it. It was the hour of hell's defeat, of heaven's victory. The loud voice in which the Holy Sufferer cried, "Finished," proclaimed His victory. The rent veil in the temple witnessed it. The opened graves announced His triumph over death. His glorious resurrection was God's vindication of His rejected Christ, His seal upon His finished and accepted work. That "wondrous Cross" has been the theme of preachers, witnesses, martyrs, ever since. The "preaching of the Cross" is still the power of God.

It is the message of peace to all mankind. It never becomes old, it retains the dew of its youth. In the Cross, the Christian glories. It is his title and his passport to heaven. He stands upon its merit, and seeks no other. The Cross defies the blasts and hosts of hell. The devil dreads it, seeks to hide it, and plots in vain to vitiate its power. But "the Cross it still standeth fast"—"Hallelujah for the Cross." Let it be lifted high as a standard. It is the world's only hope. All who look to it—to Him who died upon it as Sacrifice, Surety, and Substitute, are sheltered, saved, and sealed for glory. In its virtues, all who trust the Son of God as personal Ransom, Redeemer, Saviour, are justified. In its values, they are accepted. In its triumphs, they partake. In its loss, they gladly share. Before a scoffing world, they bear its brand of shame, rejoicingly. It will light them through "the valley of the shadow," up to the gates of paradise. Its sweet savour will meet them on the other shore. In the coming hour of change from mortality to life and conformity to Christ, of resurrection to incorruptibility and glorification with Christ, it will shine out with a radiance "brighter than the sun." The Cross will shine in eternal light amid the realms of glory, for "The Lamb is all the glory of Immanuel's Land." The first grand note of that great "Hallelujah" to be sung in the midst of the throne of God, by unnumbered hosts of the redeemed, is "Thou art worthy for THOU WAST SLAIN." And rolling on through all the heavenly throng of crowned elders, white-robed multitudes, palm-bearing hosts, and harping singers, is the chorus: "Worthy is the Lamb, that was slain"—the Lamb of Calvary.



## CHRIST GLORIFIED IN HEAVEN.



TO the early visitors who, in the breaking light of that memorable Resurrection morn, stood in the empty tomb, seeking the body of their Lord, the heavenly sentinels, clad in shining garments, who guarded the sacred spot where their Lord had lain, said, "He is not here, but is risen" (Luke xxiv. 6). And forty days after, that Risen One, who had met and talked and eaten with His disciples, calmly ascended from the slope of Olivet and was "received up into heaven" (Mark xvi. 19). There, God glorified Him (Acts iii. 13). And there He is at this very moment, a glorified Man in the heavens. There, His first martyr, Stephen, saw Him within the opened heavens, ready to receive His saint and servant to the rest and joy of the heavenly home, to which He Himself had come as the Forerunner and Welcomer of the "many sons" whose home-bringing to glory (Heb. ii. 10) God has entrusted to His hand. Very wonderful and very blessed it is to consider these things, and to meditate on the words in which they are communicated to us.

"He is not here." No, indeed. The earth was once the place of His pilgrimage, but never His home. He was the Stranger here. But He was not wanted in the world, for it "knew Him not." So He is no longer here, but gone to His heavenly home, the place of His honour and glory. And it is just because "He is not here," that there is nothing here to detain His

saints, or to attract to and fix their thoughts on things below. Writ large in letters never to be erased, faith reads, "He is not here"—not in the world's progress, its religion, or its prospects. And where Christ is not, where He is "disallowed," there His people should not, and if true to Him, cannot be. "He is not here" cuts the cords that bound the Christian to earth and its enjoyments, for if there was no place for Christ amid its scenes, there can surely be nothing to attract His redeemed ones there.

"He is Risen." Yes, blessed be God. Risen as Conqueror, Victor, Lord. Gone up on high as Representative, Firstfruits, and Princely Leader of His own, to prepare a place worthy of them, and presently to come again and receive them to Himself, to share the glory He has already entered upon. It is the fact that "He is risen," and that they too "have been raised together with Christ" (Col. iii. 1), that gives them interest in "things that are above, where Christ is seated on the right hand of God." So they set their affection on things above, where all their interests really are, and not on things "on the earth," in which Christ no longer is, and from which they expect very soon to go, to be "glorified with Him" (Rom. viii. 17) in that heavenly sphere.

Beloved in the Lord, it is the power of these great, these transcendent truths, welcomed by faith to the heart, and allowed to operate in the lives of saints, that make them heavenly and spiritual, that *separates* from the world, and sets the heart on things above. And nothing else will do it. "Christ crucified," cuts all the cords below. "Christ glorified," forms new links and eternal bonds above.

# CHRIST, SEATED AND EXPECTANT.



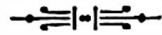
IN the Hebrews Epistle, the Lord Jesus is presented as seated in heaven and the expectant of a kingdom. He is seated, because His work of redemption is accomplished, and has been accepted. He is expectant, because the people of His purchase, the church for which He gave Himself a sacrifice, and the inheritance which He purchased by His ransom, have not yet come to Him in actual possession. The "sufferings" of which the prophets spake of old (1 Pet. i. 11) are past, but the "glories" that were to "follow" have not yet been manifested. A seated Christ tells us that the work by which our salvation, our access to God and heaven are secured, is a completed work, that there is no more to be done for our acceptance with God, or to procure our entrance to, or secure our meetness for heaven (Col. i. 12). An expectant Christ, waiting for His people and for the actual entrance on that "purchased possession" to which He has right and title, tells us, that He has not yet come to that which is His own, but is in patience waiting for it, and for that hour when He and His saints shall be "glorified together," and so enter on their joint-inheritance.

A right consideration of these two present attitudes of our Lord in heaven, as seated and expectant, with the message they bring to the soul of the saint, should (if that sight produces its desired effect and that message is received in a lively personal faith), produce a corresponding condition of heart and life in the

people of God. The sight of a seated Christ at God's right hand, having purged our sins (Heb. i. 4), effected reconciliation (Rom. v. 10), and procured peace (Col. i. 20), should set the soul at rest in the presence of God, purge the conscience, and give the joy of access to Him (Heb. x. 19) removing all fear and giving the heart rest in His presence. For there is nothing more to be done, to provide title and fitness for us in the presence of God. The blood of Christ gives an inalienable title, and the Spirit of God given consequent on redemption, and now indwelling the saints, gives ability to use that title in drawing nigh to God. But the Christian is expectant still, for until He, the "First-born" of the heavenly family comes to His own, until the "Heir" enters on the possession of His inheritance, His "brethren" (Heb. ii. 11), who are to share it with Him, cannot have their portion. And so they hope and wait, refusing to "reign" in a world from which their Lord was cast out, or to have a settled dwelling where He was a Stranger. They are content to be "despised and rejected of men," where their great Exemplar was denied His rights, and to suffer wrong where He was put to shame. They know well that the kingdom must be entered through "much tribulation" (Acts xiv. 22), so they reckon on a rough passage, with the bright hope of a warm welcome to their City Home in that land on which their eyes have long been set, which the Forerunner has already reached, and in which He now waits, seated and expectant. These are great and glorious things indeed. But they will only yield their joy and strength, if they are welcomed to the soul, and given their freedom in the domination of the life and ways of the children of God.

# THE CROWNED CHRIST,

In Humiliation, Exaltation, and Glory.



**SCENE the First.**—In the barrack room of Pilate's Prætorium, Jerusalem. A cohort of coarse soldiery, holding a mock coronation, enacting a mock investiture. In the centre of the mob there stands a Man, THE Man Christ Jesus. "And when they had platted a crown of thorns they put it upon His head" (Matt. xxvii. 29). Earth had seen many a sad sight, witnessed many a tragedy of human sin and wrong, but never one like this. Here, Jesus the Nazarene, Son of God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, Creator of heaven and earth, stands "despised and rejected of men," the object of man's hate and scorn, with a thorny chaplet on His bleeding brow, mocked, scorned, spit upon by the creatures of His hand, rejected by His own nation, the people He had come to bless. Never had man's hatred toward God and Christ and heaven, been so fully shown before. Never had men thrown off all reserve, and taken the devil's side against God and His Christ, as in that dark scene. And God has not forgotten it (Acts iv. 26-27). Nor will He ever forget it. For that thorn-crowned Christ, spit upon, struck in the face, and mocked with taunt and scorn, is the one Man on this earth who never crossed His will. This scene enacted within, is to become visible to all, in due time. "Then came Jesus forth wearing the

crown of thorns" (John xiv. 5). He could not be hid. Men of every tongue, and wondering hosts of heaven, must gaze upon "that sight." Sinners of all nations must see it and bow. His must be the Victor's fame. He endured the Cross, despised the shame. And His must be the joy and crown. His ruby blood drops were its imperishable jewels, they shall never lose their value. For God saw that great sight, He assessed it at its proper value, and the ages to come will tell in many spheres its infinite worth.

"That crown, 'mid Israel's cruel scorn,  
Marked Him as God's anointed King."

*Scene the Second.*—"We see Jesus, crowned with glory and honour" (Heb. ii. 9). Crowned already with "the Victor's crown" (Newberry). Not here, but yonder in the highest heaven, whither He has gone. Crowned in acknowledgment of His victory already won. Crowned in token of His acceptability to God, the present acknowledgment of His perfect work. Seated too He is, up there. Not yet on His own throne, but on His Father's throne (Rev. iii. 21), awaiting that hour in which He will be called to occupy His own throne, and "take" unto Him His great power, already bestowed (Rev. xii. 17) and, using it, "reign."

*Scene the Third.*—"I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He that sat on him. . . . And on His head were many diadems." They are all His by right. He has won them, won them by His Cross. The kingdom is the Lord's, and He will yet be "Governor among the nations." All nations shall serve Him, and all shall "call Him blessed." Earth, as well as heaven, will own His sovereign rule then.

The usurper's power shall cease and the long-cherished hope will be fulfilled. All redeemed mankind will then join to sing—

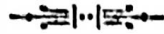
“Bring forth the Royal Diadem,  
And crown Him, Lord of all.”

And the crowning will be with not one, but “many diadems,” or kingly crowns, as the word in Rev. xix. 12, R.V.) is. For the glory of the celestial and the glories of the terrestrial will all be His in the coming days of Christ's power when He comes to reign.

“And the crowns that were worn on the False One's brow,  
Shall be worn by their rightful Lord.”

For God's King will then be on His holy hill (Psa. ii. 6), and in that day “the Lord shall be King over all the earth” (Zech. xiv. 9), and His rule owned everywhere (Psa. lxxii. 17).

