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# The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"And Asa cried unto the LORD his GOD, and said, LORD, it is nothing with Thee, to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power : help us, O LORD our GOD ; for we rest on Thee, and in Thy Name we go against this multitude. O LORD, Thou art our GOD ; let no man prevail against Thee." 2 Chron. 14. 11.

## A Word of Introduction.

*THE words of Scripture are always precious : may they always be precious to us ! That GOD may be exalted, in the close walking with Him of His blood-bought people, are these pages humbly sent forth. In the light of John 17, and in view of 1 Cor. 1. 10 and of many other Scriptures, how solemn and heart-rending must the disunity and worldliness of professing children of GOD appear. How grievous is this to Him. How His Name is dishonoured. The hope is not in federation, or in agreeing to differ. There must needs be humiliation of heart and true godly repentance. Thus will real believers be drawn from their Laodicean surroundings unto CHRIST Himself, without the camp, and so will He be exalted among them, as they watch for His Coming. The verse above reminds us of our emergency, against the forces of Satan : but if our problems are great our LORD is greater. This spiritual conflict is a grave one, but its issue is never in doubt. May we realize our interceding LORD, and the quieting, humbling, reproving power of the HOLY SPIRIT.*

**"I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears" Ps. 34. 4.**

DAVID'S experiences were very remarkable, but he ever proved that GOD was faithful. Nor is He changed to-day. The heading of Psalm 34 reminds us that David sometimes had painful fears,

and thus arranged for himself, and thereby difficulties were great. Thus this poem of praise seems written to *condemn* the doubts of 1 Sam. 21. 10, and dissembling of verse 13. This background adds force to the words, "O fear the LORD, ye His saints : for there is no want to them that fear Him." It is a mercy to be saved, but we need, for the glory of GOD, a deliverance from FEARS. When there are fears we dishonour Him, and compromise. Nor is there the bright record of His encouragements granted to faith. Natural timidity is very real, but GOD is more real, and it is the writer's desire to be set free at all times from *natural fears*. The words of Isa. 51. 12 are refreshing, "I, even I, am He That comforteth you : who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die ?" We have no reason for fear. The constantly repeated *command* "Fear not" finds a climax in Matt. 10. 26, 28, 31, and since "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"—"we may boldly say, The LORD is my HELPER and, I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13. 5, 6). GOD hath not given us the spirit of cowardice (2 Tim. 1. 7). He encourages His people to enter into the words of Ps. 112. 7, 8, "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings : his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD : his heart is established, he shall not be afraid." Nor would we forget Prov. 1. 33, "Whoso hearkeneth unto Me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."

Thus there seems so much in Scripture to draw us away from the fear of man, which bringeth a snare (Prov. 29. 25). How often we have held back from doing the will of GOD because of this fear. Thus timidity puts man in the place of GOD, and exalts the creature. Hence the command, "Sanctify the LORD of hosts Himself ; and let Him be your FEAR" (Isa. 8. 13). If there is fear, the heart is kept from the "peace, peace" of Isa. 26. 3, it is kept *in* alarm and suspense, and there must be worry, which is as much *forbidden* as open acts of sin. Worry is unbelief, worry is looking to man, as if the king's heart was not in the hand of the LORD, and as if there were actions too hard for the LORD. Hence it puts aside GOD's authority, GOD's love, GOD's care. It cripples as to much usefulness, and there is *not* the true witness of a robust faith. We want the words of Ps: 27. 1 to be our joy, "The LORD is my Light and my Salvation, whom shall I fear ? the LORD is the Strength of my life ; of whom shall I be afraid ?"

When Peter saw the winds and waves, he began to sink : we must be "looking off unto JESUS." David shows, by contrast, the root of trouble in the very next verse of Ps. 34. "They looked unto Him, and were lightened : and their faces were not ashamed." If we do not look unto Him we shall be darkened, and our faces will be ashamed. Our Heavenly FATHER is not honoured when His people look as if they were alarmed. Let us listen to the encouragement which was given to Jeremiah, "Gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee : be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them" (1. 17). We must set our faces as flints and know we shall not be ashamed (Isa. 50.

7). Our Heavenly FATHER knows the end from the beginning ; He knows of what things we have a need ; He cares and loves with a love beyond all human measuring. Shall we untruthfully imply by a face of doubt that He has forgotten to be gracious ? If we thus misrepresent His love, we disgrace Him. Not only because peace of mind is enjoyable, but for the glory of GOD we should hate worry, and hate any *look* of anxiety or despondency, though it is equally important to hate flippancy or frivolity, to hate that carelessness which can go on in disobedience without worrying, and from which we would be delivered in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT.

### A Plea for True Broadness.

**E**RROR pretends to be truth, and arrays itself in truth's clothing. But we should be exercised to discern *good* and *evil*, even though the Greek words employed in Heb. 5. 14 have only one letter different. In the light of Matt. 7. 14, how can believers seek to be broad in a worldly sense ? Will they dare to dishonour and disobey their LORD ?

But, in another sense, true narrowness is broad, and man's broadness is narrow. The latter has room for everything except truth. The former desires to embrace that commandment which is exceeding broad (Ps. 119. 96). And it shows true affection toward children of GOD. Hence the apostle's plea, "O ye Corinthians, our mouth has been opened toward you, our heart has been broadened : ye are not being straitened in us, but ye are being straitened in your inward affections : but, for the same answering reward,\* be ye broadened, ye also" (2 Cor. 6. 11-13). The passage *at once* continues with definite pleading against an unequal yoke (2 Cor. 6. 14-18). In James 4 we find that where there should have been peace there was strife, where there should have been separation, there was friendship with the world. The two sins go together. If we lack the godly broadness of love to all the truth, we shall have the unholy broadness of admixture with systems of self, and of men. Oh that it may be ours to illustrate true broadness, and that those who tell us the truth, and thereby reprove, may not, on account of these faithful wounds, be counted as enemies (Gal. 4. 16, 17). Is it not sadly manifest that those who speak of the uncharitableness of simple disciples speak most uncharitably of them ? Those who plead for broadness, against GOD'S will, are often not broad enough to show love toward those who realize the authority of that separating will.

\* A gracious hint. Will you not reply to the tender love of the servant of God who has true affection for you ? Will you not "reward" his helping you ? Oh that we may enter into this from *both* standpoints,—of the apostle, and of any humbled Corinthian believers.

### Satan's Misuse of Scripture.

AT the beginning of man's existence on the earth, Satan, who had previously in pride departed from GOD, worked with subtlety to destroy His purpose. We rejoice that this was not possible, for the covenant of love was from eternity "in CHRIST," and therefore a temporary, limited, and apparent victory was all that the devil could accomplish. GOD, Who foreknew all, had determined to save from fallen men a great number whom no one can number, and He will not fail, nor be discouraged. But the record of Satan's working is plainly given, that we may see his constant aim and his varied methods. Oh that we may not be ignorant of his devices.\*

And so we turn back to Genesis 3, and there find that Satan's opposition is to GOD'S words, and he also throws a doubt upon GOD'S lovingkindness (cf. Matt. 4. 3, contrast the answer). Satan's *partial* quotation is very remarkable. Four words of Gen. 2. 16 are used, but they are joined to the "not" of 17, as if there were no message of bounteous love *first*. Hence Eve, taking the wrong "centre" (2. 9 with 3. 3) is misled. Beware of a misplaced "not." Beware of the alteration of GOD'S own language. It is remarkable that when Satan's personal temptation is again seen, and his definite words are given, in Matthew 4, there is the same wish to employ some of GOD'S own utterances against His will. The precious application and limitation of the promise in Ps. 91. 11, "to keep thee in all thy ways" is left out, and the devil substitutes presumption for faith. The reply of our adorable LORD, in Whom the prince of this world found nothing, is very beautiful. "Thou shalt not tempt the LORD thy GOD" affords a striking witness against so-called faith on lines of self-will and disobedience. The illustration too in Deut. 6. 16 is suggestive, "as ye tempted in Massah." Undoubtedly GOD granted the supply of water at Massah, but this was no argument for grumbling again. Past mercies, though and when we have failed, do not encourage failure, but, rather, gratitude and humility.

Satan's wish to quote Scripture may be seen also from Ps. 50. 16. Indeed, he is often disguised as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11. 14), of *positive* "light." We recollect that the "serpent" appeared *thus*, as the very name, and Gen. 3. 1 imply. We cannot be too careful as to this subtlety. The devil represents himself as an advocate for sincerity in the case of Job, and as one concerned against the forgiveness of an unclean one in Zech. 3. 1 (cf. Rev. 12. 10). I do not mean he deceives our glorious GOD thereby, but we may expect such attempts to deceive us. In Matt. 16. 22 ("Be merciful to Thee" i.e. "to Thyself") he adopts the wording of kindness. We must not merely be on our guard against the work of a roaring lion. The

\* 2 Cor. 2. 11. Lit: "the thoughts of the mind." Thus he has ever worked with the unsaved (Gen. 6. 5, Eph. 2. 3): but, not only so, as 2 Cor. shows, he tries thus to hinder children of God, insinuating doubts as to the very grace which has saved them, and sinful thoughts which they themselves would, and should, resist.

tempter is very subtle, and if we see certain sins, he will come as one who opposes *them*, to draw us toward an evil contrary of unbelief. So he leads some to be self-righteous, and others to feel they are too bad for our precious SAVIOUR, for he does all to keep men away from Him Whom our soul loveth. *May the people of GOD, in the HOLY SPIRIT, be ever upheld.*

### Grace and Temperament.

IT is important to distinguish these. Some have naturally "a kind disposition." Scripture speaks of the goodness of the flesh and of man (Isa. 40. 6, 1 Pet. 1. 24), and shows that this is ever fading (cf. Hos. 6. 4). Man's awful condition before GOD does *not* involve absolutely abominable wickedness before fellow creatures. The "piety" of man is likened to the "flower of the field," and, presumably, to the "honey" gathered therefrom (Lev. 2. 11). Temperament is partly inherited, partly associated with training and environment, partly inexplicable, but GOD knows everything about every one, and He will act righteously, and deal with sinners according to their works. Moreover, temperament never reaches high enough to lead a poor lost sinner truly to seek CHRIST. Grace is GOD'S mercy to the undeserving, manifested through the blood of His beloved SON and thereby He *causes* grace in those whom He saves. The bad-tempered sinner is changed into a meek saint, but there is still the need for warfare *against* the natural temperament, a phase of warfare which another of a "gentle and nice character" may not experience. We may be apt to quickly assume the latter is a spiritual work, or when there is a spiritual work to conclude that such a believer is more godly than he really is. Thus pride may be encouraged. How needful are the words "Judge nothing before the time" (1 Cor. 4. 5). Grace is beyond "niceness": it is not merely honied, it is with salt (Col. 4. 6). Is not much so-called love nothing but honey? It is attractive, and seems so affectionate, but it is affectionately excusing sin as well, it remains in surroundings where GOD is dishonoured, helps believers to lose their reward for faithfulness, encourages unsaved ones to think they are saved, and has nothing of the zeal of Phinehas for his GOD, or of the holy determination of Nehemiah when he cast out Tobiah's household stuff (Neh. 13. 8).

It is well to seek for heart-searching in this matter, that we may please our GOD. Perhaps His wondrous mercy to us forbids our doubting that we are His, but are all our actions His? Have we not rather shown more of temperament than of spirituality, and, therefore, our apparent growth in grace has been onesided. It is easy for us to conquer certain sins, and we have compared ourselves with others on this account, but have we not special sins, which take a vantage ground from our temperaments?

It is wrong to excuse sin because of natural tendencies, Are we not a new creation when in CHRIST JESUS? Is not the HOLY SPIRIT truly powerful? We should not yield to our old habits, but be victorious. Our strong points become our weak points, even as Moses spake unadvisedly, for we are apt not to look to GOD alone for *these*, but to have some confidence in ourselves, nevertheless our special attacks on the lines of failure before we were saved are more frequent. But there are NO vulnerable parts in the whole armour of GOD. Oh for grace to be on our guard, and to realize that Satan ever changes his tactics, but never changes his purpose. He would lead us to distrust our GOD, and he does not mind if our sin is self-trust, trust in fellow-creatures, or miserable despondency:—anything that draws away from our GOD gratifies the enemy of souls. Yet our GOD is worthy of *fullest* faith, and we would, as grace-saved ones, live graciously, so that our whole life may show we are not the slaves of our temperaments, not imprisoned by our habits, or the customs of men, but, on the other hand, the LORD'S freemen seeking to honour Him by a spirituality which embraces the tiniest and commonest actions.

### “As One.”

#### Two References to Satan.

Gen. 3. 22 and Ps. 82. 7.

“**B**EHOLD, man became as one away from us, to know good and evil.” Adam did *not* become as GOD. Alluding to the devil's deceitful words (“ye shall become as GODS”), the LORD shows most definitely that an exactly contrasted result was reached. Eve was deceived, Adam acted deliberately, and thus he is specially before us here. His iniquity was like to that of Satan, a definite self-choice, against the MIGHTY GOD. The object was “knowledge”: (Prov. 1. 7). “Surely as Adam ye shall die, and as one of the princes ye shall fall.” “Through one man sin entered into the world, and *death* by sin.” The warning to Adam contained the word “death,” which is before us often in Gen. 5. In like manner “fall” is specially employed of Satan (Luke 10. 18, 1 Tim. 3. 6). The term “one of the princes” is used for supernatural principalities (Dan. 10. 13). The great dignity of Satan before he fell is marked out in Jude. This passage surely reminds of Gen. 3, and shows the relation between the sins of man and of the devil. Moreover, it explains, with Eph. 6. 12, the ruin around. But the LORD will clear the heavenlies, and reign righteously over all the earth. How bright is this prospect, yet how solemn are its accompaniments.

An Appendix. Since in Isa. 66. 17 “tree” is in italics, the thoughtful reader may not be surprised at the suggestion that the reference is to Satan. “Behind one in the midst” (contrast Matt. 18. 20). The word “gardens” may remind of Gen. 3, where Eve, listening to the serpent, altered GOD'S “midst” (2. 9 with 3. 3).

Thus we have the threefold testimony of “law, prophets and Psalms.” (Luke 24. 44, the three parts of the Hebrew Scriptures to this day) against the devil, as the *one who exalts himself* to the denial of our gracious and glorious GOD.

### To Give and To Get.

**S**OMETIMES, in the mercy of GOD, a thought grasps suddenly and helpfully. It may be a well known thought, yet it comes with power in the gracious working of the HOLY SPIRIT, Who breatheth where He willeth, though it is our privilege, and responsibility, to seek from our Heavenly FATHER this precious leading (Rom. 8. 14).

It may be that the suggestion now before me has often been before some, and yet the LORD will grant its impression with new force. When we gather, (or, wondrous thought, *are* gathered), what is our object. Have we come to get a blessing or to give unto GOD? It is a joy to give unto Him something of the glory due unto His Name (Ps. 29. 1, 2). And He deigns to receive this. But if we assemble with the idea of getting a blessing, selfishness may become very prominent, and thus there will be dishonour unto our gracious GOD. It is true that we give most, when we feel the need for the cleansing blood still, and further, in accord with Acts 20. 35, GOD will always exceed our giving. But our OBJECT should be His praise.

And this will involve godly love to His people. John 21. 15-17 may illustrate this. Love to CHRIST will mean feeding of His people. If there is lack of love to Him, there will be lack of love to those who represent Him. See 1 John 4. 20 for a related thought.

So when we are found in fellowship around the Throne of grace, let the thought of Ps. 116. 12 be uppermost,—“What shall I render unto the LORD for all His benefits toward us?” Then we shall be able to rightly enjoy His leading to further petitions, as Ps. 116. 13 goes on to show. Oh that we may give something unto our gracious GOD, and thus, most fully, shall we receive something more, that we may give it back to Him, in an ever enlarging circle of praise and blessing. GOD will grant us much, if we do not want it to consume on ourselves, but to render unto Him in thanksgiving, worship, and devoted spiritual service.

### Natural Looking for the Lord Jesus.

**T**HE bright hope of the Coming of CHRIST often becomes increasingly real as we look around on a ruined world, patiently bearing the trials which increase as we seek to walk worthily of our high and heavenly calling—a calling which is out from the world. The path of separation unto the LORD is not a naturally easy path, and it is refreshing to know, “He That shall come will come and will not tarry.” But Satan, of whose devices we are not ignorant, is very

subtle, and wishes to destroy our true hoping for *the* Hope if he can; and, alas, sometimes a large measure of that which is not spiritual becomes entwined. Deliverance from "trouble" is, in itself, very attractive and this thought, in a right context, is spiritually set before us (2 Thess. 1. 7). But it is easy to be occupied therewith, rather than with pleasing our GOD, and with seeking His glory. Peter, on the transfiguration Mount, had a *natural* delight as to the glories of the Kingdom, and suggested avoidance of intervening events. Afterwards he learnt the true attitude (See 2 Pet. 1), and this is also seen in Phil. 1. 20. Our privilege is to be where GOD would have us to be, and to bring Him praise and honour.

I would earnestly bring before the people of the LORD, and before myself as earnestly, our danger in this matter. Soon our beloved LORD JESUS CHRIST shall see of the travail of His soul, and He will rejoice to present to Himself a glorious Church, and for HIS sake we need to be much more interested in HIS coming again. The physical relief to ourselves is a secondary matter. And we must beware lest even the happy prospect of the ceasing of temptations be misused. Warfare against the flesh is not easy. It will be joyous to have no flesh against which to war. But "desire" to be free from this strain is not necessarily holiness, it may be laziness. Oh that our Heavenly FATHER may teach us to discern things that differ, and to preserve a true and due proportion.

But, perhaps, even these words of love and warning will be turned aside by the tempter to cause, in some feeble heart, a fear which hath torment. In the light of GOD'S glory we, like Isaiah, feel ourselves unclean. Our service seems mere "work," our longing for CHRIST so largely natural and selfish. What then? We confess this sin, but would not be occupied with it. We *know* we want His glory, albeit our minds fail to grasp all this means. We have much less love to Him than He has to us, but, like Peter, so soon after sad denial, we can say "THOU KNOWEST that I love Thee." Yes, our gracious LORD knows our hearts, and He will not break the bruised reed, or destroy the "little strength." Oh that we may be grateful that, in some measure, we long for CHRIST to be exalted, but let us be dissatisfied with the extent of our longing, that it may grow abundantly, and be more and more separated from the dross of natural wishes. Spiritual delight in the promises of GOD is caused by the HOLY SPIRIT, and we may ask for this devotedness unto our LORD.

"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God"

2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

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"And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your GOD; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law."  
"The joy of the LORD is your Strength" Neh. 8. 9, 10.

## A Word of Introduction.

*It is a privilege to love Scripture. It is a joy to find joy in GOD'S Words (Jer. 15. 16). Holy sorrow for sin is deeply important, but sorrowing ones are bidden to rejoice. Mirthful ones are bidden to be sorry. The LORD has a wondrous proportion, appointed for His people: Satan ever seeks to overbalance those whom he cannot destroy, and it is our heart's desire that GOD may deign to use these pages, to His glory, in the emphasizing of growth with a view to CHRIST in all things (Eph. 4. 15), and in urging practical longing for the Coming of CHRIST. Oh that many believers may be delivered from snares and caused to realize the reality of the HOLY SPIRIT, and to walk humbly in the SPIRIT.*

## Thoughts on "Legalism."

WHEN some of GOD'S people emphasize literal obedience, from a loving heart, to the words of the LORD JESUS, including "This do,"\* and when they urge the glad avoidance of various actions which they feel cause others to stumble,† the charge of "legalism" is raised. But is it fair? Who are the legalists?

Do we agree that whereas salvation is absolutely of grace (Eph.

\* With the simple unleavened bread of His appointment. use and symbolism.  
† E.g. travelling on the LORD'S Day, partaking of intoxicants.

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2. 8), believers are "in a law to CHRIST" (1 Cor. 9. 21, Gal. 6. 2), and to be mindful of John 14. 15, Jas. 2. 12? It is legalism to assume that the sinner can contribute to his salvation. Apart from GOD'S forbearance, and grace, we should be in His wrath now. There is no merit in the creature. The law could only condemn us. Our standing as to GOD'S judgment is a wondrous security. Nothing can change the finished work of the LORD JESUS. Many presentations of the Gospel virtually change it into a modified *law*, and look to the sinner for something natural, thus setting aside the distinctive character of the gospel of grace.

The child of GOD is in a sphere definitely contrasted with that into which he was naturally born. "CHRIST IS (the) END OF LAW INTO RIGHTEOUSNESS," and we are made the righteousness of GOD in Him, that we may live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present age, NOT to gain or add to a present and eternal salvation, BUT fulfilling the commands of Rom. 12. 1, 2, that we may please Him Who hath chosen us (2 Tim. 2. 4). In this sphere there ARE the LORD'S appointments. To break them will be to incur the chastisement which is exercised in His house, and to lose a reward for faithfulness in "that Day," yea to grieve Him. If it is "legalism" to obey CHRIST (Heb. 5. 9), then we would be yet more legalistic (2 Sam. 6. 22)! But if the error is only in our past *manner*, we would seek grace to avoid this, in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, though retaining *the literal attention to our LORD'S will* which alone can be acceptable.

The Pharisaic "legalists," when our precious and now exalted SAVIOUR walked this earth, were making the law of GOD of none effect by their traditions. And those who attack "legalism" to-day are often foremost in clinging to their own opinions. If you speak of any Divine command, they say "What a little thing," yet will not yield their "little" divergence. "Legalism" is the lifting up of man's modifications to the level of, and beyond, His appointments.

We have already referred to the danger of grieving GOD by our manner. Oh that there may be a heart-realization of the fact that if we do outwardly what the LORD has said, but with the attitude, "What a weariness is it!"—we may well receive a rebuke for legalism. WHY do we go through any strain? WHY do we give up "this" or "that"? Is our object our Heavenly FATHER'S glory? A wrong *motive*—albeit known only to ourselves—mars a right action. In other words, everything in the sphere of grace should be gracious. Climbing a cliff I do not resent a rope, crossing a plank I do not refuse a rail,—there is a wondrous lesson in the "for" of 1 John 5. 4 reading on from verse 3. May we not chafe at the LORD'S wisdom, but humbly feel our ignorance as to what is best, and thus we shall press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling, and He will be glorified.

"Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage."

"O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day."

Ps. 119. 54, 97.

## A Few Thoughts on "The Parable of the Tares of the Field."

Matt. 13. 36.

THE LORD JESUS always encouraged right questions, and He lovingly explained His teaching (cf. the angel's ministry in Zech. 4). The field is the world, not "the church." The term used in "end of the world" is distinct: it should be "ending of the age" (cf. 24. 3, 28. 20). Just now I would invite the prayerful attention, of those who would accept Scripture very simply, to the exact language of Matt. 13. 30:—"The time of the harvest," "Gathering together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them." The harvest is *not* viewed as a *moment*. It is a period. We find "the ending of the ages" as a description of CHRIST'S wondrous ministry. I would suggest that another 3½ years may be "the ending of the age." The tares will be gathered near, if not at, the beginning of this. The Kingdom of the LORD JESUS will be *still* in mystery, still the Kingdom and *patience* in JESUS; yet these will be thrust out from it.\* The *gathering* need not imply physical death any more than that of the wheat. Christendom's false professors will be *unmasked* and will surrender their self-righteous religiousness. The *BURNING* is manifest *judgment*, and we are *not* told that *this* precedes the garnering of the wheat. Thus this passage, like many others, implies a time of revival, and separatedness, among the children of GOD, and for this we would humbly pray, conscious of our need and the LORD'S fulness. Yet we would not find a goal in "reviving," but our hearts would cry for the glorious Appearing of our precious SAVIOUR Himself—"Even so, Come, LORD JESUS" (Rev. 22. 20).

## The Value of Time.

HAVE you thought of the value of time in the light of eternity? Every moment we are all going onward—to what? Ah, dear reader, I was a child of wrath (Eph. 2. 3), but GOD in mercy, since He was rich in mercy, brought me to realize my need and His love, drew me to Himself, and now, by His grace, I can humbly say I am not going on to a thing, but to a Person, and that Person, the LORD Himself, "We shall be like Him," said the apostle, "for we shall see Him as He is," and in another passage, "His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face" (Rev. 22. 3, 4). And this is all because of wondrous love, for I deserved nothing. Oh how precious is the blood of CHRIST to blot out sin. Can you say this is your joy, and your hope, dear friend?

\* A preparatory work of angels is also seen, I believe, in Matt. 22. 13 (Distinguish the word used for servants in verse 8). This is not exclusion from the Marriage Supper of the LAMB, but from the preceding Dinner, of spiritual blessings, in the present dispensation.

## "The Lord of Hosts"--A Sanctuary, or a Stone of Stumbling?

**A solemn Question, which concerns ALL the people of Israel.**

את־יהוה צבאות אתו תקדשו והוא מוראכם והוא מערצכם : והיה למקדש ולאבן נֶפֶץ ולצור מכשול לשני בתי ישראל לפח ולמוקש ליושב ירושלם : ישעיה ח יב יד . \*

"Sanctify the LORD of hosts Himself; and let Him be your Fear, and let Him be your Dread. And He shall be for a SANCTUARY; but for a STONE OF STUMBLING and for a ROCK OF OFFENCE to BOTH the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Isa. 8. 13, 14.

THIS wondrous passage shows the awful state of man in general. It is very sinful to stumble against the LORD GOD of Israel Himself. If this were described as the sin of the Gentiles, many would understand it, but we are specially told that *both* the houses are guilty, and an especial mention is made of the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*. This is not accidental. There are no misused or misplaced words in the  $\text{תנ"ך}$ : and, so, I ask YOU, whoever you may be in the nation of Israel, do YOU stumble against the LORD of hosts? If you must answer "Yes" how terrible is the rest of Isa. 8. 15. "To fall and be broken" is an awful but real end.

My next words may surprise you. You may feel inclined to thrust them aside, you may wish to reject them. They suggest to me the only Key to your tragic history as a nation. The LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Despised and Rejected One, Whom we rejoice to know as the

### MESSIAH OF ISRAEL, CLAIMED TO BE THIS STONE.

Referring also to Ps. 118. 22, He said that "Whosoever shall *fall* on this STONE *shall be broken*" (Matt. 21. 44). Now it is plain that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were especially against Him, and that many, saved out from Israel and the Gentiles, regard Him, with loyal devotion, as "the Sanctuary" of which Isa. 8 speaks. Is there anyone who has been more a Stumbling Block to Israel, though the fault is theirs, not His! Surely this passage prophesies the MESSIAH!

I would therefore suggest a solemn question:—Does the context in Isaiah emphasize such an interpretation? Do not lightly put aside the testimony of GOD Himself.

In Isaiah 7. 16 we have the threatening that the land of Israel, which Ahaz loathed ( $\text{קִיָּן}$ ) by His actions (cf. Ps. 106. 24) would lose BOTH its kings (cf. BOTH houses in 8. 14) before MESSIAH

\* Isa. 8. 13, 14. We would value the prayers of God's praying people as to circulation of this tract among Israel. † The Hebrew Scriptures.

should grow up\* And MESSIAH is mentioned in 7. 14 as a Child born of a virgin, yet  $\text{לְעַמּוּנָה}$ , and with respect to this very name, which occurs again in 8. 10, and in 9. 5(6) we have  $\text{אֵל נְבוֹר}$  as a name of One Who is both GOD and MAN, and this is the background for a complete atonement with everlasting results, for He gave Himself for guilty sinners. This love is still despised, but the only thing one might "reasonably" say is "It seems TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE." But thank GOD, it IS true, and we have proved this.