# THE SYMPATHIES OF CHRIST.



IN the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Christian is viewed as passing through the world, as a pilgrim to his heavenly home. To him, as to Israel of ancient time, this pilgrimage is a time of temptation or testing, in which his faith and his faithfulness are put to the proof. And here it is, in the time of his weakness and liability to fail under the pressure of his trials, or to be enticed by temptations from the scenes through which he passes, that the gracious ministry in sympathy and in succour of the living Lord meets him in his need, giving grace to sustain the trial, and imparting true sympathy while he endures it. Of the priest of olden time it is said, that he was able to "bear gently" (R.V.) in his measure with those to whom he ministered, as he himself was "compassed with infirmity," and, therefore, liable to err. But it is not so with our Great High Priest. For although He "was in all points tempted like as we are, apart from sin," He ever was Himself, the Holy One of God, subject to no infirmity, compassed with no weakness, liable to yield to no enticement. In Him was Manhood in all perfection seen, without fracture or stain, ever presenting to God all that man was due to Him in devotion, obedience, and service. But while He "knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21), and certainly experienced none of the effects of it in weakness or infirmity, He came



sufficiently near to us, in our low estate, to “know our frame,” and to experience the hostilities of the world through which His people pass, and the testings to which they are subject, so as to be fitted for that place and that service to which He has been “called” (Heb. v. 4) by God, and in which He will ever abide while there is a tried and tempted saint of God in pilgrimage on earth. He can be “touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” and in all the perfect sympathy of His sinless manhood, He is able to succour as well as to sympathise, because He is “Jesus, the Son of God,” passed into the heavens and up to the eternal throne, as One alike perfect in His humanity to sympathise, as supreme in His Deity to save. He is the “very same Jesus,” who had compassion on the widow who followed her only son to the grave at Nain, who wept at Lazarus’ tomb in sympathy with the bereaved sisters of Bethany, and whose tender “compassions fail not.” Although now far beyond personal suffering Himself, He is still the perfect Sympathiser with and the mighty Succourer of His people, in all their sorrows and amid all their tears. He ministers of His sympathy through the Word by the Spirit to the waiting soul, and He imparts of His strength to those who “come boldly” to that Throne of Grace upon which He sits, to “obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” It is His peoples’ privilege to make use of Him in this unwearied service as Sympathiser and Succourer, “all the days” of their pilgrimage here. And while it is His delight ever to be used by His own, especially in every “dark distressing, hour,” in days of faith’s trials His sympathies are especially in exercise and in season

# THE LORD'S SHEPHERD CARE.



**T**HE twenty-third Psalm presents to us a lovely picture of the shepherd character and work of the Lord Jesus. The present aspect of the service of the glorified Christ in heaven is that of a shepherd—"that Great Shepherd of the sheep" (Heb. xiii. 20), who was "brought again from the dead," and who is now caring for and leading safely home "the little flock for which He died." To Him God has committed them, and charged Him to fulfil that word of His, uttered under the shadow of the Cross, that not one of those given Him by the Father should perish by the way (John xvii. 12). To feed and to lead, to restore and to rule, is the sum of His shepherd work. His rule is shepherd rather than kingly in character. The crook and the rod are its insignia, rather than the crown and the sceptre. He will surely be manifested as King, in a day soon to come. But this is not yet. When He rules as King over the nations, His rule will be "in righteousness" (Isa. xxxii. 11), suppressing evil and establishing right. But He is not so engaged at present. He is serving His saints and shepherding His flock, but not either judging or cleansing "the world of the ungodly." Nor is He employing His people in the improvement of it. The opening words of the Psalm are, "The Lord is my Shepherd." As sinners, we need a Saviour, and the convicted yet confiding soul, chased from one false

refuge to another, at length yields, confessing, "Thou art my Salvation." As sinners saved by grace on the way to glory, liable to err from the way, we need a Shepherd. And it is to Christ as "Shepherd and Bishop of souls" that we returned, on the day of conversion, as 1 Pet. ii. 25 tells us. So we have a Shepherd, to feed and to rule us. In this character, the soul of the saint is to appropriate Him and to use Him. For while God has given Him to us, and the Lord has devoted Himself to us (John x. 11) in this service, we must make Him ours as our Shepherd, just as we did as Saviour, in order to enjoy His Shepherd rule and care. It is this that the Psalmist does, as expressed in verse 1, "The Lord is *my* Shepherd." Yes, mine, my very own, to feed and to rule over me, to-day, to-morrow, all the days, and all the way. This, when real, means complete confidence, entire submission, loving obedience. The sheep "know" in the sense of owning the Shepherd, and they hear His voice (John x. 27), hear it in the way of obedience too, for they "follow Him." When this is known as an experience of the soul, it is not hard to say, "I shall not want." How can I? My case is in His hands; my need is on His heart; my care is His constant consideration. "He careth," as a shepherd cares for his sheep. The second verse tells how He provides for His guided and cared-for sheep. He "maketh me to lie down in green—that is freshly-budding pastures"—the pastures found in the Word. There it was that He led the two sad disciples on the Emmaus' road on that afternoon, when He opened up to them "all the Scriptures concerning Himself," and caused their heart to burn by the way. He ever leads His people to the

Word, and opens both it and their understandings to receive it freshly gathered, like the manna from the dew of morning (Num xi. 9). And thus it is that the soul is "restored," or, as we might say, "reinvigorated," like the exhausted man who has been "run down" by daily toil, who needs the "daily renewing," as 2 Cor. iv. 16, has it. It is from lack of this that spiritual freshness and vigour fail, and commonly backsliding and decay set in. To neglect the ministry of the Lord in leading His own to the fresh pastures of the Word, and by the "quiet waters"—those restful and refreshing streamlets of the Spirit's providing, to which He delights to guide (John xvi. 13-15), is the root cause of all barrenness and lack of spiritual freshness, whether found in an individual, or an assembly of saints. And there is no real remedy, nothing to bring back the early sweetness,—that "love of espousals" (Jer. ii. 2), so much prized by our God in His own,—other than a true-hearted return to the living Lord, who is now as ever the Faithful Shepherd of His sheep, and the Feeder and Controller of His flock.

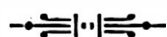
And in this present ministry of the Lord, He is surely to be our Exemplar and Pattern. It is according to His own perfect example, that all who serve Him in His church as under-shepherds are to "shepherd the flock" according to the way of the Lord, as set forth in the Word. They, too, are to "feed" the Lord's lambs and sheep, in the green and freshly-budding pastures of the Word, to feed them with food "convenient to them" (Prov. xxx. 8), giving the true message "in season," savoury and sweet, suited to their condition, as they are "able to hear it" (Mark iv. 33), not choking babes with "strong meat," but

simply, lovingly, "ministering Christ," and the "wholesome doctrine" of the Word, ever well proportioned, well balanced, and always in grace. There will be no difficulty in getting a people to hear and wait on such a ministry, for where there is "corn in the crib" there the hungry go. Even when the word of "reproof" and the sharp two-edged sword is in use—always sore and irksome to nature—it will find and call forth a response in all whose consciences are open to the light of God, to do its work in conviction and restoration—a ministry sadly needed, but yet little heard in this honey-mouthed day, in which to please rather than to profit is too often the preacher's object. And in "shepherding the flock," the tender heart and the skilful hand (Psa. lxxviii. 72) are alike needed, for the people of God need sympathy as well as food and wise guidance through the trying as well as the rugged paths of life. Let our appeal ever be direct to the Great Shepherd, and He will provide, either directly from Himself, or mediately through his under-shepherds, what He knows to be best for us.

Then let our faith to Him repair  
In every trying hour,  
To find a never-failing spring  
Of sympathy and power.

# THE RISEN LORD IN HEAVEN.

And the Presence of the Spirit on Earth.



REAT truths of eternal value to the people of God of this present time, were uttered by the Lord to "His own" (John xiii. 1) in the last hours of His presence with them in the "upper room" in the City of Jerusalem, just before He went forth to enter on the agony of Gethsemane and the sufferings of Calvary. Among these last words is the plain announcement of the Lord's personal absence from His own, and His return to heaven, the heaven from which He came, not to forget them, but to be nearer to them and more intimate with them than He ever had been in the years of His earthly presence with them. And He also gave them the definite promise that when He reached that heaven, from whence He came, and had been exalted there to a place of dignity and honour as glorified Man, on the right hand of God, that He would receive from the Father "the gift of the Holy Spirit," the Comforter, and send Him as Paraclete to be *in* and *with* His people, in successive generations, throughout the whole period of His personal absence from them. These two great facts distinguish the present period from all before it, and all that will succeed it. (1) The exaltation of the Son to the throne in the heavens, with "all authority" committed to His hand (Matt. xxviii. 18), to be confessed (Rom. x. 9) and owned as Lord by His people individually (Col. ii. 6), and as Head of, and over all to His church collectively. And (2) the

presence of the Holy Spirit as Paraclete and Strengtheners of the saints, for life and for service personally, and as Indweller (1 Cor. iii. 16) and Administrator (1 Cor. xii. 4-11) in "the Church" as a body (1 Cor. xii. 13) in its unity, and in "churches of the saints" in their individuality. These two facts characterise the whole period between His going and His coming. And after Christ had died and risen, and been glorified at the right hand of God, the promise given in the upper room was duly fulfilled on the Pentecostal Day (Acts ii. 1-3). And this is how His disciples, to whom it was given on that night of the farewell words in the upper room, understood it, as was testified by Peter on the streets of Jerusalem that day. "Therefore," said he, "being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, as ye now see and hear" (Acts ii. 33). These two great facts give special character to the time now present. (1) The glorified Lord in heaven, consequent on His finished work on earth being accepted, and He Himself exalted as Man, having become obedient unto death, now invested by God with "all authority" to be confessed, honoured, and obeyed as Lord by His people, in "all things whatsoever He has commanded" in His Word. For that Word the is full, abiding expression of His authority, never to be abrogated, altered, or added to, but simply, loyally, and faithfully obeyed, in all things, in all circumstances, under all conditions, without compromise and without fear. For he is the Lord and "Master in heaven" (Eph. vi. 9), to whom His people owe that honour and fear, which to a master belongs (Mal. i. 6), but which is so sadly lacking among

Christians in these last days. And (2) the abiding, indwelling, perpetual presence of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, strengthening with "all might" (Eph. iii. 16) those in whom He dwells, to do all that He has "commanded" to be done. So that there need be no excuse for the neglect of, or for disobedience to, any "commandment of the Lord" (1 Cor. xiv. 27), either in individual or assembly life. For we have in the Word in all its plainness making known what He commands to be done, and we have in the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, all that we require to enable us to render obedience to "all things whatsoever the Lord has commanded" (Matt. xxviii. 19). These include what we owe to Him in our individual lives, and what He claims from us in our church relations and service for His Name. But in order to have and experience that strengthening which is of the Holy Ghost, we must be found in the path of obedience to the Lord as He has made that path known to us in His Word, for it is only where the Word of the Lord is owned and honoured, and the way of the Lord as that Word points it out is walked in, that we can count upon the gracious help of the Spirit of God alike, in worship, ministry, and service for the Lord's Name. It is a spurious type of "spirituality" that has much to say of the strengthening and leading of and fulness of the Spirit, which at the same time belittles parts of the Word of the Lord, or speaks of them as being unimportant or "non-essential." For "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," is "Spirit-breathed," and is "profitable for teaching," as it is necessary unto a healthy and well-balanced spirituality in those who are the people of God.



## OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST.



**B**Y the work of the Cross, believing sinners have been brought nigh to God (Eph. ii. 13). And in this place of nearness they abide, in virtue of the once-offered and abidingly accepted sacrifice of the Son of God, under the virtue of which they continuously stand. They are abidingly cleansed, sanctified, and made competent to draw near to God, in virtue of the one offering of Jesus Christ, the value of which is unchangeable in the estimate of heaven. And He, who once was their Surety and Sacrifice on the Cross, is, as we are told in Heb. x. 21, now a "High Priest over the house of God," in an unchangeable priesthood, for all His people. So that we may, as we do truthfully sing—

"By Him, our Sacrifice and Priest,  
We enter through the veil."

To this office of the priesthood, the Lord Jesus was "called" by God in resurrection, and installed therein as glorified in heaven, the great antitype of Melchisedeck, after whose order His priesthood stands. And He will have no successor. For His priesthood is intransmissible, it will never pass to another, as Aaron's did. The priest under the Levitical order, was to be one who was able to exercise forbearance toward the ignorant and erring, seeing he himself was compassed with infirmity. And thus was he qualified to sympathise with and succour, those whom he repre-

sented. In the Lord Jesus there is resemblance, yet dissimilarity, to this. For, though we are told that He was "in all points tempted like as we are," yet He was "apart from sin." Sin had no place in Him. He "knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21); He "did no sin" (1 Pet. ii. 22); "in Him is no sin" (1 John iii. 5). Yet this sinless Sufferer was truly and actually tempted; never by sin *in* Him, but much by Satan (Matt. iv. 1), who used all his subtle arts and devices to lead Him away from subjection to God, and to rejection of His Word. But at every point in which He was assailed, He "resisted the devil," and stood true to God. And thus He overcame. Now, He appears "in the presence of God for us" (Heb. ix. 24), as our Representative and Great High Priest (Heb. viii. 1). It was to a redeemed and separated people, passing through the wilderness toward their Canaan home, compassed by enemies and liable to fail, that God gave to them Aaron to be their High Priest, to represent them continually before God, so that they were ever remembered. On the two onyx stones borne on his shoulders, upon which the names of the twelve tribes were graven in the order of their birth, all Israel stood in unity before God continuously. And on the twelve precious stones of varied colours, all set in gold, the twelve tribes were continually presented according to their places as ordered by God, on the breastplate bound to his heart, so that they were always in remembrance there. Amalek might fight, Balaam curse, and Moab resist their progress, but God had their cause ever before Him. So that no enemy could triumph, no weapon formed against them prosper (Isa. liv. 17), unless they forsook God, turned their back

upon His Word, and went after other gods. Then their downfall came. The people of God passing through the world are compassed by their foes without, and with infirmities within, are liable to err and to sin. And it is to meet these conditions that "We have a Great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God" (Heb. iv. 14). Having passed through the scene Himself, He is able to sympathise, for He can be "touched" with the feeling of our infirmities. In His sinless, perfect, unstained humanity He is perfectly able to sympathise, for He still bears the Name of "Jesus," yet withal He is "the Son of God," mighty to save, and strong to succour and to save evermore, all the way, all who are on the way to God, for He "ever liveth to make intercession" for His own (Heb. vii. 25). And all the dignity of His Person and value of His work invest His priesthood. Let us prove the efficacy of this precious ministry all the days of our sojourn here. It is, or ought to be, the greatest comfort of the saints of God, while here in mortal flesh. In the daily round of life, Christ is to be the constant Friend. In hours of weakness, and trial, His consolations fail not. And when human helpers flee or fail, He is always near, ever ready to be used, always at our service, to sympathise, and to save.

There's no place where earthly sorrows  
Are more felt than up in heaven,  
And there's none where earthly failings  
Have so kindly judgment given.

Let our appeal then, in every hour of need, of weakness, and of testing, be direct to Him. He is and ever will be faithful to the God who appointed Him.

# AN ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER.



THE priesthood of the Lord Jesus is with God. His advocacy is with the Father (1 John ii. 2). And the change of words indicate a difference in relationships, as held by the same persons. As High Priest, the Lord's ministry is to keep His people from failing. As Advocate, it is to deal with them, and to restore them when they do fail. The believer is "justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39), once for all, at the time of his conversion. And at no future stage of his history will he stand before God as a sinner, to be judged for his sins. For to him there is the definite assurance that he "shall not come into judgment," but is "passed out of death into life" (John v. 24, R.V.). But if, as a child of God, he fails and falls, either or both of two things will happen. (1) He will be made conscious that there is a cloud between him and his Father in heaven. His communion will be broken, and his peace of heart (Phil. iv. 7), lost. He will not be happy. Sin has disturbed the rest of his soul. He will be as a child who, in disobedience to his parent, has gone into some forbidden path, soiled his garments, and is ashamed to appear in the family circle, around the family board. (2) Should he continue in this state, unhumbled by it and refusing to own it, Fatherly chastisement will come upon him (Heb. xii. 9-11), and he will have to "hear the rod," if he will not bow to the voice of

conscience and of the Word, and judge himself for his sin. His relationship as a child is not disturbed, but his intercourse with the Father for the time being, is. And this is a solemn pass to reach in the life-history of a true child of God. If pride, self-will, and hardening of heart ensue, it may form a crisis, from which he may never be fully restored, or have the dew of his spiritual youth returned and renewed in experience. And in such a condition he may drift further from God, and into a backslidden and worldly condition, from which he may never fully recover. How many there are in such a state! Once bright, happy, active Christians, but they took a false step, a wrong turning, got into bad company, neglected prayer and their Bibles, and at last were tripped up or overcome, and lie like a bird with a broken wing, unable to rise into the air, or to sing as they did in days of spiritual youth. There should be no delays in having such a condition dealt with, and this thoroughly and honestly. There must be no cloaking of sin, no blaming others for it; but a full and detailed confession of it to God as Father (1 John i. 9), and a forsaking of it (Prov. xxviii. 13), and cleansing from "all unrighteousness," of which such departure from God is the real cause. It is just here that the advocacy of the Lord Jesus comes in. We see it exemplified in the case of Simon Peter in Luke xxii. 31-32. The Lord, who could read his heart, had already warned him of his "haughty spirit," which is the sure precursor of "a fall" (Prov. xvi. 18). But Peter heeded not the warning word. Then the Lord prayed for Peter—even before Peter's open fall, and for this, that in the hour of testing, his faith "might not fail" in the

"sifting" he was about to be subjected to. Peter fell, but not finally. When the Lord "looked upon" Peter, he "wept bitterly." This was the evidence of his contrition. And when through grace, having been fully reinstated in his place of service, he used his experience to "strengthen his brethren" for many a year after. And all such restoration is due to the service of an "Advocate with the Father," who in unwearied love and faithfulness, serves His brethren, of whom He is "First-born" (Rom. viii. 30). And to honest, contrite hearts, He never fails in His office, which is to restore their souls (Psa. xxiii. 2), and to bring them back to the enjoyment of fellowship with the Father, which sin had disturbed. And this latter He does, by bringing to their consciences the "water of the Word," as exemplified in the scene in the upper room, when He brought the basin and the towel to wash the soil-stained feet of His disciples, apart from which cleansing He told Peter he could have "no part" with Him—that is no present part—as we say—no communion. "*In Christ*" Peter had "a part" which he could not forfeit, as all true believers have now in salvation, security, and relationship. Their place "*in Christ*" can never be lost. But "*with Christ*," in fellowship, communion, heart intercourse, can be and always is disturbed by the least continuance *in* or connivance *with* sin. Let us, therefore, "keep short accounts with God." When we fail or fall, judge it at once, confess it to God as our Father, yield to the work of the Great Advocate in His restoring grace, and submit to the use of the Word He brings to the conscience to cleanse it from not only the sin that stains it, but to separate the child

of God from the evil and the way, that led to his fall. The word "Advocate" in 1 John ii. 1 is the same in the original, as "Comforter" in John xvi. 9, used of the Spirit, and is well expressed in the title of *Paraclete*—one brought to our aid, to stand by us, and support our cause. This the Lord Jesus does *for* His own, in heaven with the Father. And this also the Spirit does *in* the Christian, for He "makes intercession for the saints" (Rom. viii. 32). And He it is who brings the Word in season to the soul in the hour of its restoration to communion with the Father. How well provided then are the people of God! Not surely to make them careless in their ways, or indifferent to that holy living and manner of life unto which they have been called (1 Pet. i. 15), but to prevent them from either "fainting" under a sense of their failure, or "regarding it lightly," as if it were a commonplace event, to be little exercised over.

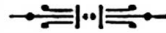
### CHRIST, OUR PARACLETE.

CHRIST our Advocate, unwearied,  
 Serving all His people still,  
 Day by day their cause upholding  
 In the Father's gracious will;  
 On his heart, in love unchanging,  
 Bearing all their need and care,  
 All their failings and their stumblings,  
 Weighed and measured in His prayer.

High 'mid heaven's unsullied glory,  
 There before the Father's face,  
 Knowing all His people's weakness,  
 Claiming for them daily grace;  
 By the Spirit's gracious teaching,  
 Making all His fulness known,  
 And in ceaseless, faithful service,  
 Watching o'er them from the throne.

# A MINISTER OF THE SANCTUARY:

The Present Service of the Glorified Lord.



AMONG the many honours which our glorified Lord bears in the heavens, as set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews, there is one that receives less attention among Christians generally than its importance claims. We read in chapter viii., "Now of the things which we have spoken"—those enumerated in Chapters i.-vii.—"this is the sum"—the main point. "We have such an High Priest, who has taken His seat on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, a *Minister* of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." In His present session at the right hand of God our Divine Lord fills the office of Great High Priest, and likewise that of "Minister of the Sanctuary," which sanctuary is not a house made with hands, like the tabernacle in the wilderness, which was only an "example and shadow of heavenly things," but a "true tabernacle," pitched in the heavens by the Lord Himself—in which He officiates in the double character of "Great High Priest over the house of God" (chap. x. 21), and as "Minister of the Sanctuary," And these offices He fills for and toward His people, in all the dignity and power of His peerless Person, and value of His perfect work. In this sanctuary all believers are priests and worshippers, and in "one



Spirit " all have equal access to the Father " through Christ " (Eph. ii. 18). The whole company of the redeemed compose that " holy priesthood," all of whom have been brought nigh to God, to stand in His sanctuary, in whom He as Father seeks worship (John iv. 23). There is no earthly " place of worship " now. Nor is there any sacerdotal priesthood, in which a chosen few have places of preferential nearness to God. There is only one " Great High Priest " over the house of God. And the exclusive honour of this office belongs to the glorified Lord, the called and anointed Son of God. And this same exalted and all-glorious Lord is " Minister " of the true sanctuary in heaven, in which He appears "*for us*" before the face of God. There also (Heb. ix. 24) He ministers *to us* from God of that grace which is " always, in all things "; for every form of need from heaven continually of His fulness to His people, who are here on earth. " Through Him " their prayers ascend to God, " through Him " and from God all their supplies come down, alike to the individual believer and to the " churches of the saints " (1 Cor. xiv. 33). But it is, and ever has been the enemy's work, to hinder this direct and godly dealing with the living Lord toward His people. He seeks to interpose between their souls and their Great High Priest in the heavens, men exercising sacerdotal functions, who virtually deny to the heavenly priesthood the liberties accorded to all saints as worshippers (Heb. x. 20-22), and seek to absorb in themselves all gifts of ministry toward the saints, such as are given by the living Lord in heaven (Eph. iv. 11, 12) for the edifying of the church. In the assemblies of the saints, this truth of the Lord

being "Minister of the sanctuary," and Head from whom all true ministry of supply comes, through whomsoever He may be pleased to send it, needs to be ever in remembrance, and full opportunity given for its exercise, if the Lord is to have His due place and honour in the midst of His people.