Enough has surely been written to show that in this section of GOD'S inspired book One is beheld as both GOD and MAN, yet for This One Israel have *no room*: they profess they have *no need*, but HE is the Only Hope. Hence it is fitting that the LORD (יהוה) should here call upon the prophet to sanctify the LORD (יהוה). The force of this is more evident when we realize there is more than One Person in the One GODHEAD, and that MESSIAH is called in Jer. 23. 6,  $\text{יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּרִכְיָהוּ}$ . The word  $\text{יְהוֹשֻׁעַ}$  in verse 14 implies that there was a wondrous "becoming," and when the LORD of glory became a MAN, and died for sinners, He became *near* to needy ones that they might find in Him a Sanctuary, and He became a Stumbling Block. This took place exactly in history. Dear friends of Israel, do not make light of GOD'S truth. You are still scattered among the nations. Ezek. 11. 16 shows GOD'S plan during this time. There is no earthly temple, but a Divine MESSIAH is the Sanctuary in Whom you can worship. He is the True Temple. A Sanctuary implies a *sacrifice*, and His sacrifice has been accepted above, But Which is He to you—a Sanctuary or a Stumbling Block?

### "How is He his Son?" Matt. 22. 45.

THE LORD JESUS did not deny the relationship to David. He emphasized a position beyond David, and then asked these words that His self-confident questioners might be brought to question themselves. In Revelation we behold Him as "the Root AND Offspring of David." His Deity and Humanity are alike shown in Scripture alike precious. This passage not only helps a believer to see the LORD'S own consciousness of, and stress on. His twofold position; it suggests a definite witness to Israel. They cannot reject Ps. 110. its Messianic character is clear. Unless they acknowledge that the MESSIAH is both MAN and more than MAN, they have an insoluble problem. So in Isa. 9. 6, we have the Child born Who is the MIGHTY GOD, as in Isa. 7. 14 the "SON" is "GOD with us." Likewise in Jer. 23. 5, 6 the RIGHTEOUS BRANCH raised to David, is "the LORD our RIGHTEOUSNESS." Accordingly the LORD in

\* A striking witness that one born in Isaiah's day is not before us. The contrast between  $\text{לֵךְ}$  in 8.11 and  $\text{לָלֶכְךָ}$  in 14 illustrates. AHAS was dead long before CHRIST came into this world.

† GOD with us. § The Mighty GOD. || Became. ¶ To thee (11), to you (plural 14).



Zech. 12. 10 says that He will pour out the Spirit of grace and supplications, and that many of the nation will look upon *Him* Whom they pierced, thus asserting a twofold coming, and the taking of a body that was pierced. The emphasized "*He*" of Gen. 3. 15 is marked off from the headship of Adam, yet is He a MAN. The King of Ps. 45 is also addressed as GOD in verse 6. This complex unveiling of the MESSIAH of Israel is a key to prophecy, and a basis of assured salvation.

### Errors in Gospel Preaching.

TO point out errors for the sake of pointing them out is ungracious, but brotherly love suggests washing one another's feet. We are all, in measure, influenced by the mistakes around us, and need to be on our guard, in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, so I would venture to do what I desire others to do for me, namely, to help by pointing out whatever lacks the warrant of GOD'S precious words of truth. It is better to be corrected now than to lose reward in that Day. "Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee" (Prov. 9. 8): "He that hateth reproof is brutish" (Prov. 12. 1): may we seek to glorify GOD in this matter, and receive with meekness His engrafted word (Jas. 1. 21).

The writer would not claim to detect all errors: nor can this brief word of exhortation deal with all which have been, in mercy perceived. There are so many sad accompaniments of preaching. Some are musical, some are social, but anything which makes the gospel of grace secondary, or which has no warrant from Scripture, is dangerous, and worse than dangerous. The apostles did not go forth to amuse men. Those who want a man-attractive message instead of GOD'S humbling gospel are *not* to be pleased. We are GOD'S ambassadors, why should we take a lower standing? Let each one who feels called, or, rather, who is called by GOD to declare His message in the open air, or on a platform, be ashamed of human contrivances, and, searching his heart and motives, *keep to the glorious gospel of the grace of GOD*, not even with wisdom of words, lest the cross of CHRIST should be made of none effect (1 Cor. 1. 17).

May I limit myself just now to the misrepresentation of the gospel, often unconscious, which EXALTS the sinner, and sets aside the SOVEREIGNTY of grace? I do not mean that we are to deny a due proportion as to truth. GOD has shown to "THE HEIRS OF PROMISE" the immutability of His counsel. Electing love is very precious to His grace-humbled people, and it is food for SAINTS. This part of truth is not so much for the unsaved, except as sounded forth to any like the argumentative Jews of John 6, who *assumed* they were elect: referring to these the LORD JESUS said "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the FATHER cometh unto Me," and again, "No man can come unto Me except it were given unto him of My FATHER" (John 6. 45, 65). So the self-righteous sinner is met with a definite testimony against him,—

came not to call the righteous." But the *general message* appointed by the LORD, is on the lines of "Come, for all things are now ready" (Luke 14. 17). Let me earnestly seek to make clear the wondrous simplicity and freeness of the gospel message. Not a few think they honour CHRIST by a *cheap* gospel. But it is the reverse. The free gospel, and that alone, can glorify Him. GOD'S grace is to the unworthy, the lost, the condemned, and to such we would preach it, rejoicing that herein is the *power* of GOD unto salvation (Rom. 1. 16). But, alas, it is so easy to make the efficacy of the gospel contingent on *some* work of the sinner. The work may be viewed as a "small" one, but anything which detracts from the *absolute freeness* of GOD'S Gospel is a denial of His amazing love, and, moreover, it flatters the sinner. In this connexion we need prayerful earnestness, that we may not be misled by *human* logic, and that we may discern things which differ. GOD'S election must be acknowledged.

Further, if we say truth in a way which we know will mislead, are we not acting dishonestly? The apostles rightly used the expression "Men, brethren," but if among Gentiles, professing Christianity, we repeat such a description to-day, most will assume the universal fatherhood of GOD. We need to wait on GOD that we may not cause others to stumble by our unwise language, though sorrowfully aware that the sinful heart will even try to change and ferment the new wine of the gospel in any case. But if we obey our LORD, we can leave results with Him: if we are careless, the solemn responsibility is our own.

The sinner must be laid low before the gospel is music to him. Its invitations are pointedly to the thirsty and the heavy laden. We address sinners, but we should explain what a sinner is, that those in whom GOD is working may own to the name. The law is good if a man use it lawfully: when the poor Israelite on the road to Jericho of the curse had been stripped of all, he was ready for the wine and oil, when the jailer was in anguish, the words "Believe on the LORD JESUS" were peculiarly appropriate. Hence we desire to show that the gospel is for those whom the law condemns, those who can do nothing, and as they feel this they are welcome to free grace, humbled to own that their very feeling is through free grace.

(To be continued, if the LORD will, next month).

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of CHRIST, Who is the Image of GOD, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but CHRIST JESUS the LORD; and ourselves your servants for JESUS' sake. For GOD, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of GOD in the face of JESUS CHRIST. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of GOD, and not of us." 2 Cor. 4. 3-7.



## Hymns for Believers.

Our Father, we, Thy people, praise  
For all Thou art, and all Thy ways:  
We know Thy grace beyond our  
thought,

And long to praise Thee as we ought.

Our Father, we adore Thy Name,  
And seek Thy glory as our aim,  
Eternal love excels our song,  
The joy of all the ransomed throng.

On us, ere born, Thy love was fixed,  
Though with the rest in evil mixed,  
Thy love can never change its  
course,

Thy praise its goal, Thyself its Source.

We worship, mid such boundless  
love,

That lifts us up to heaven above,  
And thither makes our praise as-  
cend,—

Love that will never know an end.

'Tis all in Christ, our glorious Lord,  
Whose death with joy our hearts re-  
cord,

He loved, and gave Himself, that  
we,

Redeemed for aye, with Him should  
be!

Our Father, we, Thy people, praise,  
And marvel at Thy perfect ways:  
We worship and adore, and long  
To praise Thee with a perfect song!

Made near to God, in precious blood,  
We are for ever blest,  
And now we walk the heavenly road,  
With heavenly peace and rest.

Made one with Christ, and saved for  
May we more godly be, [aye,  
Mid earth's confusion, truth obey,  
Since from our sins set free,

Made near to God, by sovereign  
grace,

Ourselves we should deny,  
Live daily in the Holy Place,  
Our Father glorify.

Made free from sin, to serve and wait  
For God's beloved Son.

"Ourselves" we should abhor and  
Since in the Righteous One, [hate,

Made near to God, may we abide  
In Christ, and walk with Him

Who for our sins was crucified,—  
His glory now our theme.

Made meet to live with Christ on  
And by the Spirit led, [high,

May we upon our Lord rely,  
And own Him as our Head.

Gracious God, hear Thou our pray-  
As we cast on Thee our cares, [ers,  
Look beyond earth's troubles too,  
Keep Christ's Coming in our view.

May we humbly live alway  
In Thy light, Thy truth obey,  
Bring much glory to Thy Name,  
By our lives make known Thy fame.

Near to Thee may saved ones walk,  
Of Thy grace and glory talk,  
As Thy pilgrims here below,  
Since Thyself Thy saved ones know.

Let us show that we are Thine,  
Let our lips and lives combine  
To declare Thy love and might,  
As we in Thy will delight.

Kept by Thee in peace and rest  
Since in Christ for ever blest,  
Saved, and safe for evermore,—  
Father, we would now adore.

Within Thy presence, by Thy grace,  
Our God, Thy children have a place,  
And feel Thou dost their all behold,  
And love them with a love untold.

Unspeakable Thy grace has been,  
Removing all our load of sin,  
Providing righteousness and peace,  
And causing anxious care to cease.

Redeemed, we would rejoice in Thee,  
From judgment saved, would thank-  
ful be,

Would overflow with praise and  
prayer,

And cast on Thee the smallest care.

'Tis wondrous that Thy love is ours,  
And we would praise with ransomed  
powers,

The love Thou hast unto Thy Son,  
Is ours in Him, the Righteous One.

Thou art well pleased with Him each  
day,

So wilt not cast Thy saints away,  
Thou dost not change, nor lose Thine  
own,

Eternal love shall still be shown.

We would on this with joy reflect,  
Thy gracious help and strength ex-  
pect,

Thy Holy Spirit's leading know,  
And in the path of praise would go.

Thy favour we would contemplate,  
Thy changeless glory would relate,  
And rest in all Thy love so vast,

Never begun, and never past.

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# The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live."

Deut. 8. 3.

## A Word of Introduction.

*THE march of events and the boasts of men have a continual attraction, but if we are "in CHRIST JESUS," how much greater should be our attraction toward HIM. These pages are not issued with the hope that we can create love unto the LORD, nor with the thought that legislation, or even advice, in spiritual things will MAKE spirituality. But they are issued with a loving desire that GOD may use them to awaken HIS own, and cause an ever-growing affection for HIS truth. Surely His blood-bought people should, in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, be earnestly ready to PLEASE THEIR LORD.*

## "They Are Preserved For Ever."

Ps. 37. 28.

*IT is delightful to have a fixed heart as to fixed truth. Listen to the precious words "I am the LORD, I change not." Then take courage, dear troubled believer. The words of GOD are not merely for the brain, they are for the heart, and it is a joy to rest on infinite and unalterable love, when we feel our neediness. Those who know not the holiness of GOD, and who see not their shortcomings, will misuse the fact of election and preservation, but those who have tasted that the LORD is gracious, and who, in some measure, are humbled before their Heavenly FATHER, will find therein a guard against pride and despondency alike. Truth may always be per-*

verted when one is self-confident, and Satan seeks so to act, but GOD'S own unveiling of His will, when appreciated in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT will be a "hedge," as it were, to keep us in the appointed path of pleasing Him.

The words of Psalm 37, set forth above, came to me suggestively, and unexpectedly. I believe they are very definitely GOD'S message to others just now. "Preserved for ever": oh how wonderful is the security of the redeemed. CHRIST'S enemies will be His *fool-stool*, but none shall pluck His people from His equally loving and mighty *hand* (John 10. 28, 29). "Preserved," even before called by grace, that they might be called, they will not be lost *now*: they will not be lost *in the future* (John 5. 24. Eph. 2. 7). GOD will not forsake the work of His own hands (Ps. 138. 8). He has loved with an everlasting love, and CHRIST *shall* see of the travail of His soul (Isa. 53. 11). How precious is the testimony of Jude 1—"Preserved in (or 'by' and 'for') JESUS CHRIST."

The expression "final perseverance" has been commonly used, and it is helpful, for the righteous shall hold on his way, and "he that shall endure unto the end shall be saved" (Matt. 24. 13). In other words, those who are "preserved" as a result "persevere": salvation is not only a Divine work in us, and GOD'S gold has characteristics which show it *is* gold. "Holding fast" proves we are held fast. Hebrews 6 is wondrously helpful as to this: we have a consolation which is strong, i.e. which holds us. The *anchor* keeps the ship amid the storms of this age, and as the anchor is "within the veil," our security is assured. GOD'S love is not fickle. He would be dishonoured if His purpose were broken. He "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1. 11).

I would emphasize *this standpoint* as to the continuance of grace. Merely verbal argument may take our minds off CHRIST, but if we are occupied with Him, and the immutability of the Divine counsel, we shall realize that GOD has interposed with an oath, showing that the *loss* of one believer would be *HIS* loss. If an oath is broken, the maker thereof must be broken! But judgment *cannot* fall upon GOD Himself. Our security is as real as that of CHRIST, our SURETY. He would bear the blame for ever if we were lost (Gen. 44. 32). Yea, our deliverance from wrath is as clearly marked out as GOD'S own immunity from wrath! He did not NEED to take this oath, but He took it to SHOW to the heirs of the promise the immutability of His counsel! Such was His condescending love, and now we are encouraged to see that all the pillars of heaven would tremble, and all the glories of GOD would be broken, if one poor, trembling sinner who has fled for refuge to CHRIST could be lost! Assuredly He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Eternal life shall not be *killed*: a member of CHRIST cannot be eternally lost.

It is noteworthy that the whole plan of salvation *coincides* with this thought, and no Scriptures oppose it. Some of the most difficult verses are in Hebrews 6; and the passage on assurance which we

have considered comes immediately afterwards, to prevent a misunderstanding. And Hebrews 6. 9 indicates that the previously mentioned powers are *not* necessarily accompanying salvation. We remember Balaam, and, in another way, the five foolish virgins. Many apparent "fallings" entirely away from CHRIST are of those who have never been His. The branches of John 15 are *all* grafted-in branches\*: thus the fruitless one had *never* been joined within. If any are the LORD'S people, they shall be holden up (Rom. 14. 4), CHRIST died for us, that whether we watch or sleep, we should live together with Him" (1 Thess. 5. 10): any suggestion of His loss is derogatory to Him. But failure in godly living and working will involve a suffering of loss: howbeit mark the added words, "but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor. 3. 15). Gratitude keeps a grace-humbled one from misusing grace, though we would all acknowledge falling short even in this. But when truth is perverted to excuse carelessness, there is grave reason to doubt any acquaintance with the LORD, though we must beware of the opposite extreme, even occupation with our mistakes so that we forget GOD'S mightier love, and the cleansing power of the precious blood. Confessed sin should not be carried as a burden: despondency dishonours GOD, and suggests a distrust of His promise. Is this right toward Him?

If any believer has any heart-difficulty on this subject it will be a privilege to help (correspondence welcome), and all that GOD may be glorified. But merely mental argument is vain. Any theory which denies that salvation is absolutely by grace, which attributes some initiative to the sinner will be inclined to imagine a loss of such a salvation, and this is logical, from its wrong foundation. But absolute grace means absolute security, and we bow our heads and worship, with heart-felt and praiseful gratitude, and with praiseful confidence in the GOD of all grace Himself.

### "Christ . . . Our Life" Col. 3. 4.

MANY, alas, confuse existence and life. Our beloved and exalted LORD JESUS is not, by any means, to be described as "our existence." He is "our Life," so that if our earthly existence be taken away, our real and eternal life remains, because we are in Him! Wondrous thought, that our eternal life is as sure as His, for it is *HIS*! Because He lives, we shall live also. It is impossible for one in CHRIST JESUS to come under the judgment of wrath. The whole question of law has been settled. A perfect righteousness has been righteously granted, and our life is quite distinct from that merely earthly career which once was ours. May each believing heart rejoice in such grace, and make manifest the heavenliness of disposition which befits those who are born from above.

\* The word used by the HOLY SPIRIT implies this, and thus removes all difficulties.

### In War-Time.

**T**HERE are many who welcome into their hands a tract concerning GOD'S gospel, but, alas, there are a large proportion who receive not its message into their hearts. Yet we would still sow the seed, and rejoice "It is the SPIRIT THAT quickeneth" (John 6. 63). But apart from those who seem encouraging there are often a few, and sometimes more than a few, who make themselves heard, and would distract open air meetings, and refuse, with scorn, a leaflet, uttering the word "It's wartime." How sadly do such misunderstand the solemnity of earthly life, and the true nature of GOD'S gospel. We pass by the open public houses, and see the picture palaces, and hear from some homes the frivolous strains of singing and music, yet how many who attack the precious gospel, support such levity, even in war-time. To those of us whose eyes have been opened and who know CHRIST as the ALTOGETHER LOVELY ONE, Who willingly died in our stead, in Whom we have salvation and rest and comfort and all things—to those of us thus privileged, the emptiness and tragedy of earth without CHRIST must be manifest. How mournful it is to see men putting aside the *only* blessing, the *only* true joy, the *only* message of eternal life at such a solemn season as this. In war-time, and in peace-time alike, the gospel is the power of GOD unto salvation, and we would make it known "in season, out of season," because it is a holy trust committed to our care, and a precious unveiling of GOD, that is never out of date. But it *will be* out of date, for those who despise, and it *would be out of* place—in hell. Oh that we may be DOUBLY EARNEST in view of eternity, whether men will hear or forbear, since GOD has so graciously granted to us His free gospel, and a precious deliverance from eternal wrath by, and in, the precious blood of His Beloved SON.

### "Importance."

**H**OW often has this word sounded forth, and to the child of GOD everything is full of instruction. "Work of national importance" has been emphasized again and again; and different opinions have been held in such a matter. This is natural, for men differ, and there is so much error in the world, even as to ordinary things of daily life, and so much ignorance exists; for man, though he would avoid the solemn realization, belongs to a fallen race.

But is it not suggestive that many have been awakened to say that much usual work is *not* really important? It may be attractive to many, it may be prosperous financially, but it is *not* important? The believer searches his heart, and his life, accordingly. With an *infinitely higher standard*, he asks "Am I doing that which is important spiritually, or am I wasting my time? Am I a blessing in the land where GOD has placed me; or am I not? It may be some who bear the Name of CHRIST will quickly put the thought aside: others may be awhile depressed with a sense of utter failure; but our

desire is that the LORD may speak in His tender power to all our hearts. To any saved by grace every moment is important, and though there may be a willingness to change to a less remunerative, but conscientious, employment, on the part of such, "as a witness," and with deference to those in authority, yet, whatever a believer's age, or path in life, he should have been hitherto, as well as be henceforth, in a sphere of spiritual value, in a calling wherein abiding with GOD is the choice privilege (1 Cor. 7. 24). Many may be the heart-examinations linked with *this* aspect of life, and how careful parents should be as to selection for the children committed to their trust. We often undervalue our responsibilities.

Further, this thought does not merely apply to what is called "daily occupation." A man has many hours beyond the fifty, or more, for which he is *paid*. EVERYTHING of a believer belongs to GOD, for he himself belongs to GOD. Precious are the words of joy, "Paul a *bondservant* of JESUS CHRIST." The child of GOD is never off duty. He has a standpoint which the world cannot appreciate. The giving up of "luxuries," in war time, is to him equally a *privilege* in peace time. The setting aside of extravagance and gay apparel, in days of difficulty, is to him an opportunity throughout a pilgrim life. The surrender of many "pleasures" is to him more than a pleasure, when the worldling feels freest so to indulge. The wasteful and sinful amusements of earth cannot ensnare when CHRIST attracts, and when CHRIST is exalted. The nation's drink bill may be reduced by legislation, but the humble child of GOD is encouraged to put aside whatever causes a brother to stumble even when it is easiest to obtain: his abstaining is in love, not with a mere drudgery. The obedient believer knows more than temporary economy, and often his usual actions are far, far simpler than the giving up of those who urge this for a brief period. As his prayers for GOD'S wise overruling are more powerful than most imagine, as his FATHER'S watchfulness is more protection than the bulwarks of men, so his use of money and time is altogether meant to be a blessing, though it may be forgotten (*cf.* in another context Eccl. 9. 15), in the land where he lives devotedly for his LORD. Yet he does not emphasize *his* importance. As John, he would exalt *CHRIST*, with Paul he would say "though I be nothing" (2 Cor. 12. 11, *cf.* Gal. 6. 3). Oh that our gracious GOD may be honoured in the devotedness of His people, as those redeemed by the precious blood of His Beloved SON. Oh that this standard of godliness may be more and more realized, for we would sorrowfully confess unto Him how we have failed to live up to it, and how often we have been more like unto the world than we should have been, and have stood afraid of the simple path of pleasing Him. May our heart be revived, and, in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, may we henceforth press forward, "looking for that BLESSED HOPE" (Tit. 2. 13).

"It is of Faith that it might be by grace" Rom. 4. 16.

## Errors in Gospel Preaching.

If we bring before the *unconcerned sinner* belief in the LORD JESUS, he assumes a modified law,\* and trusts to a mental faith. I would hesitate as to the word "offer." It implies the sinner's natural ability to produce a godly acceptance. But we know that, by nature, he will only refuse, and so we set forth that which GOD describes as a *gift* rather than an OFFER, and, as we preach this glorious message, we long and pray that GOD the HOLY SPIRIT may *cause* some, as part of the gift itself, to accept that which is beyond expression. Who can estimate the love of GOD? Oh that we may *realize* this, and also His just wrath, when we are privileged to tell of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Again let me plead against anything which encourages the sinner proudly and carelessly to think he can take as and when he likes, in his own power. Let the awful condition of those without CHRIST be shown, and GOD Himself will use this to lead the lost to His Beloved SON. Let Him thus be LIFTED UP, exalted, and honoured (John 12. 32) and men of all classes will yet be drawn to Him.

## The Attitude of Unbelief.

UNBELIEF is a deadly poison, it spreads like leaven, harms man and dishonours GOD. In view of what GOD has done for us, faith alone is reasonable. Well may *believers* enjoy the precious words, "Be not afraid, *only believe*." There is a loving rebuke in the heart-searching question, "Wherefore didst thou doubt?" We call to mind Jeremiah 2. 5 and 31 :—"What iniquity have your fathers found in Me?" and "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?" GOD has done great things for us whereof we are glad, and confident faith in Him should characterize our lives. But can we say that this is so? How easily we are drawn aside from living faith in the living LORD, or at least from its holy manifestation. But in the uncertainty is the hindrance to all witness. Inconsistency mars testimony for GOD. Unbelief denies Him, and, as 1 John 5. 10 reminds us, makes GOD a liar! Nor would we forget 2 Pet. 3. 4, 5 : "willing ignorance" is more common than most think, and we need grace that, in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, we may be kept back from anything approaching it. The attitude of unbelief is "Can GOD?"—see Ps. 78. 19. It is thus the reverse of humility, though it may parade in this disguise. Faith is *not* credulity, *not* presumption, not self-confidence, but quiet well-grounded trust in the LIVING GOD and His unchanging words! See Heb. 3. 12, 13.

*GOD commendeth HIS love: we had no love: we were only enmity. His love dealt with this, and has caused us to love Him. Our character as well as our prospect is changed.*

\* "Doing belief" instead of doing everything.

## Languages.

IN this sense there are "so many kinds of voices in the world" (1 Cor. 14. 10), and we realize the *solemn* legacy of Babel (Gen. 10. 11), looking for the gracious fulfilment of Zeph. 3. 9:—"For THEN will I turn to this people a pure language (lip), that they may all call upon the Name of the LORD, to serve Him with one consent (shoulder)." But where sin abounded, grace has much more abounded. We see this on the Day of Pentecost, and the Scriptures are in more than one language, and some words of CHRIST on the cross are given in more than one language, that we may be impressed with the precious thought how CHRIST died for sinners of all nations. Correspondingly the very inscription on the cross was in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Again we remember those beautiful words, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," and we give much thanks. How thankful we should ever be!

But there are problems connected with "languages." We cannot learn everything, nor are we called to try thus to do. We must beware of idleness, beware of that which is superficial, beware of changeableness. God *could* enable us to speak in any necessary tongue without preparation: He *could*, moreover, grant a grammatical knowledge without labour, but we must not presume on His power and love. If we have not been privileged to learn certain languages in childhood, we should now seek grace to progress beyond *natural* expectancy in that which is laid upon our heart. We must avoid disproportion in the use of time. It is very easy to "half-learn" certain words and rules, and thus to keep on repeating the unfinished work without real results. We need grace to be concentrated and thorough, in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT. The writer feels this particularly with respect to Chinese, for many Chinese sailors are now among the "opportunities," committed to the LORD's people with whom he has close Christian fellowship. May grace be granted. The work is enjoyable, and we may be permitted, later on, to encourage readers by some record of the LORD's enabling.

Again, language often has its solemn message as to the depravity of men. Words commonly acquire specialized meanings, and these frequently show departure from God. So in English the words "silly" and "knaves" had nothing of their sad meaning by original derivation. Man is *away* from God, and out of his heart he speaks. Hence the old English "by and by" and "presently" came to indicate a certain procrastination. Yet there are cheering thoughts as well, for the HOLY SPIRIT also crystallizes precious truth in one word, more truly pictorial than ancient hieroglyphics, e.g. "obedience" is, in Greek, "hearing with subjection," and "disobedience" "hearing *aside*" as when Adam hearkened to the voice of his wife rather than unto God (Gen. 3. 17). "Encouragement," (or "exhortation" as it is rendered) is "calling aside," it may be "alongside." If we would help fully, we must be *ahead* of others, and invite them from their own path, and away from the things of earth. The learning of Greek and Hebrew may be valuable in this direction, and all should be to the praise of the glory of His grace, for earthly skill and flesh activity are alike vain, but labour in the LORD is not vain! Let us trust Him more and more.

"I will bless the LORD at all times," said the psalmist (Ps. 34. 1). We feel the same privilege is ours. And we must tell you of His glories. We bless His Name because He is altogether wondrous. He only doeth wondrous things (Ps. 72. 18). He has saved us. He has kept us. He will not lose us. We have ALL blessings in Him. We *cannot* be silent. We *MUST* be very thankful. We are GLAD to praise His Name, and oh, that some who read these lines may long to know Him, and share such marvellous lovingkindness!

## Hymns for Believers.

Where sin did reign, grace doth  
abound,—  
All glory to our God redound!—  
For all is of and by Him too,  
And we in Christ are made anew.

Our hearts, now filled with love so  
great,  
Would all our sinful failures hate,  
Live by God's grace in one accord,  
That we may please our glorious  
Lord.

May we, in these last evil days,  
Be watchful, walking in God's ways,  
For Satan's power still worketh ill,  
But let us seek God's holy will.

With one accord may we unite  
To live and walk with God aright,  
'Mid all that would our souls oppress  
May we look up, His Name confess.

The time is short, we soon shall meet  
Our Coming Lord, and saved ones  
greet,  
And in That Day so bright and fair,  
We shall our Saviour's glory share.

With lowly hearts and godly fear,  
We would, our God, to Thee draw  
near.

Praise Thee for all Thy changeless  
love,  
And seek the things which are above.

With confidence in Thee, our God,  
We come to Thee, through poured-  
out blood,

And worship and adore Thy Name,  
For Thou art evermore the Same.

With faith in Thee, and through Thy  
Son,

Who died for us, the Righteous One,  
We now draw near in Him alone,  
And all His perfectness would own.

With gratitude that, in Thy grace,  
We have been brought to seek Thy  
face,

Our Father, we would praise Thee  
now,

As we before Thee humbly bow.

With overflowing love to Christ,  
Whose death on Calvary sufficed,  
Our God, we come to Thee on high,  
And praise Thee Thou art ever nigh.

'Mid all the trials of these days,  
May we delight in all Thy ways,  
Be humbly solemn, godly too,  
And keep that Day of Days in view.

We praise Thee, O our gracious God  
That we are saved through poured-  
out blood,  
Made nigh to Thee, for ever blest,  
And on Christ's finished work we  
rest.

We praise Thee for such wondrous  
love,  
Which brought our Saviour from  
above;  
Since all in Him we now possess,  
We bless Thee for Thy righteousness.

We praise Thee, Christ will never lose  
Those saved by grace, whom Thou  
didst choose  
We bless Thee that the choice Divine  
Was all of Thee, and Thy design.

We praise Thee, we shall never die,  
But dwell for aye with Christ on  
high.

We bless Thee for eternal joy,  
Which sin shall never more destroy.

We praise Thee for abounding grace,  
In Christ, our Sure and Hiding Place,  
That every word shall be fulfilled,  
As Thou hast purposed, planned and  
willed.

We praise Thee for the Spirit's power,  
His presence with us every hour,  
We bless Thee for His work of grace,  
In bringing us to seek Thy face.

We praise Thee for Thy constant  
care,  
And for the privilege of prayer,  
We bless Thee for the Scriptures too,  
And praise Thee for that Day in  
view.

We will wait upon the Lord,  
We will trust His changeless Word,  
On His promises will rest,—  
We shall be for ever blest.

Vain the pride which doubts His  
love,

Right the faith which looks above,  
God is living, we can trust,  
He is gracious, true and just.

We would glorify His Name,  
We would now His love proclaim,  
Saved by blood, we hence would be  
Those who own Him thankfully.

Oh for more abounding praise,  
And obedience in His ways,  
For reviving would we cry,  
And upon Himself rely.

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# The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto Thy Name  
give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake"

Ps. 115. 1.

## A Word of Introduction.

*EACH issue reminds us that "the Coming of the LORD draweth nigh" (Jas. 5. 8). And then we shall be satisfied. NOW we feel our limitations physically, and our failures spiritually; and moreover, our surroundings ever emphasize the words that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." But, thanks be unto GOD, where "sin abounded, grace did much more abound," and a people "redeemed from the earth" (Rev. 14. 3) will yet be around their adorable LORD in the excellent glory. Each issue reminds us He will soon come. Meanwhile, we do want to please Him, and to help those who bear His Name, that there may be among us ALL, true humility, confession of sin, obedience, and devotedness, that we may grow up into CHRIST in ALL things (Eph. 4. 15), and "exalt His Name together" (Ps. 34.3).*

## "Mutual Suspicions."

**I**T is natural that these should exist among the nations of this earth. It is natural, moreover, that they should be found among the men of this world in their *commercial* arrangements. Doubtless, most would say, "And there is good cause for suspicion." But it is sad that anything like such an attitude should be among the professed followers of the LORD JESUS, yet such is the travesty of the LORD'S work that it is harder than it should be to tell who are children of GOD and who are not. "By their fruits ye shall know

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them" (Matt. 7. 20), and we would plead for godliness among those who are redeemed from the earth, that their family likeness may be manifested, and that their LORD'S Name may not be dishonoured.

Let me earnestly remind such that the principle of Luke 22. 25, 26 applies in many ways. We are *not* to expect parallels with the world. We are *not* to say, "These things have ever been, and we cannot avoid them." We trust in the LIVING GOD. The Scriptures are *not* a dead letter. The HOLY SPIRIT *still* indwells and inworks. Are we afraid to look to the LORD for the solution of problems? Rather let us be afraid of our fears and doubts.

It is our privilege and responsibility to seek to remove suspicions, but there must be honest and true respect for *convictions*. We must not, after realization of Rom. 14. 6 and 1 Cor. 13, be self-satisfied in *imputing* wrong motives. Jealousy for truth is precious, and error can be so skilfully disguised. Satan may appear as an angel of light. True children of GOD are often *cautious*. We must *not* ask them to act against their conscience in trying to remove sad, sad differences. Let there be much tenderness, albeit, frankness, on the part of all, and much respect, though all flattery should be judged as sin.

Surely there can be an informal season *together*, with unfeigned humiliation before GOD, of *some* who feel the failures even of *real* believers, including *their own*, and who would please their LORD by being of *one* mind, as they remember *His prayer* in John 17. Is this asking too much? And is spiritual "correspondence" a burden? The thought of a new society, or a formal arrangement, will rightly repel many who are in measure spiritually exercised. But quiet heart-searching, personal prayer regarding this matter, and conversation, with confession of sin unto GOD, and praise for what HE is doing, and what HE has done, is surely the privilege of His awakened people. Any who are willing, by grace, thus to meet, with others exercised and *willing to acknowledge a share in the sin of manifest disunity* (others not being invited), without any denominational or undenominational auspices, in a quite unattached building, are earnestly asked to communicate soon, and to keep on praying.

### The King of Israel.

IN the light of Num. 23. 21, how solemn is Matt. 27. 37, 42. But how refreshing is Zeph. 3. 15. The purposes of GOD cannot be broken by man or by Satan. "Though the vision tarry, wait for it." GOD is never late. He never makes an error. He will not change to suit circumstances, but will change circumstances. That which Eastern kings ever tried to do (Dan. 2. 9), and that which Antichrist will attempt beyond measure (Dan. 7. 25), GOD ever accomplishes (Dan. 2. 21). His purpose must stand, and we rejoice that He will soon be exalted in the earth, and that our rejected LORD, GOD Blessed for ever, yet the Man CHRIST JESUS, shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, where He was put to death, and before His ancients gloriously.

### The Omnipotence of God.

IT is natural and easy to speak of all things after the manner of men. But if we are a new creation, in CHRIST JESUS, such a standpoint is quite unsuitable. May we not even say that it is sinful? A believer is delivered from the standpoint of the ungodly. To him the things that are unseen are an eternal reality, and ever precious. The power of man, however vast it may seem, is feebleness in his eyes, and the omnipotence of GOD is a cause for definite and perpetual thanksgiving. Are there troubles in front? GOD is omnipotent, and anxiety is judged. Is the power of men against us? "Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die?" The unsaved are so dead and unmoved, there is apparent reason for despair. Nay, the MIGHTY GOD can quicken, and does, for the counsel of His will shall stand, and CHRIST shall see of the travail of His soul. The omnipotence of GOD stills our worrying thoughts, and alters the aspect of everything. Nought of earth is stable, but "Our GOD is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased" (Ps. 115. 3). Oh how great the rest and calm we may have, as we seek to know more fully the Omnipotent GOD, and to act toward Him with the love and confidence, yet also with the reverence, of obedient children. The HOLY SPIRIT does not lead to any contrasted attitude. Slavish fear and proud familiarity are alike of the flesh. Oh that we may please and glorify our gracious GOD.

### Christ is God.

Let those who, alas, deny this solemn fact, account for the following Scripture unveilings of His glory:—

1. The *emphasis* that He is GOD. Isa. 7. 14, 9. 6, (10. 21), John 1. 1 (the word first as in 18 for emphasis) Heb. 1.
2. The Names He utters as His own in Rev. 1. 17, 18, with Isa. 44. 6.
3. The way in which He invariably received worship, whether in the days of His flesh when He had taken the form of a servant, or in resurrection glory (as Rev. 1).
4. The HOLY SPIRIT'S use of passages in the earlier Scripture implies His Deity, e.g. John 12. 40, 41 ("His glory"), 1 Pet. 2. 6-8 (See Isa. 8. 13, 14).
5. The attributes and powers of Godhead are before us, e.g. John 2. 25, 5. 23, Heb. 1. 3, Rev. 1. 18.
6. "Difficulties" are cleared away when we remember He became really MAN, and humbled Himself. It is noteworthy that the language of various Scriptures seems ordained to lay stress on His Deity, and to meet possible concerns of those who read e.g. CHRIST is marked off from *all* creation in Col. 1. 16; *all* the angels of GOD

are to worship (Heb. 1. 6), thus He is beyond all; and, again, the dead are to stand before GOD, yet all judgment is committed to the LORD JESUS.

These precious unfoldings of His glory cannot be set aside. May our gracious GOD mercifully forgive those who are unconsciously tampering with deadly error as to the Person of CHRIST, and cause them to say from the heart, as Thomas of old, "My LORD and my GOD."

### The Great Tribulation.

**H**OW much has been said and written concerning this. But "controversy" should never be the first thought. His people desire "the mind of the LORD," to be realized in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, that they may

**glorify Him!**

How few seem to remember the words of GOD'S servant, "We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of GOD" (Acts 14. 22). 1 Thess. 3. 3 is deeply solemn, and "all that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3. 12).

There are

#### TWO "great" tribulations,—

one under the hands of MEN (Rev. 7. 14), the other under the hand of GOD (Rev. 2. 22). Happy indeed are they who will not bear the latter. Both are before us in 2 Thess. 1. 6, 7, and the believer's attitude is seen in Rom. 12. 12, Rev. 1. 9.

Whatever your condition,

**this subject concerns YOU.**

If you have not come to CHRIST as a helpless sinner, the "tribulation and anguish of Rom. 2. 9 are indeed threatened. But if you are, in mercy, belonging to Him, are you seeking to know

**His purpose**

in this "evil age," and His unveiling of "the end of the age?" Are you encouraged in

**the prayer**

of Luke 21. 36, willing for

**the strain**

of Rev. 13. 7, comforted by

**the promise**

of Rev. 3. 10 as to the closing hour of temptation?

"THESE ARE THEY WHICH CAME OUT OF GREAT TRIBULATION, AND HAVE WASHED THEIR ROBES, AND MADE THEM WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB" Rev. 7. 14.

## "YOUR Lamb" שְׁחָתֶם לָכֶם

THE wonderful history of GOD'S commands to Israel in Exodus 12 (שְׁחָתֶם יֶבֶט) brings before us—

(a) His authority to arrange, e.g.—

הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֵאשִׁית חֹדֶשִׁים רֵאשִׁון הוּא לָכֶם לַחֲדָשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָה : שְׁמוֹת יֶבֶט  
"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months : it shall be the first month of the year to you." Ex. 12. 2.

(b) The fixed faith which He appointed. Everything is set forth as if deliverance was already theirs (see Isa. 46. 10).

(c) The personal relationship of Israel to the Passover.

This last thought is our present meditation before GOD. In connexion with an earlier plague many Egyptians were able to escape (Ex. 9. 20). GOD'S mercy is very real. But He marked out Israel ALONE with regard to the Passover. See the repeated "all," 12. 3, 6, 47, 50! To them a new year began, to them the lamb belonged. All the firstborn of Egypt died (Ex. 11. 5, 12. 29), but none among Israel. How great was GOD'S love : and how great is GOD'S love to-day.

And now I would ask you a deeply important question. Notice the wording. The lamb that belongs to you, YOUR Passover-Lamb, —where can THIS be found? You and I were, by nature and practice, altogether sinners. We needed a personal SAVIOUR. I have one, and praise GOD for this. But have you the joy of knowing such a hope? The words should ring in the ears—

**לָכֶם—לָכֶם—"YOUR lamb, the lamb FOR YOU."**

It is well that others should be safe, but are YOU safe? The matter is urgent. The necessity is real. The danger is great. On what, or on Whom, are you trusting? It is vain to rest on imperfect works! It is wrong to ask GOD to spare you at the expense of His Word, nor will He do so. He is a GOD of truth. Where is YOUR LAMB? "Hoping" will not do. "Thinking" will not do. Where is YOUR LAMB? The days are passing. GOD will soon smite. Again, I ask the question—Where is YOUR LAMB?"

וַיְהִי כַמִּדְרָת וַיֵּרָא אֶת־יֵשׁוּעַ בֶּן אֱלִיד וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה שֶׁהָאֱלֹהִים הַנֶּשֶׂא אֶת־הַנֶּשֶׂא  
הָרִץ : יִחָזֵק אֵ כֵּן

"John seeth JESUS coming unto him, and saith, Behold the LAMB of GOD, Which taketh away the sin of the world" John 1. 29.

### The Privilege of THE Passover.

WHEN GOD spared the cattle of Israel, or gave the children of Israel light in their dwellings, He displayed His goodness and power. But the privilege of the passover was far more evident. It was **A MATTER of LIFE or DEATH!**

\* Testimony among Israel circulated, the Lord enabling, at "Passover" time. The prayers of praying readers valued.



Nothing between existed. If there was the passover (פסח) there was no plague (נֶפֶשׁ): if there was no passover, there was the plague. והיה הדם לכם לאת על הבתים אשר אתם שם וראיתי את־הדם ופסחתי עליכם ולא־יהיה בכם נֶפֶשׁ למשחית בהכתי בארץ מצרים: שמות יב יג. Likewise in verse 23—The blood OR the destroyer. So in verse 27 smiting OR delivering. Solemn alternative! Did not GOD thus testify that without the passover, **ISRAEL WOULD HAVE BEEN AS EGYPT?** Their own "goodness" was set on one side. The REASON of their deliverance was simply GOD'S decisive love. The MEANS of their deliverance was the blood (דָּם). Do we not well to say gratefully "the privilege of the passover?" If the first-born of Israel had not been **UNDER A DEATH-SENTENCE**, the DEATH of the passover would have been unnecessary. Sacrifices are GOD'S declaration of mercy AND truth met together (Ps. 85. 10, 11). Truth demanded them: in mercy He appointed them. Ah, we must go a step further. "Them" is not the word used by GOD in Ex. 12. In Psalm 50 He shows a surprising difference between a Sacrifice and sacrifices (verse 5 and 8)—

אכפרלי חסדי כרתי בריתי על־רובה: לא על־זבחך אוֹכִיחַ ועולתיך לנברי תמיד: תהלים נ ה ח

And why? It was *not possible* for the blood of bulls and goats on the day of Atonement, nor possible for passover lambs to take away sins. A lamb cannot take **THE SOUL-PUNISHMENT WE DESERVE**. A lamb cannot feel the holy anger of GOD. A lamb is limited to the taking of *earthly* i.e. bodily death, and the giving of earthly clothing and food. **THE SOUL REMAINS UNCOVERED BEFORE GOD**. Israel's passover had temporal blessings: but these were temporary. We need eternal blessings:—life for evermore.

Thanks be unto GOD, there is *the* privilege of *the* Passover. MESSIAH our Passover dealt with ALL the needs. Every claim of law is righteously met by Him, (Ps. 40. 7, 8. Isa. 42. 21), and in such a way that **THOSE WHO DESPISE HIM DESPISE GOD'S LAW**, and choose eternal judgment. If I have Him as my Passover, I am wondrously free from an eternal plague, but not otherwise. Ah, dear Jewish reader, will GOD accept your plea of ignorance, and "that men told you so and so"—what is HIS testimony? All Scripture points to the privilege of those who, by grace, know HIM—**THE TRUE PASSOVER (הַפֶּסַח) the LORD JESUS CHRIST,—GOD'S MESSIAH (Ps. 2. 2).**

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## The PICTURE, or the POWER? *Meditations for "Passover."*

**YOU** hope to keep the passover very soon. Will you *compare* all your arrangements with the תִּנּוּךְ, and see if you are keeping to the will of GOD? I find His emphasis on the lamb, and specially on the blood of the lamb. But you have neither, can you account for

this? **פֶּסַח** are not **מוֹצֵת**, they rest on **פֶּסַח**: you build without a foundation. Ah, you reply, we have no temple, and cannot afford a lamb. "Cannot afford": is *that* true? Do rich Jews have the lamb? And *why* have you no temple? Can you give me any Scripture to show Israel are pleasing GOD while *without* a temple, *and away from* their land? In Egypt (Ex. 12), the wilderness (Num. 9), near Jericho (Jos. 5), and at Jerusalem (2 Chron. 35), Israel had the passover at GOD'S own gracious appointment. In every case **THE LAMB WAS SLAIN**. Where is your authority for any alteration?

**דבר אלהינו יקום לעולם: ישעיה מ ח**

"The Word of our GOD shall stand for ever." Isa. 40. 8.

But, supposing you had a temple, and offered the passover there "next year," would GOD accept it? Isa. 66. 1-3 gives a solemn thought—

כה אמר יהוה השמים כסאי והארץ הדם רגלי איזה בית אשר תבנולי ואיזה מקום מנוחתי: ואת־כל־אלה ידי עשתה ויהיו כל־אלה נאס־יהוה ואל־זה אביש אל־עני ונכחדוהו וחרד על־דברי: שוחט השור מבח־איש וזבח השח ערף כלב מעלה מנחה דם־חור מוכיר לבנה מברך און נס־המה בחרו ברכיהם ובשקוציהם נפש חפצה: ישעיה סו א-ג

It is possible to have religion *without* pleasing GOD. The passover lambs of Israel were manifold pictures of GOD'S one way of salvation. If you restored these, while rejecting that which they pictured, GOD would be angry at **THIS SIN**. It is surely plain that, as we have already said, the sacrifices were symbols of GOD'S way of salvation, (even as the tabernacle was made according to the pattern of heavenly things, see Ex. 25. 40). They could not take away sins, else why would *all* the sins be remembered again on **יום כפור** Lev. 16. 34? The sacrifices pictured GOD'S Gift, set forth in Isa. 53. An old-time Jew who had **THEM**, but no faith in *Him*, only had a picture. And a present-day Jew has an alteration of the very picture. A professing Christian too is still a Gentile or a Jew, without reality. But a *real* Christian has the power of which Ex. 12 affords the picture. The blood of MESSIAH delivers from an eternal plague. All this world is Egypt, but the believer, being born from above, belongs to heaven, and rejoices that he is no longer a bondman (of sin), for Abraham's prophecy (יהוה יראה) Gen. 22. 14. cf. 8), has come true. Yes, נראה יהוה, when אל נבור became ילד נבור, and not only lived, but died for sinners, to save them from their sins. My friend, I have only one question just now for you. How can we be silent in view of such love? How can we take your advice, and "keep it" to ourselves? *We must tell you of GOD'S salvation!* Not merely "it": we speak of *Him*!

\* The Lord will see, or, be seen.

† The Lord was seen, when The MIGHTY GOD became a CHILD born.

## Hymns for Believers.

How can we fully tell the grace,  
Which God in wondrous love makes  
known?

Those who deserved a distant place  
Are brought before His glorious  
throne.

Why all this love? What have they  
wrought?

What hidden merits were there  
found?

Their works were none, their merits  
nought,

But sovereign mercy did abound.

Grace reigns to save the dead and  
lost,

And we rejoice with joy indeed,  
God's love the cause, Christ's blood  
the cost,

And from sin's judgment are we  
freed.

The Holy Spirit deigns to aid  
When in our weakness we would  
praise;

Since all our sin on Christ was laid,  
How we would triumph in His ways.

Our God and Father we would praise,  
Who chose us in His Son!  
Eternal love, before our days,  
Salvation's work had done.

Chosen in Christ, we would devote  
Our lives unto our Lord!

His love, ere ages most remote,  
Claims all our heart's accord.

The precious blood, poured out to  
Did for our sins atone: [save,  
Since Christ for us His life blood  
How can we self enthrone? [gave,

Oh for more love, our Lord to please  
To walk within His will,  
To shun a life of sin and ease,  
His wishes to fulfil.

Our Father, kindle more our love,  
Our hearts with love would burn.  
Would fix our minds on Christ above,  
From earth-affections turn.

Forgive our falt'ring steps we pray,  
And let us walk with Thee  
Guide Thou our path from day to day,  
Thy purpose would we see.

Uphold and strengthen, help and cheer,  
Unto Thy glorious praise  
Cause us henceforth Thy voice to hear,  
And hence to love Thy ways.

How blest to know the Lord we own,  
Will soon be here again,  
Our Father, let this hope be shown,  
That we with Him may reign.

## "IF THE LORD WILL."

Those who love the LORD JESUS, and those who feel a need  
of His great salvation, are earnestly invited to gatherings, that  
our TRIUNE GOD may be exalted, during the holidays,

APRIL 6th and 9th, 3 and 6. 30 p.m.

MEETING ROOM OF BELIEVERS, 61, UPTON LANE,  
FOREST GATE, E7.

Further particulars gladly sent, and invitations to pass on.

Much preparatory prayer is desirable, that there may be

DEEP AND SOLEMN HUMILIATION BEFORE GOD,

at this time of national stress, and of continued scattering and  
diversity among GOD'S own people, who should be manifestly  
one, even as they are one "in CHRIST JESUS."

Subjects will, by grace, be doctrinal, expository and practical,  
as the LORD may enable, and if any have any suggested topic  
upon their heart, we shall be thankful to hear from them,  
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# The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"GOD RESISTETH THE PROUD, AND GIVETH GRACE TO THE  
HUMBLE. HUMBLE YOURSELVES THEREFORE UNDER THE  
MIGHTY HAND OF GOD, THAT HE MAY EXALT YOU IN DUE  
TIME: CASTING ALL YOUR CARE UPON HIM; FOR HE CARETH  
FOR YOU." 1 Pet. 5. 5-7.

## A Word of Introduction.

*EACH issue by the grace of GOD is a solemn milestone of opportunities taken, AND opportunities lost. We praise our gracious Heavenly FATHER for the privilege of speaking of, as well as to Him, for the privilege of making known somewhat of His will. But we must confess how much fuller is His will than our knowledge and obedience alike. His infinite mercy is our encouragement, and resting place, and He accepts whatever is done simply and devotedly in the worthy Name of the LORD JESUS. But would we not please Him much more? Would we not see His dear people of ONE mind in the LORD, and receiving "one another," AS CHRIST has received them to the glory of GOD? Would we not judge ourselves and the sectarian spirit which can be proud even of denying sectarian names? Would we not enter into the prayer of John 17 and the precious Divine appointment of 1 Cor. 1. 10? Oh that these pages may be used, in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, to stir up GOD'S blood-bought people that there may be A LIVING WITNESS!*

## An Underlying Testimony to the Deity of Christ.

"ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of GOD, and is profitable" (2 Tim. 3. 16). Not one word is superfluous, not one tense unimportant, not one portion is displaced (Matt. 5. 18). Multitudes of manuscripts enable us to know when to tread cautiously; a copyist's error only emphasizes the failure of man, and reminds once

more of the absolute inerrancy of the Divinely appointed autographs.

The words of GOD have a wondrous power when applied as such by the HOLY SPIRIT. But a living person alone can realize the living truth. If our eyes have been opened to see beauty in CHRIST, and to realize something of His wondrous personality, there is a work of grace, we cannot boast of human discernment (Matt. 16. 16, 17). The Deity of the LORD JESUS is definitely set forth in many Scriptures e.g. John 1. 1, Rom. 9. 5. And it is implied again and again. Implication is as strong as statement, and often this indirect testimony is more impressive to some.\*

Somewhat recently the writer, in ministering GOD'S precious truth, was privileged to notice the emphatic "I's" of John's gospel, or rather some of them, for over 150 are found†. The first ten concern John the Baptist, and in every one, he, though such a devoted servant of the LORD, (should we not say, because he was such?), disparages himself (1. 20, "not"; 23, "a voice," contrast the Word; 26 see Matt. 3. 11; 27, "not"; 30, testimony to CHRIST; 31 twice; 33 "not," 34, witness, 3. 28 "not.") Then we have the first usage by the LORD Himself. It is in conversation with the woman of Samaria: "the water that I shall give him" (4. 14), and, a little later, "I That speak unto thee am He" (4. 26). The next two examples have the same force (4. 32, 38), surely it will not be in vain to us.

After this we have one illustration of the vanity of man, "While I am coming, another steppeth down before me" (5. 7). It is well to feel this background for *sovereign* grace.

Our hearts should be deeply impressed. "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist" (Matt. 11. 11). His humility was part of his greatness. But CHRIST Himself was meek and lowly in heart (Matt. 11. 29), yea He humbled Himself beyond measure (Phil. 2. 7). Can any one dare to say that a created being would have spoken as He spoke, *in entire contrast with John*, and yet be lowly indeed? Grant His Deity, everything is clear: reject His Deity, all is confused.‡

We have not finished the study of John's gospel. Yet more definite assertions follow. How many times we have the emphatic "I am" e.g. "I am, fear not" (6. 20 lit); "I am the Bread of Life" (35), "I am the Bread Which came down from heaven" (41), "I am the Bread of life" (48), "I am the Living Bread" (51). This is the

\* You are welcome to a leaflet containing "An Incidental Illustration of the Deity of the Lord Jesus," also one entitled "The Deity of CHRIST," and Vol. 14, No. 4 of "The Student of Scripture" with a brief meditation on "The Attitude of the Lord Jesus regarding worship.

† καὶ ἄλλω included. I refer to the nominative only. Every word is undoubtedly, emphatic, since from GOD, and repetition of any grammatical case is peculiarly emphatic, but it is helpful for believing students of Scripture to know that the Greek language does not insert the pronoun at all when in the nominative, (i.e. the subject of the sentence), except for special stress. Hence there is no uncertainty as to the reason, whenever the HOLY SPIRIT uses this.

‡ A like contrast, in connexion with another meek servant Moses (Num. 12. 3), is suggested by Heb. 3. 5, 6.

testimony of one remarkable chapter. Nor can we forget such expressions as "I am the Door," "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life" (10. 9, 14. 6, 11-25). In every case, the "I" is emphatic. Would a created being speak thus? John 8. 58 shines out, where CHRIST is seen as infinitely greater even than Abraham, "Before Abraham became, I am." And it is not merely "I was," but "I am." To explain away such words is to dishonour Him grievously.

"But," it may be said, "You have left out some occurrences." Only to refer to them now. In our going through the gospel 5.17 is the next passage, "My FATHER worketh hitherto, and I work." The Jews themselves felt the force of this. Then we have 5. 30, 31. One verse cannot nullify another. These words are *exactly* what we should expect if He Who was GOD truly became a Man, and took upon Him the form of a *Servant*. He spoke as the *Perfect* Servant. Every stress on this makes His allusions to His Deity THE MORE EVIDENTIAL. Because He showed His glory in His words, why should He not also show His humility? The different Scriptures are not contradictory. Recognize the two natures of our one LORD JESUS, and the two parts of testimony in Scripture are beautifully appropriate; attack this, and you oppose its whole witness. There is no weapon to blunt the Sword of the SPIRIT, in this matter.

Definitely, I would plead with those who realize their salvation is His Name (Acts 4. 12), to avoid all compromise in the matter. Let truth be believed, held fast, obeyed, loved, and exalted to His glory. And, finally, I would, with loving and earnest Christian concern, bring before others, who "hesitate," their extreme danger,—on the authority of CHRIST Himself,—"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I AM, ye shall die in your sins" (8. 24).

## "Come." "Depart."

Matt. 11. 28. Matt. 25. 41.

THE same LORD JESUS uttered these words, and they are recorded in the same gospel. Thus in the last book of Scripture we are told of "the blood of the Lamb" and regarding "the wrath of the Lamb." Solemn indeed are the contrasts which GOD sets before us. Either we have a SAVIOUR, or we must have a JUDGE. There is no in-between position. What a mercy to have sins blotted out and covered. What a mercy to know that welcome which *will never* be rescinded. GOD does not love to leave: He loves and keeps. He will not fail. Poor, helpless sinners have been graciously received. Do you feel yourself too bad. Why not come to Him, and see whether He will not welcome even you? Your joy will be great, for you will find He does receive *such* sinners, and will not refuse you because you are so unworthy. Well may His people say "Worthy is the LAMB."