And where the glorified Christ is truly owned as "Minister of the Sanctuary," in the appointment of His God, there will be place for a man, however gifted, to assume the title of "*The Minister*," in any assembly or congregation of the redeemed. For while there are those who having received gifts of ministry, and who use them to the edification of their brethren, there are none who have any exclusive right to the designation of "*The Minister*," as if no other had the ability and the right to minister of "the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. v. 10) to the saints, or proclaim the Gospel of the Grace of God (Acts xx. 24) to sinners. All who have been "entrusted" by God with His Gospel (1 Thess. ii. 4) are as His stewards all responsible to spread it, as much as in them is (Rom. i. 15), and all who have "received the Gift" of ministering the Word to the saints, are to speak it as "the oracles of God" (1 Pet. iv. 11) waiting for man's sanction, and fearing no man's frown. But as the servants of God, studying only to be well-pleasing unto Him, and to serve in full view of the judgment-seat of Christ (2 Cor. v. 10), where all service will be manifested, reviewed and rewarded, according as His estimate of what it has been.

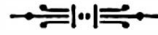
# THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF CHRIST.



HERE must have been great attractiveness in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, during the time of His earthly ministry, to gather around Himself so many different classes and conditions of mankind, and to detain them with Him as His disciples and willing servants. With the fickle multitude, who at times waited on His ministry, the loaves and fishes provided by Him to meet their hunger (John vi. 26), and the healing virtue that flowed from His touch (Mark i. 32-34 ; vi. 56), to their sick, might draw crowds into the deserts after Him, and around the doors of houses in which He found a rest (Mark ii. 1, 2). But few of these had any real attachment to His Person. It was different with His true disciples, those whom the Father had "drawn" (John vi. 37-44) to Him, who having responded to His call, had been received by Him, never to be cast out by Him (ver. 37), nor to permanently desert Him, as false professors and apostates ultimately do. In answer to His inquiry, "Will ye also go away?" at a time when many "went back" to "walk no more with Him" (John vii. 66, 67), one who spoke on behalf of all, answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." This was the attraction that drew them to Him, and this the bond that kept them, spite of all their stumblings and their failures, with and around Himself. He

was the One who met the deepest cravings of their being, whose love won their hearts, and who, while He neither withheld His reproofs of their folly, nor condoned their ignorance of His will, yet so held them by the attractiveness of His Person, that they were ready to sacrifice all, and did leave all for His sake. Yes, there was a wonderful attractiveness in "the Lord of glory," to those who had been born of God and called by grace. "Fairer than the children of men" (Psa. xlv. 2) in His excellence, perfect in His character, or moral glory, He was the object of their devotion and the "chiefest among ten thousand" in their estimation. They clung to Him in evil and good report, and followed Him even when He was blamed for being "beside Himself" and with having a demon. Or if one in an evil hour denied Him, the bitter tears of repentance that flowed from his anguished soul, told more than the confession of his lips, how truly he loved Him, and could not rest until he was restored to His confidence and love. And then, what different natures He was able to group and hold around Him, in these disciples! Some were impetuous and ardent, others slow and hard to convince, "sons of thunder" and doubting Thomas, Martha of Bethany, cumbered with care, and Mary of Magdala, of loving and devoted heart, all around, near to and finding in Christ their Lord and Lover, One to whom they could come in their distresses, tell out the deepest plaint of their hearts, and find in His company their heaven on earth. And He is the same Lord Jesus still, enough, as we sing, "The mind and heart to fill," as under the guidance and teaching of the Spirit He is presented to the soul in the Sacred Word.

## “HE IS ALTOGETHER LOVELY.”



HIS is the estimate and language of a heart occupied with the beauties and glories of Christ. However the mystic language of “the Song of Songs” may be understood, literally, symbolically, and dispensationally, there is unanimity of thought among all believers and schools of interpretation, that its grand and glowing expressions of love and devotion to its object, can only find their full answer in the occupation of the saint with the Saviour, in the heart’s occupation with Christ. And this is surely the highest and holiest occupation in which a redeemed and regenerated soul can share on earth. It is good to know the Lord’s salvation; it is better surely to become personally acquainted with the Saviour Himself. It is grand indeed for the redeemed and rescued sinner, to know and enjoy the blessings of redemption, and to sing his song of triumph, and pass on from the blessing to know the Blessor. In the “Song of Songs;” personal salvation is assumed throughout. Of the soul’s relationship to Christ no doubts are raised. Acceptance is never questioned. It is “in the Beloved” (Eph. i. 6), and unalterable. And so it surely must, for the work and worth of the Son of God, His own Beloved, never vary, never change in the estimate of God and heaven. And so the acceptance of the believing soul in all the virtues of Christ’s person and all the values of Christ’s work; remains

for ever the same. This, faith receives, and here faith rests. The soul is at peace, the heart is at rest, and the Lord Himself becomes the supreme object of the saint's quest. "To know Him" thus, as He is revealed by the Spirit, whose office is to take of "the things of Christ," all so well known to Him, and "show them"—making them known by bringing them home as He only can to the heart, so causing it to "burn" as on that resurrection morn, when the living Lord walked with the two disciples on the Emmaus road, and expounded to them in "all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke xxiv. 27), is the very highest privilege of the saint. And here—as represented in the mystic Bride—there is the sweet enjoyment of this, and the glorious expression of it in her testimony to His worth. She has seen the beauties of her Lord and Lover, she has marked His moral excellencies, and here, when challenged by the question, "What is thy beloved more than another?" she pours forth in detail her estimate of His worth, and ends with the glowing words, "He is altogether lovely." Is it thus with thee, O my soul? Is it the chief business of thy life, to so "behold the beauty of the Lord," that the heart, aglow with the heavenly vision, shall be ready to utter His praises, and describe His excellencies, on demand and as opportunity occurs, ever and always so, among the children of men? This is surely the highest service, the most powerful testimony that a saint can render, to be ever able and always ready to express from a personal, intelligent, and happy experience of the love and loveliness of the Son of God as Lord and Lover, that all excellency is His—that "He is altogether lovely."

## ON HIS HEAD, MANY DIADEMS.



**I**N that wondrous vision given to the lone prisoner of Patmos, in which the opened heavens disclose the Son of Man returning to earth for judgment, accompanied by the host of heaven, He is described as “ King of kings and Lord of lords.” And on “ His head are many crowns.” The word here used for “ crowns ” is *diadema*— a regal crown, the symbol of imperial dignity, as contrasted with *stephanos*—the victor’s crown, won in the race, or contest, the reward of merit, the symbol of triumph. Already the glorified Lord in heaven wears His Victor’s Crown (Heb. ii. 9), for His triumph is already complete. His victory has been won. But the hour of His coronation with His regal crowns, which are His right, is yet to come. It will be the public response of heaven to the dishonour He suffered on earth. Men crowned the Christ of God with a crown of thorns, and bowed the knee before Him in mockery. God will set upon His brow, once so rudely wreathed with thorns, the Royal Diadem of heaven, investing Him with the glory and the power which to Him belongs as “ King of kings.” He will bring Him back to the world that cast Him out, and to the very scenes in which the Cross once stood, arrayed in royal majesty, crowned with His “ many diadems,” to be owned and acknowledged as “ Lord of all.” And where the ruby blood drops of His Passion once sat, the “ many crowns ”—symbolic of His earthly rights—will then shine in their unfading beauty and unsullied splendour. Twice before this, the word *diadema* is found in the Book of Revelation.

Once, in chapter xii. 3, on the head of the Dragon ; once, in chapter xiii. 1, on the head of the Beast, the devil's representative and his ruler of the kingdoms of earth. But the day will come when He, whose right it is to reign, will come to his own, and then

“ The crowns that were wreathed on the False One's brow,  
Shall be worn by their rightful Lord.”

The *diadema*—the royal crown of *Creation's* lord, will be His, worn on that day of its release from its curse and the bondage of its corruption. Lost to Adam in the day of his fall, regained by Christ in the hour of His triumph. *Israel's* crown will also be on His brow, for the returning conqueror is the Man of Calvary, above whose Cross they wrote in scorn, “ Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” And the crowns of *Gentile* nations, whose rulers come to own Him King, and lay their riches at His feet (Psa. lxxii. 10), will be His also on that day. He is worthy of them all.

And then the weary earth and the restless nations, shall know the benign rule of the Prince of Peace. But not till then. No, never ! For how can the earth be at rest, or the world “ break forth into singing ” (Isa. xiv. 7), while the great usurper wears its regal crown, and claims to be its prince and ruler ? But judgment must soon clear the scene, and the great usurper will then pass to his doom. Then will heaven's hallelujahs rise in honour of her rightful King, and the call will echo from the eternal throne outward, onward, to the uttermost bounds of creation, all joining in the joyful song—

“ Bring forth the Royal Diadem,  
And crown Him, Lord of all.”



# CHRIST, THE MOTIVE IN SERVICE.

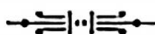


TWO hundred and fifty years ago, the saintly Samuel Rutherford lay on his dying pillow, bright and full of the joy of the Lord, whom he had loved and served amid times of cruel persecution. Four of his fellow-Presbyters came to see him, and to them his farewell words of godly cheer and of weighty exhortation from the glory-gate were, "My Lord and Master is the chiefest of ten thousand. None is comparable to Him, in heaven or on earth. Dear brethren, do all for Christ. Pray for Christ, preach for Christ, feed the flock for Christ ; do all for Christ. Beware of men pleasing—there is too much of it among us."