## Scripture Tenses:—

### 1. Introduction.

EVERY word in Scripture is fully precious. This is not a mere truism to GOD'S dear people. We do not want to be occupied with grammar, but with CHRIST, yet, inasmuch as the HOLY SPIRIT has taken "words of earth, purified seven times" (Ps. 12. 6), we do well to notice even the jots and titles, and to seek, in His guidance, to find out the underlying instruction which is meant to be the nourishment of believing hearts. The term "tense" is a simple grammatical one to describe the various forms of a verb which emphasize different "times" of an action. The tense may also show its suddenness, or lay stress on continuance. These things are not unimportant. The past, present and future come specially before us; but, for example, the past may be considered with more than one aspect e.g. in Acts 4. 33 we read "with great power the apostles were giving the witness." "Gave" loses much of the Divine forcefulness. This tense is grammatically called "imperfect": there is nothing spiritually "imperfect" in the wondrous language. Perhaps "incomplete" or "continuous past" would bring out the "aspect" which GOD is emphasizing.

Again, the frequent declaration, "it is written," renders a Greek tense which suggests, "it has been written and remains so." We think of Pilate's words, "What I have written, I have written." This tense, called "perfect," has many beautiful example in 1 John,\* and other Scriptures.

I have thought that a few notes on some of these points may be helpful to dear children of GOD. The Hebrew is a little more difficult, but, in answer to prayer, we may expect encouragement later in this also, and let all studies be humble, expectant and spiritual, and to the praise of the glory of GOD'S grace (Eph. 1. 6).

### 2: "To Have Saved" and "To Save."

σωσαι and σωζειν.

IF we rejoice in salvation, surely we rejoice to know more of its wondrous completeness, in CHRIST JESUS our LORD. Shall we ponder two forms of the word "to save"? "To save": so we describe the verb, but Greek rather uses "I save," and Hebrew "He saved" as the descriptive term. "To save" is called the "infinitive," inasmuch as it does not show a finite action, but rather the "activity" of the word before us. But, thanks be unto GOD, "to save" is not *indefinite*. We have experienced, if, in mercy, born from above, the reality of GOD'S work.

The HOLY SPIRIT, in the later Scriptures, employs various tenses

\* E.g. 1. 1, "Which we have heard," 1. 4, "May have been filled and remain so," 2. 14, "Ye have overcome," 2. 29 "Hath been begotten," with the result that he does righteousness in the present (so 5. 1, the effect of life is living faith in the present).

even in this connexion, i.e. we can view the work of salvation as an accomplished fact, or as a process. The former is called the "aorist" (lit: "not marked off" time), we may almost render it "to have saved." Its aspect is clear in Luke 19. 10. The LORD JESUS came to completely seek, and "completely save." Yes, "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance (welcome) that CHRIST JESUS came into the world to completely save sinners" (1 Tim. 1. 15). His work is not left half done, nor can the poor, guilty sinner contribute the tiniest quota.

Other occurrences may be noticed. In Matt. 16. 25\* the tense shows the unwise determination of the one who is unwilling to suffer for CHRIST (cf. Mark 8. 35, Luke 9. 24, see Acts 27. 43). In Matt. 27. 42 (Mark 15. 31), the cruel thought is "He has not power to have done the act, and to have suddenly come down from the cross." The aorist often has this aspect of sudden action.† And further, the hint seems to be included "He escaped our hands before, but could not save Himself right through." They little knew His hour was come, and that if there had been avoided the death and the curse, there could be *no salvation*. The three occurrences in James are noteworthy:—

(a) 1. 21 "Being of power to have saved your souls" i.e. to the goal, cf. *eis σωτηριαν* (a precious study, 2 Tim. 3. 15 etc.).

(b) 2. 14. Imitation faith only evidences a rocky-ground hearer.

(c) 4. 12. The decisive works of GOD.

On the other hand, in Heb. 7. 25 we have the precious aspect of continuance brought prominently before us: "He is of power even to keep on saving, to the whole end, the ones coming, through Him to GOD, always living with a view to keeping on making intercession for them." How full is this verse. And the emphasis is even stronger by a different, and inspired, *order* of words in the original:—"Even to keep on saving to the whole end, *He is of power*." Thanks be unto GOD for this power. The unchanging work of the LORD JESUS here illustrates the future in Rom. 5. 9, 10. And surely we have a solemn contrast, in some respects, if we turn to Heb. 5. 7 where *σωζειν* is found, to prepare for 7. 25. What suffering CHRIST went through that He might become the "Cause of an eternal salvation."‡ Happy are they who rejoice in such infinite love, and look forward to see their precious SAVIOUR soon, face to face.

### "But God."

HOW often has Eph. 2. 4 come with wondrous power to redeemed ones. On the dark background of MAN BY NATURE there shines forth a display of GOD ACTING IN MERCY. We deserved nothing. As children of wrath, and sons of disobedience, our

\* After the present, *duvarai*, an aorist is more unexpected, and, proportionately, more manifestly emphatic.

† This passage does not mean He was made morally perfect: He never lacked this. He was brought to the goal of the work He graciously took in hand. The word "end" is from the same root.

position was desperate, BUT GOD, in His wonderful love has stepped in and made alive those who were dead !

The thought has come to me that there are other precious illustrations of the same wording, or that which is similar, as, for instance, Matt. 19. 26 "BUT WITH GOD all things are possible. Oh that we realized this more, and looked at everything from His standpoint ! And some of the messages will doubtless be heart-searching—"Ye are they which justify yourselves before men ; BUT GOD knoweth your hearts." If only this were more felt ! Luke 18. 7 is an illustration, though veiled in our version, "BUT GOD, will He not make the righteous vengeance of His elect" ; here we have an exact contrast with the mercy of Esh. 2. 4. Yet mercy and judgment are alike holy, and the GOD of all grace is the GOD to Whom vengeance belongeth. Acts 3. 18 next comes before us. The "but" should be read with "GOD." Man's wickedness and ignorance have been set forth—"BUT GOD" has overruled, and fulfilled His prophecies. "The wrath of man" shall praise Him : He cannot be frustrated. Acts 7. 42 reminds us again of His wrath. Literally "BUT GOD turned." He is longsuffering and forbearing : nevertheless sin must be punished. In Acts 13. 30 we have GOD'S answer to man's condemnation of the LORD of glory, "BUT GOD raised Him from the dead." Happy people are those who know the joyful sound, and delight in such lovingkindness.

The epistles give further examples of this emphasis on GOD, on HIS will and His word. In Rom. 15. 5 we have "BUT THE GOD OF PATIENCE" and in 15. 13 "BUT THE GOD OF HOPE." The link reminds of 1 Thess. 1. 3, and as to both words we have a beautiful definiteness : *the patience, the hope !*

### Anxiety Forbidden.

PHIL. 4. 6 is not only an exhortation, it is a command ; and disobedience must not be excused on the ground of temperament or tendency. It is so easy to have the mind centred around some *little trial*, and thus to have a rankling evil which grows till GOD is yet more dishonoured. We should be careful and prayerful as to the beginnings of sin. "Fear not" is an oft-repeated command : verily "the fear of man bringeth a snare." It is a privilege to believe GOD, but *surely GOD is worthy of all faith.* "WHEREFORE didst thou doubt ?" is a question of continual application. There is a reason for confession of sin, with heart-sorrow. There is a reason for a sense of insufficiency. But there is NO reason for worry. Anxiety takes the mind off the LORD, and away from prayer. We can often see how illogical it is, and yet we cling to this selfish slavery. The power of GOD is strong enough to break the strongest habit, but we should seek grace to attack sin *at the outset.* Why should we be anxious for to-morrow ? *GOD is living.* Anxiety is not humility, it is a denial of GOD'S glory, GOD'S truthfulness, GOD'S real interest in His people.

### How God Interfered With the Wish of Man.\*

"THERE are many devices in a man's heart ; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand " (Prov. 19. 21). This precious word comes with renewed power in connexion with the first Purim. The book of Esther (מגלה) wondrously unveils

#### the sovereign power of GOD.

Ahasuerus, as Nebuchadnezzar, was caused to work His purpose. "The heavens do rule." "GOD is not a man that He should lie."

It is remarkable to see how many persons were used, and overruled, by GOD, in the bringing about of His blessing to Israel, and how there were necessary dangers and difficulties as

#### stepping stones to deliverance.

The things which looked blackest were a background (See Gen. 42. 36, Ps. 76. 10). GOD is never defeated, never disappointed, never too late. But though He employs men and circumstances

#### He must have all the glory,

and this is very clear. Hence, as with Abraham in Gen. 22 (and some of us remember His servant Peter in Acts 12), He waits till apparently the *last* (Est. 6. 1). Yet then He is before men.

#### Haman is just too late

with his wicked request to hang Mordecai. A day earlier he might have secured this. And Esther, who fears at first, and is privileged to speak at the second feast, is a day after Mordecai's exaltation. This may have been, from her standpoint, failure, but from GOD'S standpoint, there was His preparation of Ahasuerus, and, beyond this, His exaltation of Himself as

#### The Saviour of Israel.

A danger greater than earthly death exists, and a Greater than a mere man has made a deliverance. GOD has provided salvation in the MESSIAH, Himself

#### The Mighty GOD,

though He became the CHILD Born, according to Isa. 9. 6—

כִּי לֹד יִלְדֵנוּ בֶן נִתְּנָלֵנוּ וְתַהֵי הַמְּשִׁיחַ עַל-שִׁכְמוֹ יִקְרָא שְׁמוּ פֶלֶא יִעָץ אֶל נְבוֹר אֲבִיעַד שְׂרֵי-שָׁלוֹם : יִשְׁעִיהּ ט ה

The need for Atonement, moreover, has been met, and

#### All the Sacrifices

have found their reason and fulfilment in His finished work. Dear reader, do not make light of such bountiful love.

The care of GOD over Israel shown in the book of Esther is very encouraging. Nor will He ever change His purpose of love toward the privileged nation (Jer. 32. 37) ; but there is something more wondrous than the blessing through Mordecai, and that is

#### the eternal blessing through MESSIAH.

The wish of man is man's own way (Isa. 53. 6), and this can only

\* Circulated, by the grace of God, among Israel at "Purim" recently.

mean death (Prov. 16. 25).—

יש דרך ישר לפניאיש ואחריתה דרכימות : משלי מז כה  
but GOD has graciously stepped in, and His way of salvation is  
through One Who was actually put on a gallows, as it were,—Who  
died on the cross, that guilty sinners might live, and  
live for ever.

This mercy is our joy, and every time Purim comes round are we  
not reminded that His ways are not men's ways (Isa. 55. 8, 9), and  
that His counsel shall stand? Nothing was at first done to Mordecai  
for his act of devotion, nor are we told he was then honoured among  
Israel, but, in the appointed time, he was highly exalted in the very  
place where

**men would have put him to death.**

Will you take the side of the Amalekite, of Haman the Agagite  
against the One in Whom all true hope is found?

**The Saviour and Lord, and Friend of Israel**

is now at the right hand in glory (Ps. 110. 1)—

לדוד מומד נאם יהוה לאדני שב לימיני עדיאשית איבין הדם לרגליך :  
but, when He returns, His *enemies* will become His footstool.  
Would you wish—would you dare—to be among such?

### Snow.

**S**NOW is not often mentioned in Scripture, but its usefulness, even  
to the land, is suggested by Isa. 55. 10. It is sad to see how  
men are often forgetful of the future even in a near and physical  
sense, and of the needs of others, and quickly complain against the  
weather because it inconveniences *them* at the particular moment.  
So real is natural selfishness. So prevalent is the spirit of Esau.

In Job 38. 22 GOD speaks of the *treasures* of the snow, an  
allusion to something beyond the providence just mentioned, and  
referring, at least, to the wondrous crystals. GOD'S works are  
beautiful even in earthly things. *How beautiful in grace!*

But we would also think of the deadly whiteness of leprosy, a  
picture of separation from GOD through sin (Num. 12. 10, 2 Kings  
5. 27), and of the contrasted purity and living whiteness of the  
Righteousness of GOD.\* Precious indeed are the words "Though  
your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1. 18).  
Well might the psalmist say, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be  
clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow," i.e. a spiritual  
and lasting whiteness, and *all* because of the finished work, and  
blood, of the LORD JESUS. Reader, is *this* your hope?

\* Typified by frankincense, called "white" in Hebrew.

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"GIVING THANKS UNTO THE FATHER, WHICH  
HATH MADE US MEET TO BE PARTAKERS OF  
THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS IN LIGHT."

Col. i. 12.

## A Word of Introduction.

**E**VERY issue reminds us of God's grace, and of the com-  
ing of our Lord Jesus. While many make the sad  
state of affairs an excuse for forgetting God yet more, His  
people realize how much more terrible EVERYTHING would be,  
if it were not for His forbearance and long-suffering (Rom.  
2. 4). Moreover, they are conscious that God is speaking to  
HIS CHILDREN, who have denied their heavenly calling, and  
have mixed with the pleasures and merry-making and ar-  
rangements of earth. 2 Pet. 3. 9 shows how important is  
the REPENTANCE of such. Thankful for His grace hitherto, we  
would in each page set forth His glories, and urge whole-  
hearted obedience and devotedness in the power of the Holy  
Spirit, also seeking to make known His Gospel to those who  
are "lost" (Luke 19. 10).

## "When he Let Down his Hand, Amalek Prevailed." Ex. xvii. 11.

The narratives of Exodus 17, after the manna picturing  
Christ in Ch. 16, are deeply suggestive. He was prefigured by  
the Smitten Rock. The waters were in ample supply. God  
richly blesses! "Then came Amalek." Are we surprised at  
this? Gen. 22. 1 follows 21. 33, and, alas, 1 Kings 19. 3 is  
soon after the beautiful firmness of ch. 18. In other words, to-  
day's encouragements will not supply to-morrow's needs—the  
manna was daily:—and if we have special blessings we must  
not think it strange if Satan makes a special attack.

Amalek were a strong people. Indeed, Israel, by hard fighting, in a dispensation when God marked them out as His earthly people, and arranged their warfare, were made to feel their insufficiency. Led by Joshua, they could not conquer Amalek, unless the hand of Moses was held up in prayer. How forcible is the margin of verse 16 in the light of this, and we remember One Who ever liveth to make intercession (Heb. 7. 25), and who is Himself on the right hand of the throne (Heb. 8. 1).

Yes, the spiritual parable is clear throughout. We wrestle not against flesh and blood (Eph. 6. 12), and the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (2 Cor. 10. 4), but there is a sterner conflict than any of earth. The flesh is mighty, and demon hosts are strong indeed. But for Christ's intercession, we should fail. Because He lives we shall live also. And to our own hearts respecting the privilege and responsibility of prayer this passage applies. Moreover, some may be granted to pray for others: those laid aside from active service before men must not think themselves useless. God is not dependent on His people. He employs different ones in different ways, and it is His love to employ any.

Do we not oftentimes, both in prayer for ourselves and for others, prove faltering. "When he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed." Probably some rightly feel that 1 Tim. 2. 8 approved of a physical lifting up of the hands, even as Scripture emphasizes kneeling, not in mere ritual, but with loving intensity. And there must always be the spiritual disengagement of the hand from other things, and cleanness of hands in God's sight, and openness to take hold of the blessing He is so graciously bestowing. But I would repeat the message, "When he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed." The natural relationship of the two things may not be clear. Why should the uplifted hand have power? Why the physical action be owned? When there was a "giving way" in any measure, then was failure. Oh for more willingness to be weary. Oh for unfainting persistence. Prayer is not meant to be an easy and sleepy indulgence. We often fall in this respect. The word "let down" is, literally, "caused to rest." Let us remember the need for the command, "Watch and pray" (Mark 13. 33). The same word occurs in Eph. 6. 18, and implies sleeplessness. We must be urgent. God is **not** an unjust Judge, and His people are **not** as the widow of Luke 18. Why these contrasts? Surely to suggest how we should be expectant and continuing in prayer. It is so natural to let our hand rest, it is so easy to be a little less earnest. Isa. 62. 6, 7 is very precious. Amalek will probably soon prevail if we are prayerless. There is a need for holy concern in this matter, that, in the power of the Spirit of God, we may be able to claim and enjoy the promises.

How suggestively Ex 17. 12 shows fellowship, and then we have the encouraging statement, "His hands were steady." This word signifies "truth": the root meaning "stability." Oh for true and fixed prayer, the prayer of faith, the prayer

which wavers not. Circumstances are but circumstances, difficulties are only difficulties, things are merely things, but God is God!

### **"The Rust of Them shall be a Witness against You." Jas. v. 3.**

We rejoice in riches that are heavenly. Nothing of earth can satisfy our heart's longing. And the "best" that this age can give will soon pass away. "The world passeth away, and the desire thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2. 17). Happy, indeed, is the prospect of the redeemed. These outside the world's greatness, and prestige and money for Christ, need not any pity: they are rich beyond measure.

The message of Jas. 5 is deeply solemn, and applies with increasing power as the dispensation draws to a close, and we feel yet more that "the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh". May our hearts be "drawn" towards Him, and His continual love. He never changes, never fails. How often we fail.

The word for "rust" also means "an arrow" and "poison" (so in 3. 8). How solemnly suggestive is this. Earthly gains act as an arrow, and those that will be rich pierce themselves through (1 Tim. 6. 10). How much better to have suffering for the Lord. Earthly prospects take the mind away from those which are spiritual, and the arrangements made by those who would "get on in the world" quite ignore the Lord's will, as 4. 13-15 shows.

The thought of poison is remarkable. We want the food of the Lord. There is such a danger in being eaten, as 5. 3 emphasizes, instead of eating the food (see Isa. 1. 19, 20). How often time and strength are vainly consumed, and the things of earth cause, as it were, the very eating of our flesh, yet we choose that which never satisfies and which can only hinder.

And what is the aspect of rust? We connect it with an unused tool. Beloved fellow-believer, are you using all your money for the Lord? Are you occupied with Him, and concerned to please Him? The "rust" of large reserves, of money laid by on earth with a view to possible emergencies, is to be a witness against you. Surely this allusion to unsaved professors does not exempt true children of God, but rather awakens them yet more, that there may not be the dishonour through such "rust", at the Judgment Seat of Christ! We are all too much attached to earth, and more influenced by opinions of the world and by usual customs, than we imagine. Let us at once be concerned about "rust." Let our treasures be laid up in heaven (Matt. 6. 19-21). Moth and rust will not corrupt there. It is evident throughout this chapter that God's servant alludes to the address on the mount, with its stress on the heavenly calling. Since we



are a new creation in Christ Jesus, let us seek, with the power of the Holy Spirit, to enjoy the wondrous privileges of "spending and being spent" for the Lord, and of receiving our reward and wealth when we meet Him.

**"Loved to Wander."** Jer. xiv. 10.

**"I have Loved Strangers."** Jer ii. 25.

THESE words are deeply solemn. And all God's truth is solemn. Oh that we may be solemnized in heart. It is so easy to wander, it is so natural to go one's own way (Isa. 53. 6), and the power of habit grows. A habit becomes a chain, and the attitude is thus expressed: "I have loved strangers, and after them will I go."

Observe here the effect of love. Love goes, and likewise in 8. 2 we read, "All the host of heaven whom they have loved, and whom they have served." Love serves. It must act. And Jer. 14. 10 adds, "They have not restrained their feet." Love has a real power: how important that it should be right love.

But observe something else, and that which is beyond all else. God does not give up the rebellious nation. He pleads tenderly in chapter 2, and even in chapter 14, when the language of strongest reproof is followed by "Let my eyes run down with tears night and day," and when the Lord explains 14. 11 (after the intense longing of 14. 21, 22) by the painful words of 15. 1, He still speaks of a way of blessing: "Let them return unto Thee" (15. 19), and, indeed, the very fulness of the scattering (16. 13) is soon made the background for amazing grace (16. 14). Thus we reach the climax, "Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know My hand and My might; and they shall know that My Name is the Lord" (16. 21). I do not recollect having felt before the succession of these passages so definitely: chapter breaks often hinder. How precious "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Wonderful indeed is it to find, in the very book of such warning and sorrow now before us, the words of comfort, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31. 3). Salvation is unmistakably by grace (Eph. 2. 8).

But we return, alas, to something else which is wonderful: "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and My people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" These words of 5. 30, 31, are heart-searching. There is an end, and if individuals, and nations, forget God, there will be a terrible reckoning. God does not forget, though WITHIN the covenant of His mercy He says "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 10. 17, with Jer. 31. 31-34). Dear reader, you have thus set before you two aspects.

The awful sin of men is seen. Do you love this waywardness in your own life, or does it make you miserable? If, in God's tender working, you can say that sin is your burden, there is a welcome for you. God's great love has made so great a salvation. He gave His Beloved Son to die for the rebellious, and that glorious Lord made His soul naked for death (Isa. 53. 11 lit:) and made intercession for transgressors. Oh that you may rejoice in this lovingkindness. Your sins may be many—they are many—but God's love is stronger, and His Gospel is His power unto salvation (Rom. 1. 16). Is not this revelation of love delightful?

And many who read these lines have long rested on the precious blood of Christ and can thankfully call God "Father." Yet we all need a fuller and fuller view of His love, do we not? And surely there is a call for more concern for poor guilty sinners that we may speak to them of the Lord Jesus very gently, and, that, living in fuller contrast with any love to wander, we may henceforth adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in the present continued power of the Holy Spirit. May it be so!

### The Lord's Teaching in Luke xi. 42.

EVERY message of Scripture goes beyond its primary aspect and context. If only we have eyes to see and hearts to love God's truth, we shall find, in the powerful application of the Holy Spirit, how real is the suitability of His instruction for every need, and for every possible emergency. The Pharisees were proud and self-righteous, they were covetous albeit outwardly religious. Such is man. WE do not judge their hearts, but Christ has given us this testimony, and He knew what was in man (John 2. 24, 25). Hence His solemn "woe" to them, a woe of warning which we also should earnestly take to heart. They tithed "mint and rue and all manner of herbs." Thus they not only in many other ways broke the law of God to keep their own traditions (Mark 7. 8, 9, 13), but actually observed, in strict outward formality, some of His appointments. The attitude of the Lord Jesus regarding these two things was quite distinct. As to their own traditions, He uttered an unsparing denunciation, but since tithing was then Divinely in force He said, "These ought ye to have done." But He quickly added that other parts of obedience, even "the weightier matters of the law" (Matt. 23. 23) should not have been left undone. Herein is a deeply solemn thought. It is so easy to become unbalanced, and to swing as a pendulum. If any emphasis be laid on one of the "least commandments"—the Lord alone has a right to decide which is to be so characterized—many will cry out "legalism," and almost speak disparagingly about "tithing mint and rue." But is it love to be disobedient as to details? Love is not limited to details. The parallel with tithing mint and rue is not unimportant, not sinful, unless the heart attitude be wrong.

If a fellow-believer insists that any stress on some arrangement of the Lord Jesus is necessarily unspiritual, he is on very dangerous ground. If he answers that I must be forgetting the "weightier matters" because I would bring this before him, he is judging my heart, which the Lord alone can see, and misusing the Lord's own words against other of the Lord's words. This is grievous indeed. The solemnity of a commandment is not conditional on its "size," but on the fact that it is a commandment. If it be the "least" and it is His, I dare not despise it, else I despise Him, as definitely as if I despise a little one who belongs to Him (Matt. 18. 1-10).

Granted, sorrowfully, that Satan will seek to occupy the mind with anything rather than Christ. Hence some will tend towards "license," others toward "bondage," but it is not bondage to be simply a servant of Jesus Christ, and to dread altering His words. Baptism, to some, may appear "a small matter": they may not be troubled if there is the absence of immersion. They may even suggest that if stress is laid on this, the spiritual teaching is proportionately made secondary. Perhaps some dear child of God, grieved by this lightness and assumption, dares to speak again and again of the meaning of the Holy Spirit's own word "baptize," and of the symbol of burial (Rom. 6. 4). Is it kind to retort that he is going back to "carnal ordinances"? If he is becoming unspiritual thereby, (may the Lord prevent it!), those who neglect to ponder the exact words of the Lord are themselves helping in this, and a brother who treasures and has obeyed them is to lovingly rebuke, not one who ignores them. If the Lord's Supper is shown from Scripture to be with unleavened bread, if we would cherish His "This do" as well as His "in remembrance of Me," is it love which applies "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink" and "It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein!" Let it be remembered that Satan used part of a verse to tempt Christ. To take a portion of Scripture, and insinuate that others are "occupied" with materials is a serious charge, unless there are grounds for this speaking against them. Is it love to speak glibly against their simple adherence to the Lord's words and actions? At least they have fidelity to His arrangement. "The burden of proof" is upon those who alter. If any do omit "judgment, mercy and faith" (Matt. 23. 23), reprove them, but even then let there be a quietness before God, lest some errors apparently seen in them are made an excuse for personal continuance in other things which equally grieve God's Holy Spirit. It is "natural" to find an argument for disobedience in the failure of those who seem definite on the matter in which we fail, and to assume that their failure is a proof that the action we are avoiding is not God's will. But this is sinful, and most unwise.

Even now I fear that some will infer from the mention of baptism and the Lord's supper that I am disproportionate. They will say, "The present dispensation is not one of types." No,

but the Lord has appointed them. And Luke 11. 42 is before us, and I am thinking of the dear children of God who omit the parallel with "tithing mint." I hope that if any among us are exalting the observance of one act instead of following the Lord wholly, if any among us are proudly looking down on those who omit His will in these things, if any among us are satisfied with their own obedience, and putting "mercy" in the background, that the continual witness in our gatherings may be the Lord's means of dealing with such manifestly hateful sin. And let things glorify Him, and may we grow up unto Him in all things, so will there be true blessing through this quiet pondering of His holy will.

### **"Nor Foolish Talking, nor Jestings . . . But rather Giving of Thanks." Eph. v. 4.**

THE link of doctrine with practice is ever marked in Scripture. The Holy Spirit would show that the enjoyment of our spiritual blessings "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" must include godly simplicity in daily details of daily life. Hence the heights of Eph. 4. 15, 16 were not severed from the pointed command in 4. 25, nor can privileges and responsibilities be separated now. The tongue is a fire, and much mischief is associated with its misuse. Oh that we may realize more "the new song" in the mouth, and thus praise our Heavenly Father unceasingly. Angry, impatient, grumbling words dishonour His Name, and this is such an evil.

But there are other dangers. The word "foolish talking" is used nowhere else. It is heart-searching. How important that every word should be wise. "The lips of the righteous feed many." We do not wish to listen to the worthless conversation of those who know not God, but perhaps we have overheard at times, and needed grace to keep from semi-consciously listening to the worthless conversation of some in a railway train or elsewhere. "What fruit" is there in such talkativeness? How we pity the poor world.

And how about "jesting"? The term for this seems to signify "wittiness," "repartee," its origin being two words, viz., "well" and "turning." A "well-turned," clever reply may seem so attractive. But here is the test. It is so easy to make a joke, so natural for some temperaments to be frivolous. They see in a moment that which is calculated to amuse, and can easily lead others to a lightness. Oh the cruelty of this! Some dear children of God present may be weak, yet wanting to be solemn. Shall we hinder them in the path of pleasing God? How different are our answers to be from those of worldly repartee (1 Pet. 3. 15).