These words of testimony to the excellency of the glorified Christ, and to Himself as the true motive and spring of all service for His Name, come ringing down the centuries, as a voice to the soul for the present hour. They tell us what a dying saint, looking into the eternal world, estimates the true motive of all service to be. It is Christ Himself, "the chiefest of ten thousand," with whom none and nothing here is comparable. Himself the object and the motive for all that His servants "do and teach," in all they seek and say. What a dignity and holy height, this gives to the service of the Lord ! "The ministry" is, alas ! too often taken up as a pastime by some, and as a means to earn a livelihood by others. And no higher

ambition than to be "a good preacher," and to be "well-spoken of," may soon become its motive if not its object, if the excellency of Christ and the ambition to exalt His Name alone, ceases to be the driving power of service for His peerless Name. To preach Christ for Christ's sake, seeking Christ's approval alone, is no easy task to flesh and blood. It needs continual self-judgment, habitual heart-searching, with continuous reference to God in the secret of His presence of all, to maintain the right motive, as well as the Scriptural manner of service. And only as the preacher preaches to, and the pastor feeds and leads the flock of Christ, for Christ's sake, and not to please men, to gain their smile and secure their commendation, is his service acceptable in heaven, or of abiding value in those to whom it is rendered. "Do ALL for Christ," said the dying Rutherford. His love the constraining power, His glory the one aim, Himself the supreme Object in it all. There are few who will venture to say they do it. But it ought to be the aim of all, for nothing less and nothing else, gives pleasure to God. And what is any service worth, if it falls short of this? It will be motive rather than measure that will tell, in the day when, before His judgment seat, the living Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart. And then shall every man have praise of God (1 Cor. iv. 5), for exactly what he is worth. There will be no "fulsome flattery" then, as too often there is now. Therefore, as the dying patriarch, with the beams of the "glory dwelling in Immanuel's land" falling on his departing spirit said, "Beware of pleasing men—there is too much of it among us."

# CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.



THE history of the Church, the period of her earthly path, is surely included between the resurrection and ascension of the Lord into heaven, with the coming of the Spirit from heaven to earth, and her own resurrection and ascension to meet the Lord in His descent from heaven into the air, as in 1 Thess. iv. 14-19. The former gave her existence and set her on the pilgrim path; the latter will close her wilderness journey and bring her to the Father's house (John xiv. 3). Her resurrection, like that of her Lord, will be a "resurrection from among the dead" (Mark ix. 10). This will be its character. It will be elective, and it will be for heaven. For the raised saints, together with those who will "go without dying," are to ascend together to meet the Lord in the air, and "so shall they be ever with their Lord." And this indeed is the sure position and place of the church, the out-called saints of the present dispensation. It is this that characterises them. In life, in glory, and in rejection, they are one with Christ. The word to Saul on the Damascus road, as he persecuted the saints, "Why persecutest thou ME?" (Acts ix. 4), made this known. And the words of the Spirit in the Epistles seal the great mystery, that Christ and the church are no more twain, but one (Eph. v. 30). And as surely as in the present, "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17), and "We are members of His body," so in the hour of the first resurrection, His members shall be found in His image,

with and like Himself. Already they are redeemed and raised together with Christ (1 Pet. i. 19; Col. iii. 1), and the Cross which they own, has brought them nigh to God (Eph. ii. 13), and within the veil (Heb. x. 10). Severed from the world (Gal. vi. 14), they are brought without the camp "unto Him" (Heb. xii. 12), to share His rejection and bear His Name and shame. Do we esteem it an honour to share the reproach of Christ, in a world that had no place for Him, other than a felon's cross? O the glory of that Cross! Angels would embrace it, clasp it, cleave to it, and count it an honour to stand with a Christ "despised and rejected of men," beside it. But His blood-bought church, who owes her all to that Cross, what of her? Is she ashamed to own it, to bear its brand, to share its scorn? Art thou, O my soul? It is vain to talk of "being made conformable" unto Christ's death (Phil. iii. 10), if we shrink from and shirk identification with that lone and awful Cross. It is sheer hypocrisy to sing—

"Thy reproach and Cross I love,"

if I stand aloof and afar off, when His Name is disowned and His truth dishonoured. If the heart is right with God, who ever honours His Son, it can never be neutral to His claims, nor lightly esteem His Word. The church is called to be Christ's witness, His representative here in the world, where once He was rejected. And if she be true to Him, truly for Him, and not for another (cf. Hos. ii. 3), she—and you and I as part thereof—will surely share His rejection and bear the brand of His Cross, openly and joyfully without flinching, in shame, or fleeing or fear.

# THE GLORIFIED LORD.

Walking Amid the Churches.



THE vision presented to John, when an exile on Patmos, of the glorified Son of Man, walking "in the midst" of God's churches still on the earth, is not that of Christ as the sympathising High Priest able to succour (Heb. ii. 18) and save them in the hour of temptation, but as the Searcher of hearts (chap. ii. 23), whose penetrating eyes (chap. i. 14) see their true condition, and whose faithful judgment makes known to them their state, as He knows it and records it. The symbols of lamps and stars, tell this to be a night scene. The seven golden lamp-stands represent the churches of God as His light-givers and testimony-bearers in the world, during the period of their Lord's absence therefrom. As "stars," or planets, shed forth a reflected light, so all true ministry must come from Christ, to men. And as received from Him, it is to be given out in its entirety and purity (1 Pet. iv. 10, 11; 2 Tim. iii. 14-16), for the guidance and blessing of others. The seven churches in Asia, here selected from among many more existing at the time, represent (1) the whole course of the church in testimony, throughout the dispensation; this is why it is said to be a "mystery." (2) They represent seven possible conditions in which assemblies may be found, from early love and purity,

to lukewarm indifference and self-satisfaction, with the Lord outside, knocking at the door, His person rejected, and His claims denied. This last condition immediately precedes the near rejection of that which bears His Name on earth, while, to individual souls who *do* the works He commands (chap. ii. 5), keep the words He gives (chap. iii. 10), and give Him the place He claims, He manifests Himself and communes with them. (3) The seven messages have their fitting word to all "churches of the saints" in all seasons (1 Cor. xiv. 33) and may be used individually by "all saints" in them, as a spiritual thermometer, to test their state and apprise themselves as to what they are and where they stand, in the Lord's reckoning of them. Seven times over, He says, "I know thy works," and His investigation of their state includes the condition of the heart. He it is who marks the fall from first love and from first works (chap. ii. 4, 15), faithfulness or laxity toward evil (chap. ii. 6 ; ii. 14-16), holding forth or giving up of the truths they know (chap. ii. 24 ; iii. 8), and the keeping of His Word and the confession of His Name (chap. iii. 8, 13). The promised reward is for faithfulness to Him, while others forfeit "the Victor's crown" (chap. iii. 11). When Peter wrote his First Epistle, he said, "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God". (1 Pet. iv. 17). And here, the churches—having failed in this judging of themselves—the living Lord Himself undertakes this work, in all love and faithfulness (chap. iii. 19). For even when churches fail, He abideth faithful, and does not cease to "rebuke and to chasten" His own. May the solemn sense of responsibility to shed the light of heaven around us, and the fact that

“ the night is far spent ” and “ the day at hand ” nerve us, to let our “ light shine,” and so attract men to Christ, while the sands of the waiting hours of life run out.

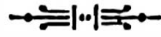
In the Epistles,—especially the Pauline Epistles, written to churches and to individuals, there is specific legislation and abiding directions given as to spiritual condition, godly order, and proper behaviour in “ the churches of God ” (1 Tim. iii. 15 ; 1 Cor. xi. 2, 16 ; xiv. 33). And these are “ the commandments of the Lord ” for all time (1 Cor. xiv. 37). Nothing has been repealed, nothing has become obsolete. But the most of God’s people in our time, give little heed to these commandments, or attention to the pattern left for their guidance in these last days. And the sad result has ensued, that even true Christians consider themselves at liberty to associate themselves with any kind of Church that appeals to their taste, and to adhere to any kind of doctrine or practice that is popular or pleasing, whether it be of the Lord and from His Word, or opposed to that which He has said His Churches are to be. A reverent reading of these seven messages from the Lord, who walks “ in the midst ” of the churches which bear His Name, and profess to own His Lordship and the Authority of His Word, ought to show to all who “ fear the Lord and think upon His Name (Mal. iii. 16), that He expects His Name to be owned and honoured, and His Word obeyed among His own, to the very end. And if this be denied Him, His judgment will come in faithful love (Rev. iii. 19) and discipline, to bring to repentance.

How many of God’s people are in this condition,

and under this form of chastisement, as the result of their indifference to His claims and neglect of His Word, He alone knows. But it will be to their great loss now, and also in the day of Christ's Judgment-Seat, if the warnings and encouragements given by the Lord in these solemn and searching words of His to the Churches in the midst of which He walks—His very last messages from heaven to His people—are lightly esteemed or passed over, as if they bore no present message to the people of God and His Churches on the earth to-day.



## THE COMING LORD.



THE Lord Jesus has left the sure word of promise to all His people, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself" (John xix. 3). And this promise of the Lord is the proper and proximate hope of the believer, and of the Church. The very last word that the glorified Lord uttered from these heavens that He entered on that day that He ascended from the slope of Olivet (Luke xxiv. 50, 51), and was "received up into heaven" (Mark xvi. 19), is, "Surely, I come quickly" (Rev. xxii. 20). And since this was spoken, the silence has been unbroken. The very next event of the Divine programme will be, the "shout" of the returning Lord, when He descends from the Father's throne upon which He now sits (Rev. iii. 21) to raise "the dead in Christ" from their graves, to change those of His people who are "alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 15), and to gather both around Himself "in the air," and lead them glorified, in His own likeness (Phil. iii. 20) to the Father's House (John xvi. 3) to be welcomed there as children of God (1 John iii. 2, R.V.), without distinction—as in later time they will be in "the kingdom"—on the ground of sovereign grace alone. And what a scene of triumph that will be! What a gathering of the scattered and long-parted family of God! From every land and kingdom they will come. Saints of all ages will be

there. The early disciples who were won to Christ in the days of His earthly ministry, those brave and noble men and women who "left all" for His Name, and companied with Him in the time of His rejection, who stood under the shadow of His Cross, and who were the first to walk and talk with Him after His resurrection. All will be there. And the first converts of the Gospel in Pentecostal and Apostolic days, who were imprisoned and persecuted, and many of them martyred for the Saviour's Name and truth. How grand it will be to see them, to clasp their hands, to meet them all, around, and in the fair image of the Lord. And then to gather around the throne, as Rev. iv. depicts the scene, and hear the praise of the great congregation gathered, and now glorified there, owning God as Creator, elders, and living creatures joining in the song. And then in chap. v., where the Lamb appears in the midst of that scene of Glory, and receives from the hand of the Throne-sitter the seven-sealed Book—the title-deeds of His inheritance—and is owned as Redeemer and Heir by all in heaven, on earth, and under it, and the only Worthy One to be worshipped.

Then, as we read it, the glorified saints will next be assembled before Christ's judgment-seat, to hear what He has to say about their conduct and their service in earthly years, since they were saved by grace: how the years were spent, how their service for His Name was ordered (2 Cor. v. 10 ; 2 Tim. ii. 5), and how the stewardship He had committed to them (1 Cor. ix. 17 ; 1 Thess. ii. 4), and the talents He had entrusted them to use in His interests, have been used, and the motives of the heart that energised them

in their service revealed (1 Cor. iv. 5), and if well-pleasing to the Lord who knows the heart, rewarded (2 Tim. iv. 8).