It is sad, indeed, that those who bear the name of the Lord Jesus can look at "Punch," and similar literature. I have heard of a "specialist," professing Christ, yet urging wearied ones to

read "something light" as a tonic. How degrading is the thought. The words of God are food and medicine. Acquaintance with Christ is the tonic. Oh that we may know Him, and walk with Him. Jestings is quite unbecoming "saints." The stress on the name in verse 3 is important. 'Tis because we are set apart that we must not be as the world. We expect, that the men of this age will have their own forms of merriment. But if we have been born of the Spirit, we have new and spiritual wishes. Oh that we may enter into the added words of verse 4, "But rather giving of thanks." There will not be a dulness, a vacuum. Let the Lord's praise be continually in our mouths (Ps. 34. 1). Let us speak more of what He is, and what He has done. Thanksgiving will drive away much else, and our Heavenly Father will be exalted.

### Salvation—The Work of God.

**S**ALVATION is very wonderful. The deliverance of a poor guilty sinner from the wrath of God is beyond human comprehension, but not beyond Divine working. Are we surprised that Scripture speaks of "so GREAT salvation," and emphasizes its wonderful character?

That which is of God is indeed great. The apostle could say, "God, Who hath saved us and called with an holy calling" 2 Tim. 1. 8, 9), and in Eph. 2. 8, we read of those who have been saved BY GRACE, and in Acts 4. 12 are plainly told that there is no salvation IN ANY OTHER THAN THE LORD JESUS. All human ideas of human working, and human merit, are vain, and full of failure. Man will never produce anything better than himself—and he is a sinner. The WORK is a real one, but it is not the work of a creature. Herein is its glory, herein its sufficiency, herein its fullness. Salvation belongs to the Lord, and His people can rest and rejoice.

But what does Phil. 2. 12 mean? Salvation must be "my own" before I can work it out. And Phil. 1. 19, and the ADDED words of Phil. 2. 13 help to explain, "for it is God Which worketh in you, both to will and to in-work, 'over' THE good pleasure, i.e., His good pleasure." "OF" here is often misunderstood. Undoubtedly believers have the privilege of doing that which is the Lord's loving wish, but the aspect of this verse is different, ascribing all to grace. His good pleasure is the cause of our salvation, and He works in us that we may work in the sphere of His will, and thus demonstrate that we are truly children of God. So believers are enabled to enjoy victory over sin, and to experience what we may call practical salvation, to the praise of the glory of God's grace. And how happy are those who are thus privileged. Let us never despise the great joy of pleasing our gracious Lord.

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# The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"MY MOUTH SHALL SHEW FORTH  
THY RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THY SALVATION ALL  
THE DAY; FOR I KNOW NOT THE NUMBERS. I WILL  
GO IN THE STRENGTH OF THE LORD GOD, I WILL  
MAKE MENTION OF THY RIGHTEOUSNESS, EVEN OF  
THINE ONLY."—Ps. 71, 15, 16.

### A Word of Introduction.

**T**HE privilege of setting forth God's testimony is one of which I trust we shall never be unmindful, and for which we would never be ungrateful. The OPPORTUNITY and WISH to do this are alike from Him, and he would seek the power which He graciously supplies; for the privilege is also a responsibility, and we would fear lest we should misrepresent our Lord, and so dishonour His Name. It is a solemn thing to tell of life and death and to know that the message is a savour of life and death (2 Cor. 2. 15 16). It is a wondrous trust to bear the Name of the Lord (Acts 9. 14, 15 16). It is a great honour to encourage the people of God to please their Heavenly Father and to walk in His ways while they wait for their Lord from heaven. Thus to glorify Him is our object, and these pages have nothing in common with the object of man-exaltation, which is (and will become more) prevalent in these sad "last days." May our gracious God ever cause a contrast and thus shall He be exalted.

### Why not Believe God?

**H**E has given many promises to faith, and not one of them has He broken. You cannot find one case of honest trust in the Lord which has been put to shame. But the lack of faith is not only perilous, it is so insulting to Him, it makes out that the God of truth is false. It encourages others to doubt, and causes personal anxiety. It robs a believer of joy, and in every way brings trouble, and in no way any blessing of any kind. Oh how sad is unbelief. How glorious to have living faith in the living God.

## Hunger.

**B**LESSED are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5. 6). How blessed is this. And as to physical need, how encouraging is the promise, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more" (Rev. 7. 16). As to the present and future alike God is Almighty, and we remember the words of the psalmist, "I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (37. 25). Again, Isaiah has set forth that, though luxuries be graciously withheld, the Lord is not unmindful of the needs of His own. It is a pleasant thing to be trusting in the Lord: "Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure" (Isa. 33. 16). Phil. 4. 19 is not a dead letter. If God permits difficulties, they are with a purpose. "He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live" (Deut. 8. 3).

It is well for a child of God to learn lessons through all circumstances and even in the matter of daily bread to receive from God (Luke 11. 3) and to be very thankful and to keep his body under (1 Cor. 9. 27). There is a danger lest "appetite" should have a large place in our life. The "natural" or "soulish" man is characterized by the natural soul, and hence by stress on "eating" (Matt. 6. 25 "life" is lit: "soul," see Isa. 29. 8): the spiritual man is to be marked by spirituality and by concern for the will of God. 'Tis not that he despises food: he acknowledges God's many gifts and God's own use of means, but there is a longing to please God rather than to please self, for all selfishness is sin (John 4. 31-34).

Sometimes believers err through ignorance, and a little prayerful talk over most simple things may be a blessing. Surely God's servant Paul referred to clothes and parchments in a way which glorified Him. Hunger is, I believe, usually of four kinds. There is that which is manifestly "sentimental": the smell of food, and the appearance of others eating may awaken this. I do not plead for irregularity. Matt. 6. 11 is against such a thought. But if one is used to food at a certain time, and hindered through the Lord's will and work, it is quite probable that sentimental hunger will assert itself. This needs to be watched. Closely allied with this is a strange feeling of need which most of us mistakenly regard as "being hungry," and may lose time thereby. It can be located in the back of the throat. It is apt to cause a measure of earnest wish for food, and if "craving" is encouraged, there may be a growth in this servitude. Hereby we learn once more how often the "physical" may pass into the "sinful," for Satan uses the flesh to occupy our mind with that which is of the earth and fading away. But there is also, at times, an internal "sinking," that one feels fatigued and unfit for God's glorifying labour (Eph. 6. 6), if food has been

somewhat omitted. I do not mean the "indigestion" apparently parallel with this, in its feeling, even after a meal, mid hurry or, at least partial, anxiety (Phil. 4. 6), but a true weakness, in some degree in accord with the Scripture declaration that our outward man perisheth (2 Cor. 4. 16). This body of our humiliation has a continual "wear and tear," hence the physical weariness often felt, though we would not be weary in well doing (Gal. 6. 9). Our Heavenly Father knoweth our frame (Ps. 103. 14). Probably there is a measure of indigestion in all weakness, and Satan frequently uses physical ailments which may be through carelessness, to produce lack of zeal, irritability and "imagination" of various diseases. We must beware of such sins. It is easy to excuse them because of the weakness of our flesh, but this is a grave mistake. If we have physical disability we are stirred to the reverse of this attitude in the encouraging promise, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." It is so easy to turn to drugs, and human control (often called "advice"), and to become self-occupied, instead of gladly presenting the body as a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service (Rom. 12. 1). The added words, "Be not conformed to this age," may surely imply that as to indulging the body, even with patent medicines and periods of idleness, we are to be the opposite of those who know not God. To walk in the Spirit means a strenuous life, but God giveth more grace. Salvation from anxiety is the best tonic, and Isa. 26. 3, 4 is a living message. "The Living God" quiets fears (Ps. 112. 7).

The fourth kind of hunger is real, and therefore perhaps rarely realised. It may be we have been kept from this. Do we praise as we should? God threatened it to Israel, "They shall be burnt with hunger" (Deut. 32. 24). To die in this way must be terrible. Starvation is painful indeed. How mercifully God has preserved. Doubtless, anxious care increases this pain, and fear of starvation may exist when it is quite out of place, and may become a sinful disease. I say "a sinful disease," for anxiety, (which seems so much before us in these pages) has a large share in such ailments, and this needs faith-healing. "Become a sinful disease" is hardly strong enough language: all anxiety is forbidden to the believer: while the Lord liveth, how can we be anxious? No good thing shall be withheld from those that walk uprightly. All things work together for good to them that love God. He is not defeated or weakened. Circumstances are nothing unto Him. Our God is in the heavens. He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased (Ps. 115. 3). There may be grievous trouble in this earth, because men have forgotten God. There shall yet be famine ere this sinful age closes, as Rev. 6 makes clear. Whether it will come almost immediately, in some lands, and whether it will be partial even in this favoured land, we cannot say. We are not prophets. It is for us to remind others, and to remind ourselves, of the solemn effects of departure from the Lord, and of ignoring Him. It is for us to declare His precious Gospel, which is still so wondrously free, so that the helpless sinner is welcome to its wine and milk,

without money and without price (Isa. 55. 1). Oh that the hearts of many may be directed to that which is more needful than daily food, even a present and eternal salvation by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh that those who know Him may realize that He is the Living Bread, and that daily spiritual nourishment in accord with John 6. 54, 63 is a needful privilege. Blessed are they who open their mouth wide to be satisfied with His goodness, and who wish, by grace, to live correspondingly. Hence we may finish as we began, "Blessed (happy) are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5. 6).

**"At that time did Hezekiah cut off from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and the pillars which Hezekiah, King of Judah, had overlaid, and gave them to the King of Assyria."**

2 Kings xviii. 16

EVERY word of Scripture is impressive: it is important that we should be spiritually impressed. On reading this passage surely we should notice the stress on "that time." Hezekiah was wavering. Verse 14 is a contrast with 7. Oh that we may continue firm and fixed, when the Lord has stirred up our hearts to please Him.

The editors of our English translation think there must be a new paragraph at verse 17. Certainly it seems remarkable otherwise that the Assyrian's apparent reply to Hezekiah's submission is warfare. But verse 20 shows a "rebellion" against Assyria has been manifest again. Does this necessitate an interval? May not Hezekiah's heart have soon smote him? But Isaiah 22 shows, it would seem, that his return to the Lord was not direct. First he was concerned to resist, and thus he retracted his "gift" to Sennacherib. But repentance is not mentioned; rather was there organization (Isa. 22. 8-11), and that excitement which "keeps up the heart," as men say (12, 13). This did not preserve from Rabshakeh. When Hezekiah was humbled and prayed, the Lord began to speak in encouragement (2 Kings 19. 1-7). And He removed confidence in the plans made by removing the very need for them (2 Kings 19. 31-32). Yet how we wish that this faithful servant of God had been more full of faith. It was a solemn thing to appropriate part of the house of the Lord.

It seems that Hezekiah's sad undoing of his own action, and principles is marked by the repetition of his name in 2 Kings 18. 16. We should have expected "the pillars which he had overlaid." The added description "King of Judah" is to con-

trast with "King of Assyria" (see Dan. 1. 2, where "the Lord gave"). God's people must not degrade themselves or dishonour Him by failing to trust. Hezekiah had the Lord's appointed position: he should not have become a servant of men!

How needful that we should, by grace, take a strong attitude against yielding the Lord's rights, though we should never "stand up" for ours, nor have we any earthly dignity and position in the present time of stress, and suffering, till He shall come, for whom our hearts would wait and long and pray.

## "FULLY COME" Acts 2. 1.

THE later Scriptures, which alas, Israel reject, make many wonderful and true claims. Among these they announce the fulfilment of **שבעות**! Most would not, I suppose, recognize **THE PROPHETICAL CHARACTER OF THE FEASTS OF THE LORD**. But the arrangements and order should be acknowledged if from GOD. Passover is put first: this month shall be *unto you* the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year *to you* (Ex. 12. 1). Any alteration from this, without GOD'S authority, must be very serious in its results. Passover precedes Pentecost and *Tabernacles*, and GOD teaches much by this. Plainly the last feast of the year (Lev. 23. 33-43) pictures Israel's peace and prosperity in their own land. Is not this *future*? Then we may well ask, "What will precede?" The answer is "A parallel with the Day of Atonement." Is not such an event before us in Zech. 12. 10, where Israel look upon Him Whom they pierced?—

ושפכתי עלי-בית דוד ועל ירושלם רוח חן ותחנונים וחבישו אלי את אש-דקרו וספרו עליו כמספר עלי-היחיד והמר עליו כהמר עלי-הבכור: זכריה יב ו

But this is associated with the blowing of trumpets, and the display of GOD'S glory as at Sinai. The *preceding* feast has no *period* attached to it ("The day of the firstfruits"), and it is not linked with a sabbath. The word "new" is startling in Lev. 23. 16. What is the spiritual teaching of the *firstfruits*? Must it not be distinct from that of *ingathering*? The present time is, we venture to suggest, before us, in which **THE MAJORITY DENY GOD'S CLAIMS**. If this be so, Passover *has* been fulfilled. But how? Passover is quite different from *Tabernacles*: it is not associated with *the fruit of the land*, but with the bread of affliction (Deut. 16. 3), and, primarily, with a going forth to the wilderness. In other words, it does NOT emphasize all the glory of Israel. Pentecost is dated from Passover, but not from the sacrifice alone, rather from the sheaf of corn waved before the LORD, having been *raised* out of the earth (after the corn has died) on the Day *after* the sabbath. We believe this to have been after the usual sabbath, the first of the week, as the entire absence of a *month*-date for the feast of WEEKS would imply. GOD clearly made known to Israel in Exodus 31. 16, 17

that the sabbath was a sign between Him and them. **PENTECOST IS THUS MARKED OFF FROM ISRAEL**, and would suggest a period when Israel are without a national position, having *no religious position before GOD*. Is not this evident to-day?

Passover can prophesy nothing other than the death of the great Passover Lamb, to deliver from the bondage of sin. Pentecost refers to a new thing, for which Israel have no place. The two loaves brought out of the *habitations* tell of a new company. As the law was given at Pentecost time, so the *new* covenant, which is not according to the covenant of Ex. 20 (Jer. 31. 31-34), was emphasized when the SPIRIT of GOD actually came down upon Jewish believers in MESSIAH, the very Pentecost after He had been slain at the Passover, and raised the day after the sabbath. That Israel does not realize this is plain, hence the new covenant is future for them as a nation, after soul-affliction (Lev. 23. 27). Why this agony? They have forsaken GOD and will then feel their sins on them. Hence GOD does not view them as His in the period prophesied *before*. It is most remarkable that *as soon as* Lev. 23. 24 is reached, we do have a sabbath, but none other is emphasized from the Passover! In rejecting the LORD JESUS you deny GOD'S Passover, and likewise set aside the work of His HOLY SPIRIT (רוח הקדש) in delivering poor sinners, because of that precious death, from this sinful age. Oh that some readers may be delivered, in mercy, from persisting in this rejection, from putting GOD'S teaching out of order, by daring to make סכּוּת first.

## The Privilege of Trusting God in the Dark.

IF we walk in the light" (1 John 1. 7):—ah, I would not say a word against this privilege spiritually. May we all enjoy it—enjoy Him—more and more. But my thought is that we may be in the dark as to earthly circumstances: we may not see which way to go or how long to wait, and we may be "perplexed" amid trials which would worry, if it were not for the Lord. "Fret not thyself." May not Isa. 50. 10 with Mic. 7. 8b, have a very definite message to a believer who is in such difficulties? Why do we ever despond? Our God is in the heavens. Faith flourishes when it needs real exercise, when everything is against it, and nothing apart from faith—living faith—can meet the strain. Problems are our opportunities to prove God's unerring wisdom and faithfulness. They are back-grounds for the display of His love. In accord with 1 Cor. 10. 13 we should thank Him for the special privilege of troubles and strains. Job was honoured to be God's witness before Satan (see also 1 Cor. 4. 9: Eph. 3. 10). God abideth faithful. How blest are His blood bought people!

## "God was displeased with this thing."

1 Chron. xxi. 7.

WITH what thing? It is well to notice carefully what displeases God, that in His grace and power we may avoid and confess and hate evil. We want to please Him if we are His. Surely this is love's own inference. And Scripture is written to guide us, and the Holy Spirit is living and indwelling. It is a sad fact, however, that we can grieve Him. It is a wondrous privilege to be able to glorify our God. Oh that this may be our heart's longing, and our happy realization, day by day.

David's numbering of the people was displeasing. But why? The action was quite "natural." Herein we find no "reason" for it. Alas, there are still those who approve of human reasoning as to right and wrong. Most take this attitude. What saith the Scripture? The will of God is all-important. David should have asked counsel at the mouth of the Lord, as on other occasions, and God had made special arrangements to deal with this very matter (Ex. 30. 12). His sovereignty was ignored. His desires and appointments were forgotten. But does this ancient history have any modern application? Surely, since all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable. Rom. 15. 4 is very definite to believers, and we do well to ponder all the truth. 1 Cor. 9. 8, with 14. 34, implies that there is more for us in the earlier Scriptures than we may have realized or even expected. Individually we often fail, because the sin of Jos. 9. 14 is repeated. Let us remember the solemn testimony, "They waited not for His counsel." It was Saul who said, "Withdraw thy hand." David usually enquired of the Lord. If he omitted it, something went wrong. "Gath" reminds of this. And I think God makes clear in this passage the underlying aim and method of Satan (1 Chron. 21. 1), for he ever seeks to draw the Lord's people away from their Lord. He encourages pride. "Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people" (2 Sam. 24. 2). The emphasis on numbering (two different words are used) is unmistakable. God was left out. And have we no personal danger of pride? Alas, if we know our hearts, this portion of Scripture appears heart searchingly. It is so easy to be proud of numbers for "a good object!" Beware!

But may there not be a further message. No earthly nation now is in the position Israel occupied. But self-confident forgetfulness of God is ever an evil. The privileged land in which our Heavenly Father has placed us is not without its boasting. The cry for men is loud: the cry for God is not heard. Self-satisfaction and grumbling have an alternate stress, but where is the heart-humbled repentance and recognition of God? Everything is thought to depend on "numbers." When David worked on these lines, he brought death to 70,000 and bereavement to

many more. Yet the newspapers of to-day and the man of the world is identified with their spirit, seem mesmerized with the thought of "numbers." Appeal is made to the wars of the past dispensation, but the attitude of 2 Chron. 14. 11 is sadly absent. Rather we see the spirit of 2 Chron. 16. 7-10 among those who lead the journalism of to-day. It is not for us to legislate, it is not for us to purify newspapers, it is not for us to improve the world. We realize there will be wars till Christ comes back, and "as strangers and pilgrims" we cannot force our heart-sorrow at pride, or our heart-convictions on others. But, albeit with a voice that seems to be crying in the wilderness, it is ours to witness and warn, and we would solemnly set forth that, in the light of God and His truth, the sensational emphasis on "men" and trusting to "men," and the hatred and blaming of God which we so often meet when preaching His Gospel "in war-time," are sure and heartrending signs of the times."

The words of Hos. 10. 12, 13 may ring out once more, "Break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you." And again the lament, "Because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men." Oh how forcible are right words, even these undying warnings from God Himself.

Those who look to "numbers" and forget God, and who adopt the spirit of Isa. 31. 1, are accountable before Him for much evil. In true sympathy for widows and fatherless, we would witness against their false un-patriotism, for though we rejoice in a heavenly citizenship (Phil. 3, 20) it is our privilege to seek the true prosperity of those who surround us in the land where we are placed, while we also praise our God for the many privileges we still receive, of setting forth His Gospel regarding the individual need of souls, which is the same to-day as at all times.

#### A WONDERFUL FACT: A COMPLETE SALVATION.

**T**HE precious blood of CHRIST has been poured out freely, and it has not been poured out in vain. Free grace does not fail. Those who are worthless in themselves are accepted in GOD'S Beloved SON. This is the glory of GOD, and this is the uniqueness of His salvation. 'Tis not your efforts, or my preaching, here is a FREE Gift. GOD'S ways are higher than man's ways,—infinitely higher: He does not meet the sinner half-way, for the sinner is DEAD. He FREELY saves, and saves everlastingly, those who deserve eternal judgment!

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# The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"IF ANY MAN SPEAK, AS THE ORACLES OF GOD: IF ANY MAN MINISTER, AS OF THE ABILITY WHICH GOD GIVETH: THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, TO WHOM BE PRAISE AND DOMINION FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN." 1 Pet. iv. 11.

#### A Word of Introduction.

**B**Y the grace of God we are able to tell again of what He is, and of what He has done, and of what He appoints for His people. The darkness of earth reminds us His Word is the lamp, and makes us long yet more for the Coming of Christ. We have no hope in man, or in socialism, or in any theory. Realizing that Christ is our complete Saviour, our responsibility is to please Him, and to seek prayerfully that many may be gathered out of the world, and, knowing their Lord, may be strong to do spiritual exploits. That this magazine may help His servants, and be used to make others desire Him, is our humble wish.

It is not by man's strength and skill  
That we God's purposes fulfil;  
'Tis by His grace and gracious might  
That we accomplish what is right.

How great His love to sinners shown:  
For now, by grace, His grace we own.  
And we can please Him day by day,  
And serve Him in the heavenly way.

'Tis not of works, we dare not boast,  
But for God's grace we should be lost;  
As those redeemed, our hearts rejoice,  
And we would praise with heart and voice.

Let us humbly remember that our very praise and prayer will intensify the need for more praise and prayer, since Satan will especially attack that for which we praise and pray. But "Greater is He That is in you than he that is in the world."



## Why will there be Sacrifices, by God's Appointment, in the Millennium?

This has often been a concern with children of God, and perhaps we have all shared in the difficulty. The testimony of Hebrews ix. 12, 26, x. 10 is so clear, and so dear to us, as to the *one* offering of the Lord Jesus, and we note the solemn words, "There is no more offering for sin," and again "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" in the *two* contrasted aspects—respecting the believer and the unbeliever alike (Heb. x. 18 and 26). How then can a temple and Aaronic priesthood be *rightly* restored? I take it that, in mercy, we agree regarding the *full* inspiration of Scripture, so that we recognise there exists no discord between any part of God's truth. Nor can we "spiritualize" (as men say) a single prophecy when God gives us no warrant for the removal of its literal meaning as to earthly things. Though there are precious *parallels* in His various dealings, Zion means Zion, and the Lord Jesus will yet be the exalted King of an earthly, rebuilt *Jerusalem*. We dare not doubt, dare not explain away the precious promises of God. If we were to do so, we should make His covenant uncertain. But, thanks be unto our gracious God, this cannot be.

First as to the fact of future animal sacrifices. *One* passage of Scripture is sufficient to prove that which it states, additional passages, however, show us we have not misunderstood its meaning. Ezekiel in chapters 40 to 48 brings forward a future temple, and a future division of the land, and in connexion with this we read, "In the first month, in the first day of the month, thou shalt take a young bullock without blemish, and cleanse the sanctuary." Many similar verses bear a clear testimony, and we call to mind Psalm li. 16, 17, "Do good in Thy good pleasure unto Zion; build Thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering, and whole burnt offering; then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar." There is no doubt as to the fact.

I recollect gratefully that Heb. ix. 13 was stated to me as a "key." "The blood of bulls and of goats" could do nothing for the *conscience* (Heb. ix. 9)· it was impossible to take away sins thereby (Heb. x. 4). But was the blood *only* a type? Was it not appointed by God Himself with a further purpose, and did not those who had animal sacrifices have a certain standing which others did *not* possess, and did they not enter into an *earthly* worship which we *cannot* copy, and in which we have *no* present share? In other words, as such a sacrifice could provide a coat for the body, but *nothing* for the soul, it could give a fleshly purifying. Hence the *definite* language of the Holy Spirit, "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, *sanctifieth* to the purifying of the flesh." Hence we read of "*carnal ordinances*" *i.e.* righteous requirements linked with the *flesh* (Heb.

ix. 10). In other words, the very epistle that suggests the difficulty solves it, and thereby *implies* future sacrifices on the earth.\*

It is, I trust, plain that believers have *no* fleshly standing before God. "The flesh profiteth nothing" (John vi. 63). In baptism we typically buried the body. Hence the striking words "If Christ be in you, the body is *dead* because of sin" (Rom. viii. 10), "If any one is in Christ, there is a *new creation*" (2 Cor. v. 17). Here is the setting aside of all grand ritual, and all worldly glory (contrast Heb. ix. 1). Our worship is in *heavenly* places, and Phil. iii. 3 is precious illustrated. May it be so more and more, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

But this limitation will not remain in the future. The words "circumcision is nothing" will *not* apply then, but "Thus saith the Lord God: No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into My sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel" (Ezek. xlv. 9). Mark the order: the heart is still *first*, and the heart-cleansing will be by the application of the finished work of the Lord Jesus, but *that* does not purify the flesh. Hence, animal sacrifices will abide in the *present* earth, nor *only* retrospectively as types, but dealing with the *earthly* acceptance of men who will be dealt with as blest in an *earthly* sphere. Hence, there will be *earthly* government and a wonderful *earthly* temple, in accord with the mind of God (Zech. vi. 13). Baptism is appropriately *unmentioned*, and apparently removed with this age (Matt. xxviii. 19, 29): it is distinguished from other types in picturing *death* to the *whole* of the flesh. A clean animal cannot give man more than it possesses: it has *no* heavenly position, but it does have, by Divine appointment, an *earthly acceptance* (Lev. i. 4). In accord therewith, the firstling of a lamb needed no redemption. *This* acceptance will be bestowed on the one for whom the sacrifice is made, but it is not conditioned on *righteousness* wrought out, and, therefore, is not permanent. Hence the *repetition* of such sacrifices, *also* showing their imperfection. How precious to know the sacrifice gives what it has, *all* the merits of Christ are ours: life is secure!

God has a right to command whatever He pleases. He can place Israel under legal arrangements without breaking His word, just as He first declared Abraham righteous, and *then* in Gen. xvii. gave the covenant of circumcision. When He thus ordains, those who are "in Christ," as to the heavenly calling, will have already received the effects of His atonement regarding their bodies, which will be glorified, and hence they will have an intrinsic *cleanness* both as to heaven and earth. Thus they will not need purifying of the flesh when God again demands this, as His very holiness *involves*, when He re-institutes worship in the flesh!

If these aspects of truth were realized, the confusing of dispensations would not be so sadly prevalent: but "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Yet it is fitting for

\* *I.e.* When God has *earthly* worship.

*believers* to try things that differ (Phil. i. 10 marg.), and to know that which God has so plainly set forth. If a saved one enters into the fact that he is not "in the flesh," though sorrowfully conscious of his shortcomings, he will be held back from many sins linked with the assumption that he has an earthly standing. Nor will he look upon the world's religiousness with approval. The path of separation is evident, and blessed, in the light of the heavenly calling, and not only have we this practical instruction, but we see how harmonious are seemingly contrasted passages, and that it would be as inappropriate for God to allow sacrifices now\* as it would to omit them in the future. There is *no* setting aside of the work of Christ, *no* opposition to Heb. xi. 18, but a distinct and temporary work in a distinct sphere, which the work of Christ will *not* purify, since it condemns the flesh on the one hand, and provides a resurrection body on the other. To Him be the praise and the glory!

### The Sword, or the Saviour?

God's sword is to be feared. It is linked with a FIRE, for when He drove out Adam "He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Gen iii. 24). Moreover, when "the Lord will come," "by fire and His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh and the slain of the Lord will be many" (Isa. lxvi. 15, 16, —note reference to gardens in 17)

But in mercy He has long waited, and still waits. Your earthly life is not cut short. Day after day you have seen His goodness. Do not take a wrong advantage of this. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. viii. 11). "But it shall not be well with the wicked" (Eccl. viii. 13), for "the Day of the Lord cometh," a day of clouds and thick darkness.