Then, the Marriage of the Lamb (Rev. xix. 5-9) which will be celebrated in heaven, with its attendant glories, baffles in description all that has ever been seen or conceived on this earth. All heaven rejoices. The Bride in her beauty appears, in the full glory of the likeness of her Lord, and "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. xxi. 2), and passes into the place assigned to her in the eternal purpose of God, secured to her by the Blood of the Cross, and sealed to and in her by the Eternal Spirit. And then comes the Epiphany of the glorified Christ with all His saints in glory (Col. iii. 4) as described in the figurative and glowing words of Rev. xix. 11-16,—an event which will introduce the Day of the Lord, and bring His judgment on those who continue in rebellion against His claims, who have despised His long suffering (2 Pet. iii. 9-10), and rejected His Gospel (2 Thess. i. 8-9), for whom no further mercy waits. O the glory of that hour for the saints of God, and the gloom of dark despair for those who would have none of Him, in the Gospel of His Grace! How they will wail their folly in that day. Would to God they might see it now, and turn to the Lord while yet they may.

The Kingdom of the Son of Man, to be set up by the act of His judgment, will then appear. His reign of righteousness and peace will be begun, and the groaning earth which has long been under the usurper's spell will be redeemed and released from his power, and will own its great Redeemer and its King.

## THE PATIENCE OF CHRIST.



THE living Lord is described as being "set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb. viii. 1), as the Expectant of a kingdom, which, in the declared purpose of God, belongs to Him alone (Psa. cx. 1, 2). He has not yet received the full recompense of His Cross and shame. Nor has the promised subjugation of His foes been, as yet, an accomplished fact. For He is there on the heavenly throne "*expecting*, till His enemies be made His footstool." His final triumph over all the powers of evil and His presentation of a kingdom to the Father, in which nothing opposed to His will is to be found, are the ultimate hopes of the glorified Christ. And for the fulfilment of these He now waits, in patience. And it is to this attitude of patient expectancy that His people are called. They do not get all that the Cross of Christ has procured for them, here and now. They "hope" for part, and "in *patience* wait for it" (Rom. viii. 25). "The salvation which is in Christ Jesus" is already theirs, but the "eternal glory," which is assured "with" it (2 Tim. ii. 10), is not yet. And thus they are like unto their Lord. They are in the place of expectancy, where patience is to have its perfect work (James i. 4). They are at present in "the tribulation and kingdom and *patience* which

are in Jesus " (Rev. i. 9, R.V.), and therefore need not expect to be exempt from the trials and sufferings consequent on this position. And in these testings of faith and endurance there is nothing "strange" (1 Pet. iv. 12). They were the lot of their Great Exemplar (1 Pet. ii. 21) Himself, when He was here. And now His saints have been called to partake in His sufferings (1 Pet. iv. 13). It was for a company of believers in Thessalonica, who were in this very position, that the apostle prayed, "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into *the patience of Christ*" (2 Thess. iii. 5, R.V.), which means that they might be sharers in that patient expectancy of His, and have the power of it ever controlling and directing their lives while here. Such a hope, although "deferred, 'maketh not' the heart sick" (Prov. xiii. 12), like the uncertain hopes of earth, for they oftentimes fail, because of the inability of those who inspire them to fulfil their promise. But the hope of the Christian, which is set "on Him" (1 John iii. 3, R.V.), who is Heir of all, can never fail. It is a hope both "sure and steadfast" (Heb. vi. 16), bound up with all that awaits the Son of God, and inseparable from His interests. It is a hope that "maketh not ashamed," and in it the believer therefore "exults" (Rom. v. 2, 5).

All this is to have its answer in the Christian's life and conduct here. He is to be "*patient* in tribulation" (Rom. xii. 12), not petulant or complaining, as if God had forgotten him. In afflictions, "*enduring* all things" (2 Tim. ii. 10), not in stolid acquiescence, but ever "happy" (James v. 10) in the honour thereof. Under reproach for Christ's Name and for His truth's

sake (1 Pet. iv. 14), he is to take it all "joyfully." When wronged and misrepresented, he is to be "tender-hearted and forgiving" (Eph. iv. 32), leaving the day of recompence with the Lord (Col. iii. 25), whose business alone it is to "repay" (Heb. x. 19).

And the Word of the Lord assures us, that "patient continuance in well-doing" is one of the evidences that one's faith is real, and that the heart reposing in God, will have its due reward. And such "patient endurance" has, while it waits God's time for the fulfilment of His promise (Heb. xi. 15) its present fellowship with a patient Christ, who is waiting for His inheritance also. To be "patient" under the hand of God in trial brings blessing to the soul, and to "rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him" (Psa. xxxvi, 7) until He incline His ear to hear faith's cry for deliverance, is the sure way to get it (Psa. xl. 1). And in view of the sure promise of the Lord to "I come quickly" (Rev. xxii. 20), there is the corresponding word of James v. 7, "Be *patient* therefore brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." For He is "not slack concerning His promise" (2 Pet. iii. 9), as if He had forgotten it, or was unable to fulfil it. But in the confidence that He has good reasons for each day that it seems to tarry, and we who wait have fresh lessons to learn in the waiting hours, that we cannot learn in heaven after He has come, and we have gone there, it is for us to keep the word of Christ's patience (Rev. iii. 10) and to "hold fast" all that He has committed to our trust, and "endure patiently" while He is absent, "till He come."

## THE LAMB ON THE THRONE.



**A**T the close of Chapter III. of the Book of the Revelation, the scene changes from earth to heaven. There is no more to be seen of stars or lampstands, shedding forth their lights on an earthly scene. In the opening words of Chapter IV., John—as representative of the heavenly saints—hears a voice calling him up thither, no longer to hear of witnessing or failing “churches,” under reproof or exhortation as to their condition there, but to “Behold” an open door in heaven—and to hear a voice from thence calling him “to come up hither.” This is symbolic. It is teaching us by sign and utterance, of the rapture of the heavenly saints from earth to heaven, at the coming of the Lord to the air as described in 1 Thess. iv. 17-19 and 1 Cor. xv. 51-52. And at this point, the third section of the the Book of Revelation begins, distinguished in its opening chapter, also as in Chapter iv. 4 R.V., as “the things *after these*.” The “things which are,” as described in chaps. ii., iii—the church in its history throughout the present dispensation, having come to their end, we now enter on a view of the saints as glorified in heaven, the first of those scenes which occupy the period spoken of as “the things which shall be hereafter”—or “after these.”

And the first sight that meets the gaze of these raised and glorified saints, as symbolised in the

raptured Apostle John, is "a throne set in heaven, and One seated on that throne." For there is absolute sovereignty there. The will of God is done there perfectly. The glorified saints are represented here, first, as twenty-four crowned elders—a symbolic number representing the complete circle of the orders of the priesthood in kingdom days (1 Chron. xxiv. 4, 18). These represent the saints of former dispensations (see Heb. xi. 2)—or as some think, rather, the saints of this dispensation, crowned with Victors' crowns and seated on thrones, clothed in white; for they have finished their warfare and are here seen at rest, calmly seated in the very presence of God. The mutterings of "thunders" and "voices," and the flashings of lightnings from "out of" the central throne, do not disturb them, for they know that their judgment is past (John v. 24), and to them there is "no condemnation" (Rom. viii. 1). But the judgments of God are soon to be let loose "on the earth," and by them, men who have rejected grace will "learn righteousness" (Isa. xxv. 9). And the next view the Seer is called to look upon in this heavenly circle is, that of four living creatures"—not beasts as A.V.—but beings, instinct with divine and spiritual life, and intelligence, which remind us of the cherubim as described in Ezek. i., symbolic of the glorified saints of the redeemed of this age as associated with Christ in His glory, as the future rulers and administrators of His Kingdom, which is soon to be inaugurated. For as Heb. ii. 7 tells us, the "inhabited earth" of the future, is not to be under the government of angels, but of redeemed men.

In chap. v., where the Throne-sitter—the eternal



God—here symbolically shown in His Majesty and Might (Heb. viii. 1 ; xii. 2) is seen to have a Book of Roll, lightly lying on His right hand, fully sealed. And an angel's loud voice is challenging all creation in the words, "Who is worthy to open the Book and to loose the seals thereof?" For He to whom the forfeited dignity lost by Adam is entrusted (Gen. i. 26, 27 with Rom. viii. 20-22), must be "worthy" to maintain the honour to be conferred upon Him. To this call there is no answer. No created being answers the Angel's loud challenge. Nor is there one found who is able to "open the book," or even to "look" thereon. And John weeps. Yes, even in that scene of unutterable glory, he weeps "much," for the silent universe tells the insufficiency of man to fulfil the demands of a Righteous and a Perfect God. Then one of "the elders,"—those glorified saints, who stand in the Divine counsel and know fully the resources of God, bids John dry his tears, for as of old God's Divine mercy provided a lamb for Himself" (Gen. xxii. 8) as a sacrifice, and later a king to rule His kingdom (1 Sam. xvi. 1), so now He has One worthy of the high and holy office of claiming the title deeds of the earth, and administering God's rule in His kingdom, delivering the inheritance from the power of all usurpers. And the Seer is then called to "Behold" (ver. 5) this worthy One, who now comes into view. He is distinguished by the elder as "The Lion of the tribe of Judah," and the place He is said to occupy is "the midst of the throne," surrounded by the enthroned elders and the living ones. But when John turns his eyes in the direction whence this mighty One, this Lion of Judah comes, he beholds a Lamb—the actual word is "a

young Lamb"—not the symbol of majesty, but of meekness, not of strength, but of submission (Isa. liii. 7), and here seen as it had been "slain"—with the memorials of Calvary still, as it were, fresh before God: "newly slain" (Heb. x. 20, Newberry). For it is on the ground of His Sacrifice, once offered and for ever accepted by His God, sealed in His resurrection and glorification, that He is to fill the throne and to reign. "He came," came from His place of glorification in the midst of the throne, and in His act of *taking* the Book from the Throne-sitter, acknowledges that God is the *source* of all authority, and that He alone can delegate that authority—and that He receives it directly from His hand (Dan. vii. 13, 14). For He would not and did not receive this power from the "god of this world" (Matt. iv. 9), when He was offered it by him, nor from the fickle multitude of mankind when they wanted Him in earthly days to make Him their "king" (John vi. 15). And the action of the Throne-sitter of letting the Book pass from His hand, into that of the Lamb, surely shows, that not only "all authority" (Matt. xxxiii. 18) belongs to Christ, but that all confidence as to His ability to use it aright is in the heart of God toward Him. And what is this seven-sealed Book, but that of the Divine counsels respecting the earth, and the opening of its seals the taking possession of it by judgment, or its deliverance from the usurping power of Satan, to become the Kingdom of Christ (Rev. xi. 15). For while it is by the blood of Christ that the title to earth as His inheritance is secured, it will be by the power of Christ that it is to be possessed, in order to be ruled by Him. And the acknowledgement of His title as the Lamb on the

throne assures us, that His rule will be beneficent as well as righteous. Need we wonder that as the title deed to the inheritance thus passes from the hand of God to the hand of the Lamb, that the heavenly host—first the glorified saints, then the whole creation to its utmost bounds, fall down in worship before the Lamb on the throne.

And it is worthy of note that while His worthiness is universally acknowledged, and all extol Him, the song of the redeemed is more direct and personal than others, for they only sing, "Thou art worthy" ver. (9). And it is worthy of note that only the redeemed "sing." Other circles of created beings who share in the universal chorus *say* with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," while the entire creation ascribe "Blessing and honour, and glory and power" unto Him, it is the redeemed and glorified saints who sing "Thou art worthy."

## THE "PAROUSIA" AND "EPIPHANY" OF THE LORD.



**W**HEN the Lord comes to the air, to call His living and sleeping saints around Himself. there will be a period—undefined in length, in which the Lord with His glorified saints will remain in heaven, hid from the world. This period and condition, is well described in the Greek word "Parousia," which is in most places where it occurs, rendered in our English Testament, by the word "coming." But this does not fully express all that it here conveys to us. "Coming" refers to the moment of the Lord's arrival in the air, to call His own to Himself, but the *Parousia* tells of His continued presence with His glorified saints, and includes the whole period from the moment of their rapture into the heavens to His and their return from these heavens with the angels, in manifested glory to the world. And this is the word used by the Spirit in 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20; iii. 13; v. 23; 1 John ii. 28, where things subsequent to the moment of the resurrection of the dead in Christ and change of the living, are in view. It is during this period of the Lord's "Parousia" in the heavens with His people, that the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. v. 9) with the manifestation, review of, and rewards for their service here, will take place, and probably also the presentation of the glorified saints,

faultless in the presence of His glory (Jude 24). But while this day "of Christ," as the period is elsewhere designated (Phil. i. 6, 10 ; ii. 16), proceeds, within the heavens, events down on the earth have been rapidly advancing toward open defiance of God and the final concentration of man's opposition and hostility toward Christ. Two forms of depravity, already existing even in the days of the Apostles; will, during this period, reach their crisis, and at the advent of the Lord from the heavens, in which He has been hid with His own, during this "parousia" period, will meet their speedy judgment: (1) apostate religion, leavened, corrupted, and concentrated, until it is found in full development in Babylon, the Great, as described in Revelation, chaps. xvii. and xviii—and (2) the full manifestation of THE Antichrist, the Man of Sin, whose agents had long been secretly (1 John ii. 18, 19 ; 2 Thess. ii. 7) working, but unable to reach their full manifestation, because of a Restrainer (2 Thess. ii. 6, 7) present in the world for a season. But this being removed, the full flood-gates of evil burst open, and men who had hardened their hearts against God and His truth, having "pleasure in unrighteousness" are then given over to judicial blindness, by God (2 Thess. ii. 11, 12), and join in the common apostacy against all that is of God, to become confessed devotees of Antichrist and of hell, whose servant he is (Rev. xiii. 12-15). And all this combined and concentrated wickedness will have the great world-powers backing it up, and for a time at least co-operating with it. A great "League of Nations" will rise from the lands in which the light of the Gospel had for long ages shone, and in which God's Name was first owned. And these confederate nations

## 94 PAROUSIA AND EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

will accept the headship and own as their Kaisier, the Anti-christ, who will in all probability at first patronize all religions; and bring into focus what the religious parts of the world are seeking after just now,—a universal church, inclusive of all beliefs and all classes and conditions of men, which for a season will serve his purpose well, to carry out his Satanic designs. For this great super-man, whom the whole Gentile world will own as their Ruler, and who will possess the whole authority and craft of the Devil (Rev. xiii. 2, 14) for purposes of deception, will ultimately demand that his subjects shall worship the Dragon, whose Vicegerent he is, and he will at last claim Divine honours and seat himself in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, to be worshipped as God.


The climax of all this will be, that he will lead on the duped and deceived nations who own him as their king and worship him as their god, to open "war with the Lamb" (Rev. xvii. 13, 14). The massed forces of Europe's chivalry will be found gathered together in this hopeless conflict, led on by demons (Rev. xvi. 13-16) who will deceive them by a false hope of victory. But the iniquity of men has at last reached its crisis, the cup of human confederacy in evil has become full. The "raging" nations, (Psa. ii. 2), with their leaders taking counsel "against the Lord, and His Anointed." His chosen King already in the Divine Counsel "set" by God upon His "Holy Hill" (ver. 6) will now assert His Divine rights; and break the long silence by speaking "in His wrath," and vexing these rebels in His sore displeasure. And this He does; by drawing aside the veil that has hid the glorified Christ with His people through the "Parousia" period within the heavens,

and as in a lightening flash (Matt. xxiv. 27) bringing His Christ, "His First-begotten again into the world" (Heb. i. 6), not in the lowly form of the Babe of Bethlehem, but clothed in majesty and as described in the vividly descriptive words of Rev. xix. 14-20. The hour of the concentrated opposition of the enemies of the Lord, becomes the hour of their complete and final defeat, and they perish in a moment at the "Epiphany, or forthshining of Christ's Parousia," which event introduces "the day of the Lord," and causes a loud wail from earth, to reach the very courts of heaven (Rev. i. 7 ; vi. 15-17).

The Antichrist, the ringleader in this last supreme attempt to seize the throne from God's appointed King, will be caught redhanded at the head of his army, and at the voice of the Lord (Joel ii. 10-11) and by the breath of His mouth (2 Thess ii. 8) he will be brought to nought, and hurled alive; with his accomplice—into the lake of fire—its first occupants, who go thus without mercy to their final doom, while their deceived followers perish in a moment. Thus the scene is cleared by judgment due and direct from the hand of the Lord from heaven. And then and thus; Christ's kingdom will be set up and established (Dan. ii. 44 ; vii. 26; 27).

# THE ADVENT OF CHRIST GLORY.



HE Prophets of Old Testament time, had spoken and written of the return of the Lord to earth in judgment accompanied by His glorified people from heaven. The first to make known this great event was Enoch, who lived before the flood, some 3000 years before Christ. And the words of his prophecy are recorded in the last of the New Testament Epistles, some 90 years after the life and death of the Lord Jesus : “ Behold the Lord cometh, with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment ” (Jude 14, 15). The coming of the Lord from heaven accompanied by His glorified saints is that which is referred to in the following and other Scriptures, Matt. xxiv. 29-31 ; Luke xvii. 24-29 ; Col. iii. 4 ; 2 Thess. i. 7-9 ; Rev. xix. 14-16 in the New Testament, and in Zech. xiv. 3, 4 in the Old Testament. This advent of the Lord is to be distinguished from His coming *for* His people, as in John xiv. 3 ; 1 Cor. xv. 31-54 ; 1 Thess. iv. 13-17, and many other Scriptures. This latter, is the Christian’s proper hope, and it is for this that he “ looks ” (Phil. iii. 20, 21) and “ waits ” (1 Thess. i. 10). It is an event that may happen at any moment, and there will be neither sign given nor date announced, when it will take place. The advent



of the Lord in power and glory; His coming to this earth *with* His saints, to judge His enemies, will not and cannot take place apart from the signs and portents which are clearly described in the Word of God (see Matt. xxiv. 27-34; Luke xxi. 8-11). And these portents and signs will be watched and used by a people on the earth at that time, whose hope will be in character different from that of Christians of this present time. They will be an earthly people, looking for their Deliverer to judge their foes and deliver them from their cruelties, praying for vengeance on their oppressors, all of which is quite foreign from the present age of Grace and Divine long-suffering (2 Tit. iii. 9-10), and the prayers of the people of God now in their relation to those who persecute and kill them (comp. Luke xxiii. 34; Acts vii. 60; Rom. xii. 19-21, with Psalms iii. 7; xxv. 19; xlii. 10; lvi. 51; lxxxiii. 13). This is an age of Grace, but that will be the beginning of a time of Judgment, "the day of vengeance of our God" (Isa. lxi. 2). By failing to distinguish these dispensations which differ, many things are done by Christians, which are out of season for the times in which they live, and cause men of the world who see them and expect something different from those who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Christ, to stumble, and in many instances awake their fiery opposition to and ridicule toward the Lord and His truth.

The coming of the Son of God from heaven, to raise the dead and change the living saints and take both from earth to heaven, at a moment of which no man knows, was an unrevealed "mystery" to saints of former times. It was made known directly to

Paul, and by him in his Epistles; to those to whom they were written unto us (1 Cor. xv. 51) by "the Word of the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 15)—a special message bearing on this subject. This passing to heaven WITHOUT tasting of death had been mentioned by the Lord Jesus in His interview with Martha of Bethany on the occasion of the death of Lazarus, her brother (John xi. 25, 26), but it had not been explained. For the time for its full revelation had not then come. But now it is an "open secret" to faith, and is "the proximate hope" of the believer. But the advent of the Lord *with* His saints to earth, to judge His enemies, and deliver His earthly people who will then be in the throes of "the great tribulation"—"the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. xxx. 7) will be an event which will compel the attention of the world, and bring to their knees the most indifferent and unexercised of mankind. For it will be the first open intervention of the earth-rejected Christ in the affairs of the world that cast Him out, and whose peoples still refuse to have Him as their King (Luke xix. 14).

## THE REIGNING KING.



**T**HE widely accepted theory; that the present preaching of the Gospel with the advance of civilisation; is to convert the world, and bring the nations of the earth to own the kingly rule of the Nazarene, and thus see His kingdom "stretch from shore to shore"—is a day-dream which has no existence in fact; and never will have in accomplishment by such means. The Gospel when it is preached by Spirit-filled men, in the power of the Holy Ghost, will always prove itself to be God's chosen instrument in taking a people out of the world for His Name (Acts xv. 14)—a people who, from the hour of their conversion, are no longer "of the world" (John xvii. 16), but Christ's witnesses in it (Acts i. 8)—a people for His own possession (Tit. ii. 14, R.V.), guided by His Word and owning His Lordship in all departments of their lives, until the hour in which He shall call them one by one, or all together, to their heavenly home. But the world will go from bad to worse until, in full and open apostacy from God; and in full defiance of God, it will be brought to a sudden halt at the open appearing of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven; as Judge of mankind and administrator of God's long-delayed judgment. And this is to be the great crisis of human history, the close of God's time of long-suffering toward men and the beginning of the hour of His judgment, in which God will, by the hand

of the Man "whom He has ordained" to (Acts xvii. 31) be Judge of living and dead, and to whom He has committed all judgment (John v. 27-30)—administer His judgment in strict righteousness, with which no mercy will mingle, but every man receive according as his works have been, through years and privileges of earthly life.