God showed His sword against Balaam when Balaam's way was perverse (Num. xxii. 31, 32), and He showed His sword over Jerusalem (1 Chron. xxi. 15, 16), when His teaching as to redemption (Ex. xxx. 12, 15) was forgotten, and have not you forgotten redemption? But then the sword was caused to tarry,

### THE APPOINTED SACRIFICE

was offered (1 Chron. xxi. 18, 26), and the LORD commanded the angel and he put up His sword again into the sheath thereof (verse 27). Observe that the hand of destruction was held back in verse 15, but the sword was NOT put away without a sacrifice.

\* Romanism is convicted in this connection. Bread (1 Cor. xi. 26) would only "give" that which it "has." A sacrifice cannot transfer anything more. But Romanism is only a part of a general alteration from primitive Christian teaching. All should acknowledge God as Creator, but to claim Him as Father (and to arrange an earthly worship now) is an act full of many evils.

Zechariah tells us that it is possible for the sword to *rest*, and yet to *exist*, ready to be used! God was very patient with Israel, but the words "Awake, O sword" imply that He can suddenly reveal His wrath. Psalm lxxviii. 38, speaks of God, and of His love *many* times, and hence of *not arousing* all His anger. It also speaks of one atonement. In that wondrous work, His sword was aroused, and *all* His anger, or to use another picture, *all* His waves of wrath met on the Atonement, instead of on those for whom the atonement was made. "Awake O sword," here is God's own statement that His sword was often held back. But against Whom does it awake? The answer of the prophet is clear. We are told of a Mighty Man, Who is also God's Friend and Who is, at the same time, *the* Shepherd! Who can this be? One Person is before us. God's Friend, the One together with Him, must be holy, yet how can the Holy One smite this Holy One? Is there any parallel? Yes, the killing of the pure sacrifice without blemish, and also the typical smiting of the Rock, since God Himself is the Rock (Deut. xxxii. 4). The sword of justice met

### A PERSONAL SACRIFICE,

and the Righteous One died for unrighteous ones. If He, Greater than all the sacrifices of 1 Chron. xxi., has suffered in my place, the sword is put away from me. Wondrous mercy! I can enter into God's presence by Him, but if I know Him not, the flaming sword *still* closes the way of the only tree of life.

In the tabernacle, God placed cherubim. No sword was there between, but the blood of atonement instead. The sword had met the sacrifice! The high priest had sprinkled the blood! But Aaron was a sinner, and in those sacrifices there was a remembrance again of sins every year. Last year's sins came up a second time and a third and so on. Therefore it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. But God has a reason for every appointment. The *repeated* days of atonement pictured one work, one atonement, one sacrifice for sins for ever. The Shepherd of Zech xiii. is before us in Psalm lxxx. He is dwelling where the cherubim are, instead of the sword, and His strength is "awakened" instead of the sword, awakened to save (verse 3). Are these words used by accident? There are no accidents in the Scriptures of God. We have the striking contrast between the awakened sword and the awakened strength of salvation, because the Saviour died—and now He lives, raised from the dead! But if you are

### WITHOUT THIS SAVIOUR

the sword of the Lord bathed in heaven (Isa. xxxiv) must soon come down upon you, upon all those under the curse; and His curse is very solemn (Deut. xxvii. 26). Dare you still despise God's ATONEMENT?

### An Error Lovingly Corrected.

Some dear children of God, as they seem to be, by grace, are confused and will tell us that John cannot be a member of the bride because he is the friend of the bridegroom (John 3. 29), and that the virgins of Matt. 25, and those who are called into the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19. 9) must likewise be distinct from the bride. Is not this based on a misconception, and must there not be a fuller prayerful study of the Scripture before such a decision? Is it not true that the Holy Spirit uses many, many words to emphasize the nearness and dearness of Christ to His people, and of them to Him? Is not nature, and are not natural relationships, full of designed parallels and pictures? Are not the servants of Matt. 13. 27 themselves among the wheat, in His mercy? Is not Christ the Firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8. 29), but will not these manifestly be members of His body? Yet are they not among the seed that shall serve Him (Ps. 22. 30: Isa. 53. 10), and I would suggest, in the precious light of Eph. 5. 23, included in the bride? The word "as" identifies the body and bride, and the first type thereof (Gen. 2. 21, 24) prepared for this. In any case, it will be acknowledged that those whom He calls "brethren" (see Heb. 2. 11) are also to be in His body, but this would be impossible if we deny the Lord's gracious use of naturally distinct types, even as in His own precious names, for He Who is the Lamb is also the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, nor do our hearts fail to see the beauty of His fulness in His many descriptions. Why should we limit His love in speaking so "manifestly" of His own?

### "FOR Thou Art My Praise." Jer. xvii. 14.

SOMETIMES a verse of God's precious truth "comes" with peculiar power. It is precious to realize the difference between this experience and bare mental interest. It is well to lay hold of Scripture, but how blessed it is when the Holy Spirit lays hold of us through Scripture, i.e., when it is not only that we come to the words of God, but these words come to us.

It may be that other readers have specially enjoyed the verse now before us, and it is well to repeat the enjoyment. Since all Scripture is God-breathed, and every word of God is pure, it is not surprising that He can and does use even a brief message, yea "a jot and a tittle." I have felt the encouraging reality of the word "for." The prophet knew something of need, but he was enabled to trust for grace to live beyond it, because of what God was—and is! To forsake Him was foolishness indeed (13 with 2. 13), to rejoice in Him was true wisdom, and so it is to-day, for He has not changed (Mal. 3. 6). Hence

the pleading, the personal pleading:—"Heal me, O Lord," "Save me." Mark also the holy confidence, "And I shall be healed," "and I shall be saved." If the Lord works, there is a wondrous security and certainty.

But the beautiful "reason" in prayer is so impressive. It is not only "Thou art my Praise"—a delightful name of God—but "For Thou art my Praise." If we forget to praise we lose power in prayer. Murmuring and doubting bring the difficulties they imagine, but when we begin to sing and to praise, how wondrously will God intervene (2 Chron. 20. 22). Moreover, the wording implies "Surely Thou wilt work completely, for I have praised Thee as One Who is altogether Glorious: Thou wilt not fall short of Thy wondrous character."

But it is not enough to know these things. We would be like Jeremiah and we would say, feeling our own weakness, "Since Thou art My Praise, heal and save and bless," and our Heavenly Father will not disappoint. We lose many encouragements because we have not an opened heart for them. We do not need to ask the Lord to increase His love, but to make our faith and receptiveness grow. The precious command lives, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it" (Ps. 81. 10). God waits to be gracious, and He says as it were, "Prove Me now herewith" (Mal. 3. 10). With God all things are possible (Matt. 19. 26), and all things are possible to him that believeth (Mark 9. 23).

### The Translation of Scripture.

Some years ago the Lord graciously encouraged in the translation of certain epistles, and copies will be gladly sent to those whose hearts are set on the fuller spiritual knowledge of God's will.\* Conscious of weakness, we realize that God has taught many things each succeeding year. Oh that we might be more diligent and more disciplelike. Hence we feel that, apart from the mistakes connected with the incompleteness of human language, there are those through unnecessarily varied renderings of the same word, and other failures. But our Heavenly Father graciously blest, and used, and we are grateful to Him.

If it be His will, we would expect His help in further translating and should like to know if believers would value this, that the guidance of our gracious God may be definitely sought, and His wisdom and power, in answer to prayer.

\* Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Timothy. (Several errors in the printing have been kindly pointed out. Page 2, line 3, "Jesus" wrongly inserted; line 9, "God" omitted; line 29, for "love" read "truth." Page 4, line 27, words; page 6, "in" should begin line 13 not 12).

## The Miracle of Salvation.

How great is the privilege of salvation. How wonderful it is to, have passed out of death into life. How precious is the position of children of God, accepted in the Beloved, made the righteousness of God in Him, caused to know what it is to have eternal redemption, entirely delivered from the wrath of God, made near and never to be driven away, looking for that Blessed Hope. How precious is the richness of grace. Well may believers banish their alarm, and fleshly excitement. They have all things in Christ, and a few trials now are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed. The very sufferings are an encouragement, if they are for Christ's sake, an evidence of His truthfulness, and a stimulus to spiritual expectation!

## Privileges Beyond Measure.

What a mercy it is to be saved. The world is hurrying on to an awful goal. This age is ripening for judgment, God is forgotten, and His truth is set aside. What a mercy it is to be saved, to be able to call God "Father," and to have no more conscience of sins, because Christ has dealt with those sins, and has taken the punishment, so that His people are wondrously, and for ever, free. The things that are seen may appear large, but they are temporal, and really very small. Eternity is vast, and so is the possession of Christ, and of all spiritual blessings in Him (Eph. i.). Oh, who can overestimate what this means? Surely there is a call to deep gratitude. Why are we not more praiseful? Why are we not more fervent? Why do we not lay aside every weight, and make manifest, yet more earnestly, the grace received in Him Whom our soul loveth? Grace has reigned. God has been rich in mercy. If we lose everything of earth, we have greater possessions than the greatest men of earth! If we are brought down to suffering and trials which seem heavy, these are, in contrast with the glory, light and not worthy to be compared. Yea, the very reproach of Christ is greater riches than all the choicest treasures of Egypt. It is a reminder of the coming reward. Well may God's people rejoice in their Saviour; well may their hearts leap for joy. Well may they echo the words of the Psalm, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" and again "Bless the Lord, O my soul." There is every reason for thanksgiving. There is no reason for murmuring.

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# The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"YE ALSO SHALL BEAR WITNESS BECAUSE YE HAVE BEEN WITH ME FROM THE BEGINNING."

John xv. 27.

## A Word of Introduction.

THE words above not only emphasize the wondrous blessing we have in possessing the very words which God caused the apostles to write, they set forth a principle which is deeply important, even for those who acknowledge how they fall short in their ministry. Communion with Christ is the basis for true witness. Mark the order in Mark iii. 14. "That they should be *with Him*, and that He might *send them forth* to preach." Are we surprised that we read in Acts iv. 13, "When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus!" John xvii. emphasizes the same thought:—"I kept them, they are not of the world, as Thou hast sent Me, even so have I also sent them." A related aspect of the power of communion is seen in Exodus "Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while He talked with him (or he talked with Him, Ex. xxxiv. 35.) It is our desire to bear witness, and to please our gracious God. Hence we would long for grace to dwell with Him, to abide in His presence, to know His purpose, and to glorify His Name thereby. May this be the united experience of many of His own—Thus shall there be a drawing together of hearts, and a denial of the sectarianism and selfishness of to-day.

## The Right Order.

"ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and His instruction extends to every word, and every arrangement. So in 1 Thess. i. 9, we read "*to God from idols*," not merely "from idols to God." Thus believers are encouraged to go forth to

Christ without the camp (Heb. xii. 13), the order is *not* without the camp unto Him. Let *Him* be exalted, and separation will be spiritual. The need for emphasizing that everything should be in its right place is seen from Jas. iii. 17. "The wisdom that is from above is *first* pure, *then* peaceable. The child of God has many trials in this sinful age, but he is not to be occupied with his difficulties. If the order in John xvi. 33 is realized, there is a true preparation for meeting the strain. "That in Me ye might have *peace*" precedes "In the world ye shall have *tribulation*," and thus we do not say "What a weariness it is," but would "count it all joy" when we "fall into divers temptations," *knowing* that God works thereby (Jas. i. 3, 4). Hence the order in Rom. v. 2, 3, "We . . . rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and not only so, but we glory (same word as 'rejoice') in tribulation *also*." There must be the "ALSO," the enjoyment of grace must be *FIRST*. And as to earthly necessities, God emphasizes the right order. The righteous are not forsaken, we shall not be brought to *beg* bread (Ps. xxxvii. 25), since God *gives* to His people, and they should receive from Him as definitely as if dependent on manna from heaven (Isa. xxxiii. 16, Matt. vi. 11). Hence we read "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be *added* unto you" (Matt. vi. 33). "Added"—something must be there *first*, and that "first" thing is spiritual. Let us never put the body, and the needs of physical life, into undue prominence. It is not enough to notice gratefully this continual stress on Scriptural arrangement, let us seek grace that, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we may have, more and more manifestly, *the right order* in our lives, to the glory of our glorious Saviour and Lord.

### "The Old Testament" and its Appointments.

WE believe the Hebrew Scripture (commonly called the Old Testament because setting forth God's covenant of works with Adam, and with Israel) to be *equally* inspired with the Later Scripture. If, however, we have been graciously counted with Christ, and have thus met all law's demands representatively, so that we become "dead to the law by the body of Christ," we are "not *under* law, but *under* grace," being on resurrection ground in Him. Hence we should no more feel ourselves called by God to fulfil His dispensational commands to Israel respecting circumcision and the unchanging *seventh-day* sabbath, than to claim a true letter addressed to some one else though at our house, and withal containing much guidance, both directly and in many precious principles, suited for us. Our answer to those who oppose is firmly, but humbly, this, "We died with Christ *from* the rudiments of the world" (Col. ii. 20), and are forbidden to continue the old dispensational arrangements just mentioned (Gal. v. 2, 3, Col. ii.

16). God has not changed, but in His sovereignty He has given different appointments (*quite distinct from contradictions*) at different times to different persons. If only believers grasped this, there would not be the defence of musical instruments in the present worship of God because they existed in the temple. Do His people now have animal or spiritual sacrifices? 1 Pet. ii. 5 gives the order. To take part of God's arrangement for Israel and refuse the other is a dangerous thing to do. Believers are in a law to Christ (1 Cor. ix. 21), and what has been said above does not give any right to lawlessness, or to a glib statement, "We are not in bondage." Matthew v.-vii. would show that the path is *narrower* than in any previous dispensation, and our gracious God has clearly shown not only that many precepts are the same in all ages, but that a knowledge of Christ means an unveiling of the deeply spiritual meaning of these solemn commands. Love does not question obedience: the leading of the Spirit of God must not be misinterpreted as a plea for independency.

In like manner we cannot spiritually and rightly execute justice or vengeance from the standpoint of grace (Rom. xii. 19), nevertheless Israel in an earthly calling, *had* this earthly executive from God (Matt. v. 38, e.g. Num. xxxi. 9, xxxv. 33), and Christ *will* righteously reveal both when He returns (Rev. xix. 11), near the opening of "The Day of vengeance of our God" (Isa. lxi. 2). It is remarkable, and would be unaccountable, did we not solemnly remember 1 Cor. ii. 14, that intelligent men confuse these things altogether, unmindful that God gave direct authority in matters of life and death (Ex. xvii. 16, see Ezek. xviii. 4), and unmindful of such passages of Judges vii. 3, 4, and Num. xxxi. 49. How many are strangely forgetful of these wondrous words.

That there are *parallels* we heartily acknowledge. We have already seen this with respect to "*spiritual* sacrifices." Eph. v. 19 uses a word which *suggests* a musical instrument, but at once qualifies by the name of the befitting instrument, viz., "in your heart." So we have in Eph. vi. *our* solemn resistance of Satan and his principalities, unseen but real, in a conflict that is as definite and continual as that against Amalek, and regarding which we may say that not one believer shall be lacking, not one believer shall lose eternal life. We are not "forced" to this solemn wrestling. If we are fainthearted we lose its fulness and its training and lose many blessings thereby. If our hearts are stirred we have the Lord's encouragement therein, but there is no more room for vaunting on our part than on Israel's part in the days of Gideon. The principle of Deut. xxxii. 22, 30, *which God meant* in accord with Lev. xxvi. 7, 8, has its spiritual parallel, for there are spiritual legions which only the sword of the Spirit can cause to flee. The Satanic enemy comes in like a flood, but the standard of the Spirit of God is lifted up, though Isa. lix. 19 shall be literally fulfilled respecting Antichrist, and thus there is the amazing result, "Resist the devil and *he will flee from you*" (Jas. iv. 7). Surely God's people are called to fuller lives of faith.

## Scriptural Tenses.

### 3—THE USE OF THE IMPERFECT IN ACTS iv. 32-35.

THE "Imperfect" tense, or "the incomplete," calls special attention to the continuance or repetition of the action which the Holy Spirit brings before us. In this passage the words "were," "said," "had," "gave," "was," "brought," "laid down," "was made," "had," are all of this character, and we may say that no other tense is employed. Thus God shows that jerky and spasmodic enthusiasm, which soon cools, is not approved by Him. When there was a work of grace in the early church there was a marvellous holy persistency. Thus the *test* proved the *origin* of the loving concern for "one another." I should feel inclined to render some sentences much more literally, *e.g.* neither was a single one saying (*i.e.* keeping on saying) anything of the possessions belonging to him, to be his own, *i.e.* there was a holy judgment of the *attitude* which will keep on talking proudly and selfishly, "This is mine," "That is my very own." There is *such* a danger in this standpoint, Christians should never "show off their houses." The "incomplete" tense, moreover, implies a contrast with the operation of mere "law" and of so-called socialism. It is not wrong to have for use a *few* earthly things: the wrong is in emphasizing this either by *actions* or by *words*, and in being occupied with these. We are only trustees, even with sixpence and five minutes. Our talk reveals where our heart is, and a man may be intensely proud of his "goods" while living in a garret.

Again "The apostles *were giving* the witness" *i.e.* they were encouraged to *keep on, while* the saints were beautifully illustrating resurrection life in Christ Jesus. Further "they were bringing the prices of the things being sold:" there was no aspect of a *compulsory* sale: believers kept on selling as needs kept on coming. A sharing out of all goods would not have met the problem. Love is wise. Here is a child of God who has lost a situation simply for Christ's sake: but something has been just sold, and the need is met. I am not pleading for "slowness." It is not God's will that we should have large earthly supplies or excuse "laying up" for ourselves, in these pilgrim days. We should and would gladly give up anything for Him Who became poor for us. Oh that there may be a godly readiness thus to please Him, and a godly detachment from all things of earth because of sincere attachment to Christ Himself.

## The Promise of Christ's Coming.

THE last promise of Scripture is with regard to the coming of Christ. Somewhat remarkably the first promise, after Adam and Eve had sinned, likewise concerns Him and His coming (still to come true) that He may bruise the serpent's head. Christ is emphasized from Genesis to Revelation.

And the last prayer of Scripture pleads the last promise. Is not this what we should expect? Man-made prayers may be very dangerous. God gave Israel their request but sent leanness into their soul. It is our privilege to pray in the Holy Spirit and to turn a promise into a petition, or rather to rejoice in it as a promise which is so secure that we can set our petition upon it. God does not encourage "doubting prayer." He is worthy to be trusted.

The hope of seeing our beloved Lord face to face is very refreshing in a ruined world. And it is continually brought before us that we may be separate from those who know Him not. How can we be worldly while we are looking for Christ? It is easy to settle down if we forget Him. But this bright, albeit solemn, hope is graciously intended to encourage holiness as well as hopefulness, when applied in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**"I have called . . I have filled . . I have given . . I have put (given) . . I have commanded."**

Ex. xxxi. 1-11.

THESE precious words emphasize God's greatness, and His authority. They also show His wonderful love and care for His people. How dependent are we on Him! Would we serve Him? Thanks be unto God for the very wish. The strength also must be from Him. What a privilege to be called and equipped.

When the Lord graciously calls He does likewise fit for the high honour of pleasing Him. Each word needs godly stress, and we may well turn it to prayer. Oh that we may be called. Let us plead for a wondrous "filling."\* Is not our petition "Give me wisdom." Do we not rejoice in the *commandments* of the Lord, and do we not seek the realization of these? In mercy we would not go our own way. Our wishes have been brought into subjection, and we are sad when there is departure from Him. Our self-choosing is no longer our delight, but our burden. May our Heavenly Father be pleased to answer our fervent request for a godly illustration of the principles of Exodus xxxi., and may our hearts feel more than ever that we cannot worship acceptably unless there is a link of "calling," "filling," "giving," and of obeying His commands in our life. None of Israel could rightly appear before Him empty. May we, conscious of John i. 14, 16, come rightly, and in the Holy Spirit, unto the Throne of Grace!

\* Does not this verse help to explain Eph. i. 17, v. 18, Col. i. 9, and remind us that as there was a filling with the Spirit even in the dispensation now past, there may be a wondrous parallel even in days of weakness! Let us trust God more.

## Godly Proportion

AND

### A Tenderness for Truth.

ELSEWHERE\* we have sought to set forth a grave danger lest any word of the Lord be treated with unholy contempt. The general theme of "Godly Proportion" needs much emphasis. Some are so occupied with prophetic teaching, for example, that they omit true stress on other parts of God's revelation. It is a privilege to grow up unto Christ in *all* things (Eph. iv. 15). Sound *doctrine* is never to be put aside. Christian *practice* is always to be in the front. In our conversation, moreover, we need this proportion. If we are always speaking of one portion of truth, we shall not help others. They will rightly be troubled on this account if they are walking with God, and if they are not, they may feel resentment. A "specialist" is often quite unable to take a fair view of everything, and so is it spiritually, we must not have our favourite theme, when *all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and should be precious to our hearts.

Possibly this thought comes before some of us again and again as to "the breaking of bread." We deny that Christ used or spoke about or approved leavened bread: to us this is a "traditional," or careless, or unwitting departure from His Will, though we believe there has very, very often been much, and accepted, love to the Lord combined with a mistaken symbol. If we refer to this as one matter which shuts us out from many gatherings, the answer may be, "You are making too much of the symbol, you are forgetting the spiritual feeding on Christ." If we do not speak, we are apparently guilty of sectarianism without giving reasons. Hence our difficulty. May we affectionately bring before God's dear people the need for godly proportion, and that they compel a mention of this severance the more frequently, so long as their action regards the symbol as *nothing*? If, in godly proportion, they would say, "The first thought must ever be, Christ and His finished work: only His redeemed can partake, but we must not alter what He arranged, even though this would be worthless, without a true heart." If they would thus speak, we should heartily agree and then be enabled to ponder before God, together with them, exactly what He *did* arrange. But is there not a need for more *tenderness* as to truth? If I see anything is the Lord's will, how sad if I do not make haste, but delay to keep His commandments. I must not come to Scripture with the thought of argument, or mental victory, or retaining my present action, but with a tenderness, that I may receive with meekness the engrafted word, and confess every sin. "What has *my* Lord said, if I am His?" It is my privilege to find out. An open heart for truth is as needful as a closed heart against error. If I assume finality, I deny discipleship. If I will not ponder anything under the plea, I

\* "The Lord's Teaching in Luke xi. 45."

must then read everything, I show a lack of all godly proportion, and misuse truth.

Again and again this evil must be realized, and we need to be very humble that we may realize it in ourselves. If a child of God is advised not to dishonour the Lord by neglecting certain business, how natural it is for him to put direct service to the Lord in the background, and spend extra hours in labour for meat that perishes. If there is a caution against "arrangement" of worship and against calling on a brother to pray, how easy to fall into the error of an unprepared heart, and of trusting to impulse, and imagining this is spirituality. Man has a tendency to extremes, but those in Christ Jesus should be conscious of the *real* work of the Holy Spirit. Thus shall we be kept from mixing with that which dishonours the Lord, but yet be longing to welcome a desire to be humbled before Him on the part of any who are His. Thus shall we be guarded from self's eccentricity professing to be spirituality. A godly proportion in the use of time and of money is deeply important. It is in these things we can *adorn* God's doctrine, but if we dishonour His Name therein, our verbal witness is often undone. To know how much time to spend in prayer, how much sleep to have, how to glorify God in quantity and time of earthly food, how to be outside earth's customs yet to live for God in earth's cities—who is sufficient for these things? Suggestions are often possible in conversation, but a table of rules would be contrary to the dispensation, and oppose the purpose of God to draw our hearts away from mere formation of continual dependence. It is more than hard to live a Christian life anywhere, unless one is "in Christ," being born from above. The whole arrangement of the Lord Jesus is not to make machines who act by a mechanically worded code, but to encourage heart love, and godly activity which is only possible as we consciously abide in Him.

### Moses as an Intercessor.\*

GOD has been pleased to give many types of the Lord Jesus, but necessarily they fall short of His glorious perfection. He never failed and never fails. The animals which were offered to picture His atonement were without visible blemish, as to their bodies, but they could neither experience God's wrath nor provide a covering for the soul. In like manner, Aaron's priesthood was without a secure foundation, since he needed a sacrifice himself. Moses was privileged to do certain priestly work, and to represent the Lord, and in this connexion we notice his intercession. God Himself lays stress upon it (Jer. xv. 1), and we call to mind Deut. ix. 19, 23, "The Lord hearkened unto me at that time also," and "I prayed for Aaron also the same time." Gracious indeed was the Lord's answer in Num. xiv. 20, "I have pardoned according

\* See also Vol. xv. No. 6.



to thy word." The *added* statement makes clear that nothing can detract from the glory of the Lord. He cannot break His word, but He is pleased to use prayer in the working out of His purpose, and He delights in the powerful supplication of His people.

But the intercession of Moses is very definitely marked much earlier: I refer to Exodus xvii. "When Moses held up his hand . . . Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed" (11). These words are familiar to most children of God, and many have enjoyed the margin of verse 16 "Because the hand (is) upon the throne of the Lord," and they have looked beyond the servant to the Saviour, and realized His uplifted hand, and His glory on His Father's Throne (Rev. iii. 21). Sitting is the position of interceding in 1 Kings ii. 19, 20, and, far more wondrously, in Ps. cx. 1. Our adorable Lord ever liveth to make intercession (Heb. vii. 25). Psalm cx. emphasizes that He is a Priest *sitting down*, a Priest for ever, linked with the word of the oath, a King-Priest—in striking contrast with the Aaronic priesthood. There were no seats in the tabernacle. The work was *unfinished*. "Every priest standeth daily" (Heb. x. 11, note 12). The work of Christ is finished (John xix. 30), and in this we rejoice. The parallels, and contrasts, as to Exodus xvii. are remarkable. "Moses' hands were heavy:" not so the hands of Christ. Of Moses it is written "They took a *stone* and he *sat* thereon." Christ is on the Throne, "Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands," our adorable Lord needs no help. *We* pray because of His prayer! His hands are steady, not only all day "until the going down of the sun" (12), but He *continues* ever, and does not slumber nor sleep.

**"Come unto Me all ye that labour."**

Matt. xi. 28.

THE call of the gospel is very precious to those who feel their need. The invitation is a *command of power*, (even as "Lazarus, come forth") to those who have been caused to see their condition. Thus their very helplessness is met, and with faith which they cannot understand, but which depends on God, because it is from God, they seek Him, and are brought to know the blessedness of redemption, acceptance, sonship. Are you labouring to gain salvation? You *must* fail. But if you are worn out, and at an end of trusting to self, Christ's word is to you, and He still says "Come unto Me." Not to a system, not to a religion, not to a doctrine, but to a Person, and that Person the glorious Son of God Who loved sinners enough to die for them, and ever lives to plead for those whom He thus loved! Can you hesitate as to His welcome?

Believers' Meeting Room:—61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, E. 7; 43a, The Broadway, Waltham Green, S.W. 6. Also "Rosemond," Bede Burn Road, Jarrow-on-Tyne.

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# The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

A MESSAGE TO BELIEVERS:—"YE ARE NOT YOUR OWN, FOR YE ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE: THEREFORE GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY."—1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

## A Word of Introduction.

IF you are, by the grace of God, a believer in the Lord Jesus, your position is quite different from that in which you were **FIRST** born, and quite different from that of the most intelligent, honest, and religious "unsaved" man upon the earth. The difference is **NOT** one of degree, but of an entirely distinct life. If, in unmerited love, you have been born from above, you are no longer of this world. Its pleasures and treasures are no longer yours, and it has no claims on you, nor have you any claims on it, beyond those which the Lord has appointed for His "strangers and pilgrims." The Lord has purchased you: you are His entirely, and completely subject to His laws. The words sound forth: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." To help believers along the narrow path of pleasing Him are these pages sent forth, nor are we without hope that He will use them unto His glory in the salvation of some who cannot at present say they have passed out of death unto life (John v. 24). The object of each article is, we trust, to exalt Christ, and not to exalt self, or man at all. "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that Day," and we are His, and of His kingdom in advance (Rev. i. 9).

## A Difficulty, and its Removal.

OUR subject is not the removal of *any* difficulty, though this subject would be spiritually precious, if pondered in the light of the Lord, and with a conscious realization of these facts:—

- (1) If He is not pleased to explain, we should be pleased to rest in His silence.

- (2) If it is not the appointed time to know, we should be humbly patient.
- (3) If the lack of knowledge is through lack of communion, and thus a chastisement, we should search our hearts, and seek for the Lord's quickening.

But just now there is before me the thought that some dear children of God live in a measure of apparent bondage, because they feel that He so often checks their plans. Sometimes, this may be through the instrumentality of fellow believers, whom they love and respect, but who *appear* to have a special caution, (to say the least, for this is frequently wisest spiritually), as to *anything* proposed by the one who thus experiences a series of disappointments. May it not be well to seek to remove this "bondage," by loving concern that our suggestions may be more and more in harmony with the Lord and "one another," and thereby help toward the spiritual and powerful unity for which Christ prayed? We often make our trials by setting our hearts on "something." I do feel that it is so easy to become eccentric, and am personally grateful for the checks received through a number of tiny circumstances, and perhaps, at times, through a measure of love even to weaker believers, lest they be caused to stumble. The Lord can overrule a brother's weak conscience to help many others. Further, the gradual effect of having one's own wishes again and again is soon very dangerous. The individual becomes self-assertive, and impatient of reproof, unwilling for delay through others, and (shall I say?) selfish—at least in some degree. Thus the character is not being spiritually trained, and there will be loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ. But though I rejoice in the Lord's withholdings, they have often been painful at the time. Yet they should ever lead to more concern *before* "a wish" is thoroughly embraced, because then it is so painful to give it up. Surely, our united prayer is, that other dear people of the Lord, and we ourselves, may, by grace, be slow to acknowledge anything as a "desire," unless and until it is plainly, as far as we can see, in accord with the Lord's purpose. And, secondly, we want to be glad to give up anything, except His appointment, because of a greater love for those who are His, so that the feeling of "bondage" may be more and more removed by the power of a stronger spiritual feeling. For the new nature it is *not* bondage to seek to glorify Him Whose Name we bear: the flesh must not only be bound, it must be mortified: the personality (or shall we say "the person"?) should long to be in holy harmony with the new nature, and thus, in the Holy Spirit, to look at things from God's standpoint. Thus will He be exalted in our praiseful and cheerful and humble lives, and in this way we shall enter into the meaning of the precious words, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye: Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in *with bit and bridle*, lest they come near unto thee" (Ps. xxxii. 8, 9).

### Because of Conscience.

Rom. xiii. 5; 1 Cor. x. 25, 27, 28; 1 Pet. ii. 19.

SCRIPTURE lays a great stress on "a good conscience," and at least the word has come into prominence of late. How important that believers should be known as conscientious in *all* things. They should simply please their Lord in *all* circumstances. He is faithful. It is vain to "profess." It is dangerous to be one-sided. It is precious to fear grieving God as to *everything* of daily life. Separation from the world's standpoint must be thorough. "Conscience" is worth little, while we lose little for it. If we "stand outside" one popular attitude when our path is easy, and "stand inside" another, equally of the world, because we do not wish to give up "too much" for our Lord, how solemn is the denial of His *absolute* authority. What has your conscience *cost* you to-day? You claim inability to do something, "naturally" expected from you by others, because you must put the Lord first, and His arrangements for His own in this dispensation. Well and good; but, beloved friend, we must adorn His doctrine by putting Him first as to *all* assembly arrangements also, by exalting Him with regard to our very meals, and by a business integrity which will make men feel they can find nothing against us, unless against the law of the Lord. If we are more concerned for His honour when it "suits" us, do not be surprised if our dishonour to Him calls forth the ugly word "hypocrite." You may not *mean* to be one, but beware! Let your conscience come into "everything," as you have a conscience. If Christ is your Lord, own His control of your *wishes* in such a way that you gladly give up, at His bidding, things which you have long cherished. The believer who is "*consistent*" is a witness. The world rightly demands much from those who declare they are very concerned *not* to be unconscientious. Whole-hearted devotion to Christ means a whole life *contrasted* with worldliness. The child of God should be different in *kind*, not merely in *degree*, from those who are not His. High profession with low practice is a disgrace.

Exactly the same experience is used by the Holy Spirit in the five verses before us, and we can render "Because of conscience" or "For conscience sake." Romans xiii. 5 has a clear message. It appoints the believer certain boundaries, and he must keep within them, if he would please God. He dare not "resist" authority, even if it be, as in the apostle's days, the authority of a Nero. We are not to discuss the *character* of the one holding sway, as if this could justify resistance. The believer is to acknowledge the Divine right of "the powers that be," and to praise God happily, illustrating *absolute* refusal of resistance thereto, and remembering that God will use and overrule the authorities of the earth for the needed *discipline* of His people. If even an apostle was put in prison, he did not resist: the Lord was *refining* His gold. This is a deeply encouraging standpoint, though

humbling, for we feel *how slowly* we all learn His chastening lessons. Thus, moreover, we see the preciousness of ordinary actions, "For this cause *pay ye tribute*." We pay taxes because the Lord appoints, and this for conscience sake, and cheerfully and spiritually *serve the Lord* thereby. If an action is to be done, it is not to be a bare action, but spiritual service. Thus, everything of a believer is dignified. To return to verse 5: non-resistance is not merely to avoid wrath. If authorities did not punish, we could not be any more defiant. Defiance is un-Christian. Agitation is un-Christian. Submission, for Christ's sake, is Christian. We have Christ. We have no earthly honours, or rights, till Christ shall come again. "But what if Nero commanded worship?" *Submission* is contrasted with *resistance*, but not necessarily made synonymous with obedience. Submission would, in such a case, have involved suffering *through respectful, but firm, non-compliance*. The principle of Rom. xii. 9 would have been lovingly obeyed, and Nero would have been loved still (Matt. v. 44). To sum up, "conscience" was not only to be prominent when it was easy to emphasize it. Conscientious submission to authority, even when under the cruelty of a Nero, was the appointed testimony for Christ.

I Cor. x. shows again the believer's privilege against "self-choosing." The Corinthians were corrupting "liberty." The apostle, while showing that we are not unnecessarily to increase problems (25), makes evident that we must be careful regarding any relationship with the world (27),\* and must be held back from doing many things which are not "wrong" in themselves, but which would grieve another's conscience. Here is a vast field of "giving up." We should be very tender for the concern of "another." Anything else is lack of love.

I Peter ii. 19 reminds of Romans xiii., though specially referring to business. "This is *grace*, if, because of a conscience *belonging to God*, any one bears up under griefs, suffering righteously." Yes, this is "*grace*," it is not "*nature*," it is not "*standing up for one's rights*," it is simply *grace*. Have we a conscience *belonging to God*? Then let us manifest this in the power of the Holy Spirit, and act in accord with His will in this dispensation. We must be willing to be downtrodden for *His sake*. It must not be that we go through trials because we lack determination, or because we want a "reputation" for patience, or because we cannot deal with the confusion. We must be willing to suffer when we can avoid the suffering, and thus shall we *glorify Him*!

Oh, how important with respect to home, business, and the state, to illustrate our relationship to Christ, and thus to fulfil these precious verses, that He may be exalted, as we live and walk in the leading of the Spirit of God!

\* Mark the hint and warning, "Ye be disposed to go." Can we be faithful as Christ was? Many are apt to misuse this passage, I fear, as if it only referred to grand banquets. All meals with unsaved ones, and other intercourse with them, must be carefully watched.

## In What Way is Sin Hated?

THERE are many who have a *natural* hatred of certain sins, but, if God has graciously given to us a knowledge of Himself, our attitude will be quite distinct. It is not sufficient to hate sin because of its *punishment*, nor is it a proof of godliness to hate it by reason of the *troubles* attached thereto.\* Remorse is not repentance. Further, we would not hate sin only because of its *ugliness*: the "goodliness" of the flesh is as the flower of grass, and we would mortify the flesh in all its manifestations. Again, we dare not attack sin merely because of its *size*: of two evils, we DARE not *choose* the less. The thought is prevalent that, in certain circumstances, one cannot help doing that which is morally wrong. Moreover, it is considered "selfish" for believers to refuse to compromise one iota of their convictions when "great things" in man's esteem are concerned, and when others will try and "meet" believers more than halfway. To emphasize "little" acts of obedience under such conditions would seem to many quite indefensible. But, in the light of God, anything else is impossible; and there are *no* little sins. It is not the *character* or the *size* of the *special* sin which is in question, but the *fact* of sin. Anything which is against God's will is to be hated, with perfect hatred, because of what He is, and because His will alone can be honoured. This is the only attitude which glorifies God, and which marks off a humble and growing believer from a false professor, who, under certain arrangements, will do evil that good may come, *e.g.*, will tell a lie to protect life; will *act* a lie to gain the necessities of earthly existence. But, to the thoughtful believer, nothing is rightly dear apart from Christ, and He is the Truth (Acts xx. 24). Realization of the *nature* of sin, as that which is *against God*, is deeply solemnizing, and *nothing* can justify sin, or render it at all excusable. Oh, that we may own, feel, and declare this, by our *manner* as well as our *words*, and by *all* our activities, and not one-sidedly, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Our past failures are no argument against setting forth, and seeking grace henceforth to live in ever-increasing accord with, the standpoint of the Lord.

## An Often Overlooked Aspect of Love.

WHAT right had you to listen to the *hint* of slander against "another" this morning? You did not mean to help someone in sin, but what right had you to listen at all? You have prayed "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," and have rejoiced in the wondrous deafness of Isa. xlii. 19, 20, but why did

\* "The pleasures of sin" actually exist; yet pleasurable sin should be, to the Lord's redeemed, equally an abomination with that which more speedily illustrates the words "the way of transgressors is hard." All sins have ONE END.

you not illustrate more fully the grace of "refusal." Does "self" feel attracted to such conversation? Is curiosity a power? It is natural to hear, and hard to say "no." But God calls His people to supernatural lives. Oh, we must all be humbled as to this. Self must be *denied*: the flesh must be *mortified*. There was no Scriptural reason for listening, *and you harmed the speaker*, failed to show love to the one mentioned, and injured yourself. The failure in love to *the speaker* is specially on my mind just now. The Book of Proverbs plainly rebukes not only whisperers and those who wrongly repeat a matter, but likewise *unholy hearers*. The message of xix. 27 is important, and we have a special example in xvii. 4, "A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips, and a liar giveth heed to a naughty tongue." It is easy to *approximate*, in some measure, to these sad evils. Again it is written, "If a ruler *hearken* to lies, all his servants are wicked" (xxix. 12). Refuse to allow slanders to spread. Be not like wood with regard to these fires. Seek to hate what God hates, and do not sow discord among brethren (Prov. vi. 19). It is cruel, cruel indeed to *allow* anyone to have *practice* in saying aught against others. "Talking" is so attractive, and, if one finds a ready ear, he will be helped to talkativeness. Let there be a holy sternness which will silence the unholy tongue, and be ashamed of everything else. In this connexion I would notice 1 Cor. i. 11 thankfully. "It hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you." In this solemn, but beautiful, verse, the Holy Spirit through Paul attacks two evils, and gives to us a precious example. "So and so does this or that." Answer:—"I will tell him what you say about him." Or, "Some do not agree, &c., &c." Answer:—Give me their *names*." These two answers will check much evil. It was necessary that the apostle should deal with the failures, but he would not suggest listening unless he was free to do as he felt would glorify God with the names of those who spoke to him. The same caution is seen in 1 Tim. v. 19. Paul was a man of godly *principles*. If any of His people to-day *must* hear necessary complaints because they have responsibility from Him, let their attitude hinder wrong speaking, while it never prevents a right mention of that which is grievous. And let those who are otherwise placed in His wisdom be prayerful for any who have this difficulty of oversight, that the Lord may be exalted in giving wisdom, and that there may be no allowed envy on the part of those who are spared this burden, any more than allowed pride among those who feel its weight. Only as the Lord is honoured by each one taking his right place can there be true progress, in the power of the Holy Spirit. We need a watch before our mouths, and before our ears. Indeed all our members, which are so precious to present as instruments of righteousness, may become opportunities for displeasing God. We cannot be too concerned lest by little things we undo the witness for the Lord which it is our *heart's desire* to give.

### "Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause." Ex. xxiii. 3.

THIS verse is most remarkable. We could understand a prohibition of countenancing a rich man more easily. It is so natural to illustrate the sin of Jas. ii. 2, 3. But God would also warn against the tendency to defend the poor unjustly. I suppose that many, who bear the Name of Christ, have, through forgetfulness of this principle, sometimes assumed that "the poor" must be right, and sometimes encouraged a variety of socialism.

The emphasis of the Holy Spirit, lest we be led astray by mistaken kindly feelings, is seen by the words of Lev. xix. 15, "*Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty.*" *Inequality* in justice was an abomination before God. How solemn a sidelight we have on the ruined condition of man, and the universal lack of balance. What a longing there should be for the Lord Jesus to come as the Rightful Judge. 1 Cor. vi. 1 is definite as to the inability of man to decide, unless there is the work of the Holy Spirit. Surely, this should draw back every disciple-like believer from an unappointed share in earth's justice. We dare not anticipate, in any wrongful way, the time when the Lord shall come (1 Cor. iv. 1-5).

Let me repeat the fear, lest any of us incline to employees against employers in a way which will tend toward the development of the spirit of the age, and lawlessness. We know there are grievous faults on the part of capital and labour alike. We cannot right them. We are not called to try. It is ours to take a quiet outside position, as those who have been brought out from this evil world, and made a new creation in Christ Jesus, in order that our life should be corresponding with the infinite mercy bestowed on us.

### "Not Unfruitful."

HOW sad to be unfruitful (Luke xiii. 7). The parable of Isaiah v. is heart-searching. Does the Lord find a return for His love in our lives? Do we bring forth fruit, much fruit, more fruit, abiding fruit (John xv. 2, 8, 16), or do we show by our actions that our profession is more than our possession of the Lord Jesus?

All godly works are fruit. The expression of life from above is fruit. The manifestation of what *the Vine* is, through the dry branches of our frail bodies, is fruit. How precious are the words of Gal. v. 22-24. The Holy Spirit enables fruit. And when our lips truly and truthfully praise (Heb. xiii. 15), or preach (Isa. lvii. 19), there is fruit. Shall we not be concerned to give it? "What fruit had ye then?" is a piercing message (Rom. vi. 21). But there ought to be fruitfulness now. We should not be withered. There is no spiritual winter if we walk with God (Ps. i. 3). Fruit every month (Rev. xxii. 2) and fruit in old age (Ps. xcii. 14) are

alike realities, in the spiritual devotedness of God's people. Let us ask ourselves the solemnizing question—Am I fruitful?

### "Do All in the Name of the Lord Jesus."

Col. iii. 17.

THIS precious appointment shows the wonderful change which God's grace has brought, and the dignity of His dear people. Surely it is our privilege to praise Him for the honour of representing on earth Him Who represents us in heaven. How careful should we be, for our failure will bring Him dishonour. We may not think that a tiny action is of vast importance, but it is. Oh, for grace to be concerned lest we grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

And, surely, the verse before us limits the believer, in a decisive way, as to many earthly arrangements. Just as he cannot, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, join an earthly "sect" or "society," he cannot, in that worthy Name, be identified with earth's government and authority. And every circumstance of life is affected. In the Name of the Lord he can be a blessing, but he cannot be anything else. He can show love, but he cannot show hatred. He can help, but he cannot injure. This beautiful solution of problems belongs to those who are "in Christ Jesus," and to them exclusively. The world's question, "What if we were like you?" is quite out of place, for their thought is of copying one action without illustrating the whole principle. The believer is called out of the world, and, since Scripture is true, he is rightly no more of the world than the Lord Jesus was of the world. Oh, to feel this more and more.

### "We are His Workmanship." Eph. ii. 10.

IT is a wonderful thing to know something of God's "manifold" works in nature, and to praise Him for these. Indeed, all His works shall, themselves, praise Him (Ps. cxlv. 10), for the creation is to be delivered from the bondage of corruption (Rom. viii. 21). God will not break His word, nor is He slack concerning His promise (2 Pet. iii. 9): The wilderness shall blossom as the rose.

But there is a *new* creation (2 Cor. v. 17, Gal. vi. 15), and those who belong to this are blessed beyond measure. "All spiritual blessings" are "in Christ Jesus" (Eph. i. 3), and they also are created "in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 10). Hereby we see their privileges and their security: thus, too, we learn how much can be rightly expected from them, and how they should be contrasted with the world. "His workmanship" suggests "vessels unto honour." The Lord has made and set apart *for Himself*, and we can never over-emphasize the practical outworking of His electing and covenanted love!

Believers' Meeting Rooms:—61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, E. 7; 43a, The Broadway, Walham Green, S.W. 6. Also "Rosemond," Bede Burn Road, Jarrow-on-Tyne.

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# The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"THUS SAITH THE LORD, THY REDEEMER, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL; I AM THE LORD THY GOD, WHICH TEACHETH THEE TO PROFIT, WHICH LEADETH THEE BY THE WAY THAT THOU SHOULDEST GO. O THAT THOU HADST HEARKENED TO MY COMMANDMENTS! THEN HAD THY PEACE BEEN AS A RIVER, AND THY RIGHTEOUSNESS AS THE WAVES OF THE SEA."

## A Word of Introduction.

EACH passing week reminds of never-passing love. God gave His Beloved Son for guilty sinners, and with Him how many are the precious bounties provided. Every need is met in Christ. Do not look outside Christ for anything if you are His. Read the Scriptures in His light. Expect to enjoy the exceeding great and precious promises in Him (2 Cor. i. 20). Do not look to self. In Christ there is a wondrous fulness, and no good thing shall be withheld from the trustful and obedient people of God. Alas, many of us very, very often, put ourselves in such a position, that if our prayers were answered we should consume God's good things upon our pleasures (Jas. iv. 3). Hence He holds them back, but this is all in love, and Ps. cvi. comes to mind: "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul (Ps. cvi. 15). Is it not an exceeding mercy that our request is often refused? But if we ask according to our Lord's will, how wondrously complete will be our Father's answers to His children's prayers.

The Psalmist said: "O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day," and soon added, "Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way." Ps. cxix. 97. 104. *Is this our experience by grace?*

### The Providences of God.

GOD is not silent in every way, though, as to judgment, He waits (Ps. l. 3). Men urge that He should speak: they little realize the terrors this would mean to those who know Him not. In His goodness, which leadeth to repentance (Rom. ii. 4), He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust (Matt. v. 45). Day unto day uttereth speech (Ps. xix. 2), and His tender mercies are over all His works (Ps. cxlv. 9). Yet men assume these are a matter of nature, and then, having stolen them from God's authority, profanely speak against Him if they are withheld, as if physical and material blessings were a matter of course. His beloved people rejoice that He has spoken to them (Ps. lxxxv. 8): they have learnt of Him as their Father (John vi. 45), and been drawn to His Beloved Son, Whose voice they have heard (John v. 25). Hence they *recognize* when He speaks in mercy, and likewise in warning: "Hear ye the rod, and Who hath appointed it" (Mic. vi. 9). The deafening cries of men, boasting in men and trusting in men, hide from the majority the wondrous providences of God, but they are very real, and many have experienced them *so* often that it is strange they cannot see. Yet, not strange in one sense, for Satan would ever blind the minds of them that believe *not* to God's hand in history, even as to the glorious gospel of Christ (2 Cor. iv. 4).

Hence, not a few speak of "luck" and "chance" and "fate" when their lives are preserved amid the solemn occurrences which enter in the paths of many, especially in these days of peril. How marvellous to see God's *restraining* hand when one is within a few feet of death. A hairbreadth escape speaks loudly: and how many at the front, and even in this city, know what this means. Alas, many are flippant after their deliverance, and if the mind is directed to ponder the unexploded bombs, and those which fall in streets and gardens, and the *comparatively* small, though deeply sad, loss of life in this "terror of night," many would ask "Why do *any* die?" In other words, if God is providentially holding back *some* troubles, men who forget Him in prosperity, ask why He does not hold back *all*. Will not the multitude, when the third part is several times affected, in fulfilment of Rev. viii. omit to realize the *mercy* that two parts are still spared before the Day of the Lord starts? We are all apt to forget that a sad individual death (and our hearts would be *full* of true sympathy) is not, in the present time, because of *special* individual sin (Luke xiii. 2-4), but that *all* our natural lives are forfeited, and that God's prolonging of life, and bringing His truth before any, is a wondrous privilege, if rightly appreciated. Moreover, it is comforting to know that those who die in infancy are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ (Jer. xxxi. 15-17 with Matt. ii. 17, 18), and that God's foreknowledge and power, prevents the cutting off of one in his sins, who would subsequently have sought the Lord Jesus and His eternal salvation.

The mystery of His dealings may be a real one: we expect mysteries with God. But enough of His ways is seen to cause a sense of providential care. "O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men" (Ps. cvii. 8, 15, 21, 31). This repeated verse needs repeated emphasis, and though part of the chapter deals with God's ways in saving love, aptly following Psalms cv. and cvi., there are also definite hints of His *providential* mercy, on behalf of mariners for instance, appropriately referring back to Psalm civ. If only men looked at God's hand in history aright, they would not be stumbled by the confusion around, but marvel that everything is not in a worse state when He has been so forgotten; and they would admire His tender patience, and compassion, which restrain many, many, troubles which human disregard of Him has long been diligently sowing. The work of God in "little" things for individuals, should be seen as His witness against all thoughts of "chance," and all ingratitude. As Israel's history sets forth the *Reality* of God, so the personal experience of many is a clear evidence of God's warnings, alas, very often unheeded. Surely, those who have been brought to know His quickening in their lives, should feel a deep concern for others who are yet without hope. Oh, what a mercy it is to have one's eyes opened to see beauty in Christ.

### "And this is Love, that we walk after His Commandments."—2 John 6.

HOW hard it is to tell naturally what love is, oftentimes selfishness parades as love. If one finds pleasure in another for the sake of self, he must not speak too readily of love. Love gives up, love loses, love is willing to do anything painful for the sake of others: oh, how little love we have! "God is love:" marvellous was His mercy, and it abides!

Even believers are sometimes misled as to love. They do not seek the spiritual profit of their brethren so fervently as they should. We must all bow our heads in shame, or rather bow our hearts. We see wandering believers whom we helped to wander—at least because we did not hinder—or at least because of our example. May our humble joy be the Lord's reviving, and a sense of His forgiveness, so that we may have power to draw many back to Him, and His will.

But how may we discern love? Only that which is linked with, and tends to, godly obedience can be thus characterized. "This is love, *that* we walk after His commandments." Whatsoever impels in that direction is love. If we are careless about the Lord's will, however sentimental we be, we are not showing love. Love must express itself in holy conformity to the Lord's will. Oh that this may be our experience in the power of the Holy Spirit.

### The Peril of "IT."

ARE we not afraid in our own lives of *anything* that draws the mind from *Christ*, and conscious that Satan can use *everything* thus,—conscious that there are so many failures as to *whole* hearted devotedness? Oh for a *continual* reviving: we would not be irregular! Matt. xvi. 17 has impressed me. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed—unto thee." Our version inserts *it*. But this seems a mistake, in the light of Matt. xi. 27, even as the "this" of Psalm xxii. 31 weakens the stress on the fulness of Christ's finished work, and I would dread the intrusion of "*it*" in our experiences. A Person, a glorious Person, had been revealed to Peter, and the Lord Jesus has been revealed to us. "*Italics*" may sometimes help, but there are too many "*italics*," if I may so say, in our daily walk: we add to, and thus diminish, the Lord's will. Oh, beloved friends, beware of "*it*." Your coming to Christ was to a Person, not to a thing: religion could not save, cannot save. Every "*it*" failed: *He* did not fail, *He* never fails, what a mercy to rejoice in Him.

But what about *daily* arrangements? Let me be practical. I would speak to myself as much as to you. God approves and uses some means, not *all* that many imagine. But are we *trusting* to any "*it*," to food, or to something else, for health, or whatever it may be? If so, we are grieving Him. Faith is upon the Lord Himself. An *appointed* means may be misused often (2 Kings xviii. 4). How often when He encourages, and opens doors for service, some "*man*" is our confidence, and some "*it*" is our hope that He may work yet more. And if the "*it*" fails, we are gloomy. But what are men? What are things? If God is pleased to work *against* circumstances, who can stay His hand? Herein is the removal of dependency, and the Lord's call to victory over the sin of anxious worry.

Again, we often desire to do *many* things unto the Lord. They may be parts of precious service, but *in* the *very* doing, the flesh seems to assert itself, and we do this or that labour because we like "*it*," and are so glad to say afterwards we have done "*it*." This is sad. The remedy is not laziness. To obtain from enthusiastic toil (because we may go astray therein) is wrong, but to be occupied with "*it*" is wrong also. God's path avoids turning to the right hand *as well as* to the left: precious two-fold thought, warning us against the *apparently* contrasted sins to which Satan would attract. In like manner, if we set our mind on any "*thing*" to be done to-morrow, with a measure of self-choosing and self-delight, we shall be disappointed if God, in His love and wisdom, disturbs our plan and wish. Let us beware of any "*it*," however useful in a right position, when "*it*" becomes an object in life. We are the Lord's, if so be we are born from above, and should (or would) do all to His glory. Will He not enable? Will He not graciously guide? Let us not be those who by turning round need to hear a voice *behind* (Isa. xxx. 21), though we own His love in

granting this:—but let us rather have our eyes upon *Him*, and so be guided by His eye (Ps. xxxii. 8). Again I would earnestly say, "Beware of '*it*.'" A *thing* may be precious if unto the Lord, but if the *thing* becomes, in any measure, the centre or aim, to that extent He is forgotten, and our hearts lose, and we fail to glorify *His Name*!

*Two Gospel Leaflets circulated among Israel:—*

### 1. A REAL NEW YEAR, OR NOT?

"AND it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, *the first day of the month*, the waters were dried up from off the earth." Thus Gen. viii. 13 reads. Noah had a new year, and soon entered into its enjoyment, in connexion with the removing by God of the waters of judgment and wrath! "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be *unto you* the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year *unto you*" (Ex. xii. 1, 2). Israel had the joy of deliverance from Egypt. *God made their new year!* "And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up" (Ex. xl. 17). God granted worship. "Hezekiah began to reign when he was five and twenty years old . . . He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the Lord, . . . Now they began on *the first day of the first month* to sanctify" (2 Chron. xxix. 1, 3, 17). Israel experienced a new year with the putting away of the wickedness of Ahaz! "Upon *the first day of the first month* began he to go up from Babylon . . . for Ezra had prepared his heart" (Ezra vii. 9, 10). Happy privilege!

And if *you* are to have a new year that is *real*, it can only be by the grace of God, and by His causing of a mighty change. But you do not feel your need for this change. You think you are "all-right." Why does God emphasize one new year *only* in some of the above histories? Is it not because He would show that there is, in a fuller sense, *one* new year which cannot be repeated? Yes, there IS the new year of the new life. "*Your*" new year is soon followed by a dismal fear of God's wrath, except you are careless as to *Yom Kippur*, and then the months go round without any lasting change, and you have another new year, *with its failure*, unless your earthly life is cut short before. Your need, dear Jewish reader, is a *true* "beginning," a *new* life, a deliverance from the worse-than-Egyptian bondage of sin, the worse-than-Babylon separation from God, and a judgment more terrible than the flood, even the wrath of God. There is such a deliverance, by Him Who, as the Ark, bore judgment for helpless sinners; Who, as the Passover, died for those who otherwise would have been smitten, and *THIS ONE IS THE MESSIAH*, the Lord Jesus. Yet you *will* not have Him—at least, you have despised Him hitherto, but *only* in Him can there be found a *good* new year; only in Him is there a true and everlasting salvation. Again I ask, "A real new year, or not?" Which is yours?