It will be thus and then, that the Kingly rule of Christ will begin. This phase of His kingdom was the theme of Old Testament prophecy and psalm, and is much dwelt on in such Scriptures as Isa. xii. 16; xxxii. 1-20; xxxv. 1-10; xl. 1-14; Psalm lxxii. 1-19, and the groups of Psalms xciii-c.; cxlv.-cl., where "the Lord reigneth" is the key note; and "Praise ye the Lord" the grand refrain. The New Testament opens with the announcement and the birth of The King (Luke i. 32-33), and records the visit of Gentile kings from the distant East inquiring, and when they had found Him, worshipping the new born King (Matt. ii. 1-11). But Israel was blind and obdurate, and although the heaven-sent Ruler fulfilled in His person and lowly form all that their prophets had uttered concerning Him, the people He came to bless and rule over, rejected Him and cast Him out as a malefactor. But God raised Him from the dead, and will, at His own time and in His own way, set His King on His holy hill of Zion (Psa. ii. 6), and no power of man can hinder it. The events that follow the Lord's descent from heaven accompanied by His saints, as described in Rev. xix. 11-21, will be; first the gathering out of His kingdom all offenders and opponents of His rule (Matt. xiii. 41), the discriminating judgment of the living nations as described in Matt. xxv. 31-36, the subduing by the rod

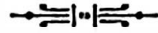
of His power all forms of rebellion, causing all foes to quake before Him. And others, who are not truly converted, will yield a "feigned obedience" to Him. For while the kingdom is to be "set up" by an act of judgment (Dan. ii. 44 ; vii. 14), and the glorified Lord receives and takes unto Him His great power to reign (Rev. xi. 17), there will still be rebels to deal with and "angry nations" (Rev. xi. 18) to subjugate to the righteous sceptre of the reigning King. In the heavenly department of this kingdom; the glorified saints will reign with Christ throughout the thousand years of millennial bliss (Rev. xx. 4), and share His throne (Rev. iii. 21) as in earthly days, they shared His shame and Cross (2 Tim. ii. 12 ; Rom. viii. 17-18).

In its earthly sphere, the reign of Christ will be over the house of Israel, again united with Judah, sifted (Amos ix. 9), cleansed, converted, and back in their land, one nation, under a new covenant (Heb. viii. 8-10). The locality of the millennial kingdom is the Earth (Psa. viii. 1-8), its centre or metropolis is Jerusalem (Isa. lii. 2-10 ; Zech. xiv. 11-21), rebuilt (Jer. xxxi. 38-40). It will then in reality be "the City of the Great King" (Matt. v. 36)," for there the Lord will have His throne, and there He will "reign before His ancients gloriously" (Isa. xxiv. 23). And in the very scenes in which the deepest sorrows of the Lord were known—Gethsemane and Calvary—the glory shall shine forth; and His reign shall be beneficent and glorious. A lineal descendant of David's house—named "the Prince" (Ezek. xlv. 22), may occupy the actual throne of the Lord; the twelve tribes will be arranged in God's own order, occupying territory of over 1000 square miles. All wars will cease (Mich.

iv. 3 ; Isa. ii. 4), so there will be no need for armies or fleets to guard the coasts. The curse (Gen. iii. 17-19) removed ; earth will yield its increase (Amos ix. 13). The animal creation will own the rule of their Great Creator and live at peace (Isa. xi. 6). Idolatry will be abolished all over the world, and the "one Lord" will rule over all (Zech. xiv. 6). Then, but not till then—will the groan of creation cease (Rom. viii. 21-23), and under the sceptre of earth's rightful King; God will receive His due, and redeemed man his full mead of blessing; which never since Adam's fall has been known on this earth.

# THE GLORY OF CHRIST

In the Eternal State.



THE reign of Christ for a thousand years (Rev. xx. 4) over a purged and subjected earth, from which the devil has been banished and shut up in the abyss, and every outburst of insubjection and lawlessness of unregenerated man checked by summary judgment, although a period of wonderful peace and blessing, such as the Adamic world has never known since the day of Adam's fall and man's subjection to sin and Satan, will not be a perfect condition of things. A "reign of righteousness" (Isa. xxxii. 1) in which power in the hand of Christ will repress evil, and cause the righteous "to flourish" (Psa. lxxii. 3) is not to be regarded as a condition in which all is of God, or in which "old things" have completely "passed away." Although we may rightly assume that all who are of Israel are truly born again, ere they enter the kingdom of God (John iii. 3), and that all are "righteous" (Isa. lx. 21) as individuals and as a "righteous nation" (Psa. cxviii. 20) there will be generations born to live on the earth during the millennium who will not all be truly righteous, or actually born of God. And the human heart in that day will be no better than it is now, for mankind at no period of their history and under no dispensational distinction, be it conscience, law, govern-

ment, grace, or glory, has been, is, or can be subject to God or His rule (Rom. viii. 7) apart from being born again. In the millennium, children will be born as now with natural hearts at enmity with God, with minds insubject to His will, and ready to join the ranks of open rebellion against Christ, if they can, or dare. But so well are they kept in hand under a "reign in righteousness," and by "princes ruling in judgment" (Isa. xxxii. 1) that many will yield a "feigned obedience" (Psa. xviii. 44, margin). Accustomed to view the "open heavens" and the manifested "glory of the Lord" (Isa. xxxv. 2), which will then be revealed and its knowledge cover the earth (Heb. ii. 14.)

Yet the unrenewed nature of the natural man will continue to be as it now is. And the reign of Christ will prove that under the very best conditions of life and environment, man in nature, unregenerate and without Christ is a sinner and a rebel against God. How all this goes to show the fallacy, so widely held in honour by the world's religious leaders and statesmen, that if better conditions were provided for the submerged masses, and more healthy environment surrounded them, they would rise in the moral scale of living, make better citizens and cause the world to be a better place for all to live in, and all this apart from redemption by the blood of Christ and regeneration by the Spirit of God. But this will never be, for even in the bright and peaceful years of the millennial reign of Christ, and after they have shared the earthly blessings He bestows, immediately the devil is let out of his prison and men are free to join his train, the whole Gentile world will gather from the



four quarters of the habitable earth to rally around him, and join in the last great rebellion against God and His Christ in numbers like "the sand of the sea." But only to meet the summary, swift and final judgment of God by fire from heaven which will instantly devour them. The final judgment of "the dead" (1 Chron. xx. 12) at the hand of the Son of Man (John v. 27, 28) follows, and the heaven and earth flee away, "the elements melt with fervent heat" and depart, so ending in judgment the history of man on this earth.

### THE ETERNAL STATE.

But the Apostle Peter in the closing chapter of his Second Epistle (ver. 13) tells us of what lies beyond the thousand years of earth's jubilee, and the last outburst of man's rebellion against God and Christ. He says, "Nevertheless *WE*, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein *dwelleth* righteousness." And it is of this new creation, this eternal state, that Rev. xxi. 1-7 tells us. The blessings and conditions of the millennium had, indeed, been great and wonderful, beyond anything that men in mortal flesh on this earth had ever known, yet they fell far short of that perfection of blessedness which it is in the purpose of God to bestow, and which according to His "plan of the ages" (Eph. iii. 11 R.V., margin), He will manifest, in spite of human failure and Satanic power. The subjugation of all enemies, during the millennium on earth, is not the peace or perfection of heaven. Nor will it be until its close, and the Son has delivered up the kingdom to God,

after all rule and authority and power has been subjected wholly to Him, and Death the last enemy completely destroyed, that the New Heavens and New Earth are called into existence at the call of God, and into them the New Jerusalem is seen to descend from heaven "as a Bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. xxi. 2), having lost none of her freshness or immortal beauty since her marriage day, over a thousand years before at the beginning of the millennial reign (Rev. xix. 7, 8). Into this newly created and perfect scene she is seen descending and taking up her abode, as the eternal dwelling-place of God among men, in a sense of which it is said "the former things are passed away." This is the Eternal Glory of Christ and His redeemed, a condition of perfect bliss into which no sin or sorrow, no failure or anything short of perfection will ever come—the sinless, tearless, Sabbath rest of God (Heb. iv. 9) and His people. Herein righteousness "dwells" (2 Peter iii. 13), and here "God is all in all." The glory and the beauty of this new creation, the Home of the last Adam and His Bride, excels all that eye has seen or ear heard, for it is wholly the workmanship of God. It comes into existence under His hand, and is according to His mind. As we sing—

" Beneath Thy touch, beneath Thy smile  
New Heavens and Earth appear,  
No sin their beauty to defile  
Nor dim them with a tear."

It is to a view of this Holy City—New Jerusalem—as it descends in its eternal beauty and glory that John is called, and to him it is described by an angel (ver. 9) in the language of symbol and sign. The

body of the glorified saints is said to be his "house from heaven" (2 Cor. v. 2), a body spiritual, heavenly, immortal and incorruptible. And the symbol of a city surely suggests a community of such glorified beings "dwelling together" in perfect harmony and bliss. For in this abiding and glorified condition, no failure can enter, no lurking serpent come to spoil the fair scene. All stands secure in virtue of the Redemption of Christ, and all is as pure as it is fair. For—

" The Charms that woo the sense  
Are all as pure as fair.  
And all while stealing o'er us  
Will tell of Jesus there."

Yes, indeed. For is it not His own by purchase and by power, and now filled with His glory. For John tells us the city he saw descending "having the Glory of God." It is the abiding home of glory, that "eternal glory" unto which God has called His redeemed (1 Peter v. 10), and unto which He has now at last brought them under the hand of "the Captain of their salvation" (Heb. ii. 10) to whom God entrusted the home-bringing of all His sons. Here they have reached their goal, their everlasting home. And from thence they shall no more go out. For the Golden City is their final above. And "The Lamb is all the Glory" of the scene. And they "see His Face" (Rev. xxii. 4), unveiled, yes, they "see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 2), gaze upon His beauty and are satisfied—

" God and the Lamb shall there  
The Light and Temple be,  
And radiant hosts for ever share  
The unveiled mystery."

That sight, these glories, the Heavenly City in its beauty, John would never forget. It would ever be present with him in his lone exile on Patmos. And, if through grace it become so to us, we shall walk along the remaining steps of the wilderness in the fair light and glory of that heavenly city, in which we long to dwell and to mingle in its happily, holy, glorified throng. Like Bunyan, when his pilgrims entered the Celestial City, and he was allowed to have a glance within the pearly gate, he closes his allegory with the words, "I wished myself among them."

And such desire is what the vision of the Eternal Glory of Christ and His redeemed in the last glance sacred Scripture gives of them, is surely designed to form and cherish in all the people of God. And so keep awake in them throughout the watching, waiting hours, that blessed Hope, so sure, so near, so real, and cause their hearts to sing as one of years long ago so sweetly sang—

"For thee my own dear country  
Mine eyes their vigil keep,  
For very love beholding  
Thy happy name they weep.  
The mention of thy glory  
Is unction to the breast,  
'Tis medicine in sickness,  
'Tis love and life and rest."

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