## 2. "ONCE A YEAR." Lev. xvi. 34.

IT is precious to *know* that God is truthful. Every word of Scripture *must* stand. God is not changed by changing times. Yet how few seem to realize this:—their actions fail to set forth a true faith in the God of truth (Deut. xxxii. 4).

Lev. xvi. is full of meaning. "After the death of the two sons of Aaron," the Lord emphasized *His* greatness, and the impossibility of approaching Him according to human wishes. Even Aaron was held back: "Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil" (2). Why? The solemn answer sounds forth, "That he die not." And immediately we read, "For I will appear." Even the seraphim cover their faces before *Him*, and Moses was told, "Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live" (Ex. xxxiii. 20). "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts" (Isa. vi. 3).

On one day, however, Aaron was bidden to draw near, but even then, *not without blood*, and, moreover, the cloud of the incense covered the mercy seat (Lev. xvi. 13). Such was the Divine mark of the Day of Atonement, nor has God approved a partial observance.

How can any dare to think that so holy and mighty a God will alter His arrangements to please men? It is sad, indeed, to see so many remaining utterly careless as to God's infinite Majesty, while professing to keep the Day of Atonement itself! And the Sabbath-breakers, who (if the law of Exodus xxxi. is still in operation) should have been put to death, are welcomed by the religious Jew, although it is well known they do not give up their attitude. But it may be said, "We cannot put to death." You *can* avoid treating such an one as a *living Jew*. But by the objection, you acknowledge that the law was given for obedient Israel to observe as the Lord's nation. May not this suggest that God can work in some *other* way while Israel is temporarily out of this privileged position? You claim the keeping of law, but vary it: we, as Christians, acknowledge its changelessness, except by Divine appointment, and, seeing our condemnation, do not assume God will accept our rags of self-righteousness. Nay, **we have fled to the Righteous One**, and God beholds us in His merits, even as He clothed Adam and Eve in coats of a skin—a covering by a sacrifice!

To return to Lev. xvi. Even if you kept the arrangement exactly, you would have no assurance of cleansing as to the *conscience*. How then can you expect this, when you remove the priest and the sacrifice which are said to make an atonement, and only retain the affliction of soul, which is *not* mentioned till atonement is finished, and which is *never* said to make it? But *why* could you have no real peace of heart, even if Lev. xvi. were fulfilled? Let verse 34 sound forth: observe the words, "To make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once

a year."\* But many of their sins had already been atoned. Two similar atonements for one sin shows the failure of the first, yea, of both. Not only so, the expression, "all their sins," seems to imply that **last year's sins, and yet preceding sins, came up again**. Thus, each Day of Atonement proclaimed the previous one had not taken away sins. Animal sacrifices could *not* give more than they possessed, viz., (1) a robe for the body, (2) temporary physical acceptance, and drawing near to God. "Once a year" is thus a deadly blow to every thought of a lasting righteousness by the work of man. It is God's witness against the power of any merely human priesthood. Notice, moreover, that verse 32 speaks of one failing priest following another, because the first was not allowed to continue his work by reason of *death*! And verse 11 is so solemn, "Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering **which is FOR HIMSELF**" (this thought is *repeated three times*). God appointed this to direct our mind to something greater, of which it was a type. Rather, "to Some One Greater." Listen to David's confidence, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest *for ever*, after the order of Melchizedek" (Ps. cx. 4). Here is a *Sacrifice accepted in heaven*, where **this Priest sits down, never** to die any more, because His work is *done* (verse 1). Which, dear reader, is your hope—a work "once a year," or a work "once for all"? In the words of a Hebrew Christian, inspired by God, our hearts would say, "So Christ [Messiah] was *once* offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear *the second time* without sin unto salvation."

### Following.

EVERY word of Scripture is valuable. "To follow" suggests

- (1) Continuance.
- (2) A position *behind*.
- (3) An object in view.

Sometimes, as in Num. xiv. 24. xxxii. 11, 12, the literal meaning is "*To Fill after*" *i.e.* to take the right place and to *fill* it as well, with hearty agreement (*cf.* Deut. i. 36, Jos. xiv. 8, 9, 14). But the word in the later Scriptures seems to mean a coming together on the same path. "Disciple" is often explained by young people as "follower," but "disciple" is rather "learner." We have noticed two aspects of following, one outward, *e.g.* Matt. viii. 1; one spiritual and resultful, as in Matt. iv. 20-22, Luke ix. 23: How precious thus to be dependent on the Lord. Oh that this may be our experience, if so be we have *tasted* that the Lord is gracious.

\* It may be said, "The same verse says, 'an everlasting statute.'" This is deeply important. It shows that Israelites can no more be saved as Israelites than Gentiles as Gentiles. *Cf.* Ex. xxxi. 16. If you are to know an *everlasting* atonement it cannot be by this *everlasting* statute, it cannot be barely as an Israelite, but as one *born again*, one "in the new covenant" of Jer. xxxi. 31, 34. Thus all Scripture agrees, and God is glorified! Do not think that all who call themselves Christians are Christians, or that we believe in earthly priesthood of sinful men. Messiah is God's provision, and our joy!

**"Unclean until the Even."**

Num. xix. 7, 8, 10, 21, 22.

## BIBLE MEDITATIONS.

THESE words occur over *thirty* times: is there not much to learn? God emphasizes the dangers which surround us, that we may flee from them. It is so easy to be *contaminated*: "uncleanness" till the evening seems to be especially connected with this thought. Continuance in personal sin is an awful thing, and the soul allowing this was cut off from his people (*e.g.* Lev. vii. 20, 21, 27). There was no atonement for "an high hand" in wickedness (Num. xv. 30 marg.). But "contact" *seemed* such a small matter. The holiness of God forbids such an opinion. Again and again, *uncleanness* till the even is mentioned with the word "*touch*" (Lev. xi. 24, 27, 31; xv. 11; xxii. 4-6; and Num. xix., where it occurs seven times). We may *think* we are "safe," but "can one go on hot coals and his feet not be burned?" Jude 21-23 (note also 24), with Gal. vi. 1, shows the danger, even when we are seeking to restore one who has wandered. We are more *susceptible* to sin than we realize. Only One could say, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath *nothing in Me*." How thankful we are for His finished work.

There are parallels and contrasts with the types in *our* experience. The uncleanness so solemnly set forth was with respect to God's earthly Sanctuary, and the purifying of the flesh (Heb. ix. 13): but contact with sin hinders as to the enjoyment of worship in the heavenlies. If we have failed in this respect we need to be humbled, and to enter into the *right* application of the work of our Lord Jesus, when we confess our sins. The water of Num. xix. depended on the sacrifice already made (see also Lev. xi. 32 for instance). But how wondrously the blessings in Christ excel types. Though when we fail we lose communion, and may be delayed as to many privileges of service, we must not argue in favour of a continued state of separation from God till the evening, nor for seven days as in Num. xix. Quickly should we seek cleansing (*cf.* Lev. xi. 40), though conscious of a "howbeit" (2 Sam. xii. 14), and never wishing to change God's holy reproof (Deut. iii. 27). The evening suggested a *new* day with Israel, even as seven days led up to the eighth with its type of resurrection. It is only as we enter into the new experience, which God gives in His Beloved Son, that we can know deliverance from uncleanness. How very solemn are the closing words of Num. xix. They show how sin spreads: truly we must be on our guard, and, still confessing our sin when we please our Heavenly Father most, we would praise, in the Holy Spirit, Him Who was invariably "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners" (Heb. vii. 26).

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Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"I WILL MAKE MENTION OF THE LOVING-KINDNESSES OF THE LORD, AND THE PRAISES OF THE LORD." Isa. lxiii. 7.

## The Revealed Characteristics of "The Day of the Lord."

WE turn to the Scriptures. Human theories are never reliable, We do not lay claim to prophecy, but, in the mercy of God, we have implicit faith in the prophecies of the Bible. Seeming delay in fulfilment is *not* delay with Him to Whom a thousand years is as one day. God's marvellous glory, and His works, in time and space alike, beyond human understanding, may well be used to encourage our praiseful and humble adoration. "The Day of the Lord *will come*" (2 Pet. iii. 10). We are reminded of Hab. ii. 3: "Though it tarry, wait for it: because it will surely come, it will not tarry," and the letter to Hebrew believers shows us that our translation misses some of the fulness which God graciously intended. We do not look merely for "*it*," but, on the contrary, "Yet a little while, and *He That shall come* will come and will not tarry" (Heb. x. 37). Happy are those who can say from the heart, "Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. xxii. 20). Is Christ a reality in your life?

"That Day and Hour" (Matt. xxiv. 36-39; see John vi. 39, day; ch. v. 28, hour) is associated very definitely with the personal Coming of Christ. He is the Exalted One, and Scripture is *full* of references to Him. We cannot please the Father, we cannot understand the truth, *unless* we honour the Lord Jesus Christ. At the present time, as it were, we have "the Day of His espousals" (Song iii. 11, with 2 Cor. xi. 2), but *then* (and soon) it will be the further "Day of the gladness of His heart" (Song iii. 11, "and"). Surely we can see the reason. He is now "expecting" (Heb. x. 13), but then His expectations will be fulfilled in more than one

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way. He will present to Himself "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing" (Eph. v. 27). Rev. xix. 17 will be fulfilled, "Let us be *glad and rejoice*, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. xix. 7). And we have a stress on *joy* in Matt. xxv. 21, 23, also: "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." How His blood-bought people should long for "the Day of the gladness of His heart." Their love to Him must prevent any other attitude!

In this context we should seek to understand more fully the revealed aspect of the *present* dispensation. It is seen in 1 Cor. iv. 3 as "*man's day*" (marg.). Undoubtedly, "the heavens do rule" (Dan. iv. 26), and there is no power independent of God (Rom. xiii. 1), but the Lord has not yet taken to Himself His great power (Rev. xi. 17). The words of Ps. lxxxii. 8 are not yet fulfilled: "Arise, O God, judge the earth: for Thou shalt inherit all nations." The italics of Ps. ii. 8 should be left out: this verse, in the light of verse 9, cannot refer to the *present* testimony of the gospel. These are the times of the *Gentiles* (Luke xxi. 24), and we note the contrast of 1 Tim. vi. 15, "In His times." Accordingly, God is silent as to any display of His fire of wrath (Ps. l. 3). Concerning Israel, He has gone and returned to His place, and it is only on the *third* day He will raise them up (Hos. v. 15, vi. 2). The climax of *this* age shows the reverse of His working for *Israel* governmentally (Rev. xi. 2). Hence, the present time is one in which His humbling, separating, gospel of grace, is to be declared to *all* the nations (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, "unto the end of the age" lit.). How important it is to notice that the Lord Jesus suddenly stopped in Isa. lxi. 1, 2. He closed the book after "the acceptable year of the Lord." "The Day of *vengeance* of our God" is quite distinct. The parallel stress on a day of salvation *now* in 2 Cor. vi. 2 is wonderful in the light of Isa. xlix. 7, 8, where the language, and tenses especially, emphasize *two* periods. While Christ is sitting at the right hand of the Father, His enemies are not placed at His footstool (Ps. cx. 1), but the message of reconciliation sounds forth even to enemies (Rom. v. 10). Grace is reigning through righteousness, and also the long-suffering of God is displayed (Rom. ii. 4, contrast verse 5). The end of the age will be "as it was in the days of Noah" (Matt. xxiv. 37-39), and then "the *long-suffering* of God waited" (1 Pet. iii. 20). The *present* period is, therefore, "*man's day*," in which God is manifesting His grace in calling a people out from the world (John xvii). *These* are not to be linked with unbelievers (2 Cor. vi. 14); they are to go forth to Christ without the camp *bearing His reproach* (Heb. xii. 13). There is not one syllable as to their earthly exaltation till He comes. His reward is *with Him* then (Rev. xxii. 12), but they are *not* to have or seek their reward now (Matt vi. 2-18). In another aspect, the present time is one of His presence *with them* as a people separated from all nations (Matt. xxviii. 20), *then* they will be received by Him and be *with Him* in His honour (1 Thess.

iv. 17). To illustrate greatness, or reigning, or earthly glory, now, is to act before the time (1 Cor. iv. 5, 8). This unveiling of the days in which we live is solemnizing indeed, but it thus makes very clear the believer's *simple* path. He is to be rejected with his rejected Lord. There is no promise of relief from the strain till the Lord Jesus shall appear (2 Thess. i. 7); there is no approval of earthly settling down. We are God's "strangers and pilgrims," and "here have we no continuing city." All worldliness is excluded; we cannot desire man's esteem, while Christ is left out, or only nominally owned.

Through this study of *present* privileges and responsibilities, we have already seen something of "the Day of the Lord." Often it is brought before us in the earlier Scriptures as darkness, and linked with wrath (Amos v. 18, 20, Zeph. i. 14-16). "*That Day*" is frequently mentioned in Isaiah and Zechariah, and its characteristic is seen in Isaiah's *first* mention: "The lofty looks of *man* shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and *the Lord alone* shall be exalted in that Day" (ii. 11, see 17). And this is plain from the latter part of Scripture. It is clear from Rev. vi. 1-11 that there are *premonitory* displays of power, but man is *not* humbled. On the contrary, this age ends with Antichrist still in the ascendant, still on the throne. The *decisive* conflict of Rev. xvi. 14 is definitely reserved for "the Day of God Almighty." It would, therefore, seem that, as the Coming of Christ, *immediately* after the tribulation of those days (Matt. xxiv. 29-31) is the *beginning* of "the Day" (2 Pet. i. 19), and that the *temporarily* terrified men of Rev. vi. 15, 16, express a tremendous fact when they cry "The great *Day* of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" *this day* is marked by the *sitting down* of Christ, but *then* He will have risen up (Luke xiii. 25): observe the *narrow gate* is emphasized in this dispensation, (24). When the Lord standeth up to judge (Isa. iii. 13), it will be the Day of His power (Ps. cx. 3), the Day of His wrath (verse 5). This is a totally different aspect from that of the present. *Now* we are to *give place* to wrath, "for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. xii. 19). "I *will* repay": the future is certain, but it remains future, and a careful study of Scripture will show that the words "wrath" and "indignation," concerning God, are *not* used by the Holy Spirit in the Book of Revelation *before* the time denoted by the sixth unsealing. The previous period does *not* belong to the Day of vengeance of our God, and it is quite compatible with the grace thus emphasized, if not *necessarily* linked, that the saints of the present dispensation should be found on earth so long as this longsuffering and grace are being shown. To take them away *before* the time of wrath would almost involve a contradiction. Hence we find in 2 Pet. i. 19 they are regarded as having the *word* of prophecy, and still surrounded by "a dark place," *until* the Day dawns. They are the objects of God's interest, and He leads *them* to spiritual and "unworldlike" repentance ("us-ward" or "you-ward"), and *then*

the Day of the Lord will come (2 Pet. iii. 9, 10; verse 14 implies a position amid earth, "in peace" of heart, up till that time; the words would lose much force otherwise).

In accordance with this, we find that *as soon as* the Day of the Lord commences there are definite dealings with Israel. At once, in Rev. vii. we have the sealing, and in Matt. xxiv. 30 the tribes of the *land* mourn (*cf.* Rev. i. 7 *lit.*); Zech. xii. 10-14 will thus be fulfilled; nothing will be before the appointed period, nothing will be too late. Everything will be God's appointment. The third Day of Hosea vi. 2 will have begun, and Isaiah lxi. 23 will be strictly, and blessedly for Israel, carried out:—"and the Day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in *Zion*, to give unto them beauty for ashes."

I have been impressed by the promise of Christ, repeated four times in John vi. (39, 40, 44, 54), to raise up His beloved people "in the last Day." We do well to ponder the word "last," as in 1 Cor. xv. 52. It is beautiful to see Martha's appreciation of His testimony, when Christ led her to realize yet more of Himself. We ask, "What Day?" And we find in John xii. 48 another statement:—"the ungodly will be judged "in the last Day." Is not this the Day of the Lord? A word may be uttered in passing against the unholy and unfounded doctrine which sets forth the judgment as an opportunity in which the majority will be *blessed*. The context in John xii. combines with ch. v. 29 to refute this sinful interpretation. Let us not encourage the ungodly by setting aside the tremendous facts of God's great wrath. Reader, if your sins are not blotted out, you are now in the greatest peril. But to return, since believers are raised in "the last Day," and we also read "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, *before* that great and notable Day of the Lord come" (Acts ii. 20), have we not His own instruction as to their presence on earth till the sixth unsealing, and His own explanation as to the time when the Day starts?

There is *nothing between* "man's day" and the Day of the Lord! Changed characteristics are very marked in Scripture. We have already seen that *He alone* shall be exalted. In accord with this we find that the judgment which is now held back (John xii. 47) will then be manifested (John xii. 48, *cf.* 2 Tim. iv. 1, 1 Pet. iv. 5, Jude 6). But believers will have boldness amid all (1 John iv. 17), for they do not come into judgment (John v. 24) since so wondrously saved in Him Who took their demerits, and with Whose merits they stand accepted! Hence the fulness of the description already noticed in Isaiah lxi. 2, namely, the Day of Vengeance (*cf.* lix. 17, lxiii. 4). To the unsaved sinner *judgment* must mean *vengeance*. This two-fold aspect, of wrath and mercy, is remarkable in these passages—"The year of My *redeemed*" is God's own title for that which is also, in blessing, a year of His goodness as to products of a sin-cursed earth (Ps. lxxv. 11 *marg.*). When His indignation is known toward His enemies, His hand will be known toward His servants (Isa lxvi. 14). Happy indeed are they (1 Kings x. 8).

Should it not be said that this removes an error respecting the Address on the Mount? Some have transferred its teaching to the Day of the Lord. But how inappropriately, for the redeemed will be exalted *when* their Lord is exalted. In like manner, the suggestion that the *quite* different expression of Rev. i. 10, "the Lord's Day," means "the Day of the Lord," not only puts aside the exactness of Scripture, but makes Rev. ii. 10, for example, unfitting. Persecution is to be expected now, but that Day, though darkness to the ungodly (Amos v. 18, 20) is light to His beloved people (2 Pet. i. 19). The *twofold* prophecy of Isa. xxi. 12 will be illustrated:—"The morning cometh, and also the night." And which will it be to us?

Thus we see that Scripture bears a consistent testimony as to the *nature* of the Day, and *when* it begins. It will be well, in closing, to look through the epistles, and notice the precious and solemnizing allusion. The believer may be enabled to work out more fully their different aspects. In Rom. ii. 5 we have "the Day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God"; this anger *exists* but is not yet *revealed* (*cf.* Rom. i. 18). Verse 16 speaks of "the Day when God shall *judge* the secrets of men": there will be no hiding away from Him. Rom. xiii. 12 encourages the people of the Lord with the precious thought, "The night is far spent, the Day is at hand." Believers will be "blameless (uncharged) in the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. i. 8), whereas others will be charged, or called into judgment, as the word used by the Holy Spirit implies. Concerning the Judgment Seat of Christ, a totally distinct thought (see 1 Cor. iii. 15), we read, "Every man's WORK shall be made manifest; for the Day shall declare it" (iii. 13): the context speaks of children of God only. 1 Cor. v. 5 shows discipline with a view to that Day (*cf.* xi. 32). 2 Cor. i. 14 reminds of mutual rejoicings "In the Day of the Lord Jesus." Eph. iv. 30 teaches that the redemption of the body will then be granted (*cf.* Rom. viii. 23). Phil. i. 6 is full of comforting assurance and holy confidence (note with 5 "*from* the first Day). Phil. i. 10 looks forward in prayer, "that ye may be sincere and without offence till the Day of Christ," and in ii. 16 we again see its happy boasting in what the Lord has caused. 1 Thess. v. 2-8 explains that those who are *of* the Day will *not* be overtaken by the Day of the Lord: on the contrary yet more *grace* is to be brought to them then (1 Pet. i. 13); thus in every way there will be, in their experience, a contrast with the thought of "as a thief." 2 Thess. i. 10 speaks of the Lord's glory amid His saints "in that Day," and the next chapter reveals how the Day of the Lord cannot set in before an awful climax of evil (ii. 2 *lit.*). "That Day" is before us in 2 Tim. i. 12, 18; iv. 8 as the time of reward for saints. Hebrews iv. refers to precious types of the millennial rest, and in x. 25 we notice believers gathering together more earnestly as they see *the* Day approaching. The dawning of the Day is set forth in 2 Pet. i. 19, but to the ungodly its terrors are emphasized. It will be a Day of *judgment* (ii. 9), and "the Day of judgment and

perdition of ungodly men" (iii. 7). 2 Pet. iii. 8-10 contains a very helpful reference to "the times and seasons," and in verse 12 we have the believer's intense attitude in "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the Day of God" (*cf.* expressed in Rev. xvi. 14). And judgment is again brought into holy prominence, as we have seen, in 1 John iv. 17 and Jude 6.

Now it is the evil day (Eph. vi. 13), but *soon* there will be the great change. Blessed are they who, in the mercy of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, can humbly say that their sins are forgiven, and that nothing can separate them from His love. Oh, that each believing heart may leap for joy, and in the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, seek to live "soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world (age); looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious Appearing of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 12-14).

### Is It Love?

CHRISTIAN love is very beautiful, and it must be carefully distinguished from that which is natural, else the words of the Lord Jesus in John xiii. 34, 35, have no meaning. "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another: by this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another" (more lit: "in one another": here is a striking test). It is sadly possible to love in word and in tongue (1 John iii. 18), and sadly possible to call darkness light, and not to use God's appointed tests for Christian love. 1 John v. 2 is deeply important in this connexion. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments":—*i.e.* (a) we cannot *know* the nature of our love if we are disobeying His appointments, or in a state of wandering, and (b) we do not really love if we set an example of disobedience, even though our conversation and actions may seem very loving. In this connexion observe, "We ourselves were sometimes (once) foolish . . . hateful, *hating one another.*" There is no limitation expressed, the apostle includes himself before salvation, implying that ungodly ones *always* hate; yet they may have natural affection and generosity, but while they lead "one another" on the path of sin they are guilty, *in God's sight*, of hating "one another." This is a heart-searching refutation of many human theories.

*Is it love* to exercise departure from the Lord, and to agree to differ (Lev. xix. 17)? It may be self-love, idleness, a fear of offending, but is it *appointed* love? Satan is subtle, and would lead us either to the right hand *or* to the left, *i.e.* to apparently *contrasted* sins. This "right hand" sin is often disguised, because we are Scripturally afraid lest younger ones should proudly rebuke older ones, lest the wrong time should be chosen for reproof, lest the

manner "I am better than you" should be suggested. But if any of us are not humble enough to deal with sin, let us not excuse the sin, but judge first our lack of humility. It is very rarely that a partly unspiritual manner does not partly spoil a spiritual intention and action, yea in everything *we* fall short. But "dangers" do not justify sin: our weakness may *delay* our action, and cause us to spend more time on our own failures rather than on pointing out those of others. The principle of Matt. vii. 5 prevents hasty decision.

*Is it love* to show kindness to any while they are willing to agree, and then speak bitterly to them when we cannot command their identification with us in all our personal wishes?

*Is it love*, or self love, that has somewhat of the changeableness of Ammon in 2 Sam. xiii. 15?

*Is it love* to do that which we like cheerfully, but to be sullen if we cannot have our own way? Let us remember sin is subtle, and as it is easy to make a hobby even of work for the Lord without doing it in the Lord, so, *in like manner*, to choose actions which appear loving, for *self-gratification*. It is an enjoyment to some temperaments to "get cross," and to others to manifest philanthropy. But true love is not primarily for the sake of the fruit which one receives in enjoyment, but rather for the sake of the Lord, and for the benefit of those concerned. Much natural love is for the sake of the return love which natural selfishness seeks; and such love becomes unlovely when it cannot have *its* way.

*Is it love* to be unwilling for sternness in dealing with a naughty tongue (Prov. xvii. 4)? Shall we not *refuse* to hear that which is slanderous or tale-bearing? *Is it love* to listen for fear of offending the one who thus adds to his sin? To *whom* is it love? Not to our Heavenly Father, not to those mentioned, not to the one whose evil is thus helped to spring forth. The whole attitude is wrong. May we be saved from it, and remember Prov. xt 11, 12 (cover the well's mouth, if it is a well of talkativeness; *th.s* is love, if done for God's glory).

*Is it love* to encourage another in self-occupation, in the development of feelings, in trust to human means and corresponding forgetfulness of the Lord's wondrous power as to body and mind. No, it is not love, though the motive *may* be loving, and any contrasted action *without* a loving motive is equally a failure. Every attitude has two parts, and both the inside and the outside thereof must be love, or the whole is made unloving. It needs *as much grace* to reprove in the Spirit as to encourage a brother with the thought that you are thankful for his growth in grace.

One has loved perfectly, and still loves. His love never disappoints the love which it causes, but if only believers saw how, though He *could* step in, He keeps them waiting; and how, though He *could* allow them their way, He permits a thwarting in misunderstood wisdom;—they would not be so ready to doubt the love of their best friends, who cannot always enter into their own ideas. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."

**“Unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.”** Est. viii. 9.

THIS verse stands out before some of us because men have not divided it into two : its ninety English words look so remarkable. (How short are most verses, and how easily learnt !) But since God has been pleased to impress more definitely upon us the privilege of seeking disciples from “*all* the nations,” and to impress, it would seem, “*India*” upon us, we have another background for feeling the emphasis of the Divine record in the words “the writing thereof” and “their language.”

Divers languages are the result of man's attempt at unity, and man's final attempt under Anti-Christ is destined to utterly fail. God will yet turn to the peoples a pure language (Zeph. iii. 9), aye, and a pure lip, for there will be precious words of truth uttered by man from all nations in a very wondrous unity (Zech. viii. 20-23). But, meanwhile, we have a continual reminder of the trouble which sin has brought, even as to languages. Yet God gives mental powers, and we would present them to Him, for all our abilities in our members should be His. The good news, in the days of Mordecai, was sent to all nations, and *we* have good news, and would desire that men might hear in their own tongues wherein they were born (Acts ii. 6, 8, 11, a *threefold* stress). God marked out the beginning of this dispensation as a contrast with Babel, and also He, in love, indicated when He set aside Hebrew, that instead of appointing for all to go to one earthly centre, He would send His message to men in all parts, and thus He emphasized that the Gospel was “the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first and *also to the Greek*” (Rom. i. 16). We rejoice in this fact, and enter into the words written to those who were “in time past Gentiles” in Eph. ii. 11. To such the apostles, in the leading of the Holy Spirit, gave a message of wondrous fulness, declaring that Christ “*Came* and preached peace” to far off ones as well as to Israel. “*Came*” : a marvellous word of marvellous love. May we adore Him.

It is our privilege to meet men of various languages, and we desire to give them the precious Gospel in their own tongue. To this end, and God's glory in it, we seek the prayers of His praying people, for brethren prayerfully endeavour to learn other languages, and moreover, that we may be guided in passing on Scripture translations, that God in all things may be glorified. He has, apparently, encouraged us in this work, though we feel our unworthiness. Especially we meet hundreds of Chinese, and many Indians, most of them seafaring men, and we long to lead many of them to our Lord Jesus.

Believers' Meeting Rooms:—61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, E, 7; 43a, The Broadway, Walham Green, S.W. 6. Also “Rosemond,” Bede Burn Road, Jarrow-on-Tyne.