

# PRESENT TESTIMONY VOLUME 6, 1854

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*A collection of articles and writings by G.V. Wigram from Present Testimony Volume 6, 1854, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.*

123 Chapters

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## Present Testimony Volume 6, 1854

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## 1 Peter 4:14-16

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" As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy."

But for simple faith in God and the consciousness that the Spirit of God is still guardian in the church, one would not know how or what to speak in these days. If you speak of grace, and dwell upon the fullness, and freeness of it, there are so many hearts that will delight in it after a carnal manner, and use it as a cloak for evil; not merely those who do, as Jude says, "turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness," but who will cover over a deep spirit of worldliness, excuse themselves much obedience on the ground of grace. Indeed, this is the prevailing leaven of these days. It is the root of that latitudinarian spirit which is tolerant of many evils and much disobedience. On the other hand, if you speak of holiness of walk, many souls put themselves under legal bondage, which robs them of their joy and peace, or at the best makes them the slaves of their own frames and feelings, or promotes that self-righteous spirit which fills the heart with intolerant pride.

Still the truth must be told; and it will have its fruit in some hearts. In the passage above we see the most touching appeal to the heart of a saint; and these two principles, grace and holiness, exactly in unison. The appeal is not to bondmen or servants, but to children. "As obedient children;" and it is from "Him which hath called you." Grace has brightly shone in these two facts, "He hath called us," and "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). That is, He hath called us, and has made us His children. The appeal is this, seeing He who has thus acted in such grace, and brought us into such relationship, is Himself holy, so should we be holy. And there is grace in this appeal, for He desires that we should be before Him in joy and love; which could not be without holiness. This our God has secured to us in Jesus, "having chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. 1:4). But God has now separated us unto Himself from an evil world, and from our own evil too, hence the present appeal to be "as obedient children." The principle is this, the children should be as the Parent. God is holy; hence His children are to be holy. As holiness is a characteristic of the Father, it should also be a characteristic of the children.

Now, if this principle had more weight in our minds, our chastenings would be found much more fruitful; for surely that soul that longs after holiness will profit more than the careless soul, by the varied chastenings of the Father's hand. " For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness (Heb. 12:10).

Many are apt to contrast grace and holiness, but there can be no contrast between any of the attributes of God. All His attributes express Himself, and He is One. Grace, indeed, shines most in this, that we sinners of the Gene tiles should be reconciled unto God, and built up with the Jews a holy temple in the Lord, etc. (see Eph. 11-22; see also same chapter all through, especially verses

4, 7, 10). "Grace reigns through righteousness" (Rom. 5.21).

I am sure of this, if we would serve the Lord, we must be holy. Not in self-righteousness, but "as obedient children." As those that wish to be as He is. Every exhortation to His children, and every recognition of them is full of this principle-holiness. As, "To the saints," "holy brethren," "redeemed from all iniquity, to be a peculiar people," etc.

One could dwell very much upon this important subject; and I trust the Lord may lead our souls more into it. For it is evident, from the Word, and from past experience, that God's work is accomplished by means of holy and godly people. A true position and clear knowledge of truth will not suffice; holiness is what God looks for. The reason is evident, since to do God's work he must have the soul walking with himself; in communion with his mind. Witness the contrast between Abraham and Lot.

Let brethren in Christ everywhere look well to this, for there is lack of power: much truth abroad; but it seems to have little power in separating souls from evil. For when we see light spreading, if that "light in them be darkness, how great is that darkness." There seems to be lack of power for obedience to the truth when it is seen. Why is this? 2 Tim. 2:21 implies there is such a thing as meetness for the master's use. And this is the meetness "being purged from these" (vessels of dishonor) not having knowledge.

Let us remember this, " the Lord knoweth them that are His; and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." I doubt not the Lord is doing a work among souls; and if we would share the rewards of such a work, we must see to it that we are found " in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God." " As workers together with Him, giving no offense in anything" (see 2 cor. vi.)

## 1 Timothy 4:1-3

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Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

## 2 Kings 8:13

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"The Lord hath showed me that thou shalt be King over Syria."

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."

The doctrine of "the desperate wickedness of the heart," as a truth of universal application, is the verdict of divine Omniscience, however questioned by individual experience. Every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has doubted it in his own case, till he has been taught it by God Himself. But after this lesson so taught of God, and acquiring depth by increasing experience, it is another lesson to learn practically the deceitfulness of the heart. The reception of this doctrine in the power of it, helps to keep the believer humble and watchful. Thus, "the Lord keepeth the feet of His saints," putting "His fear in their hearts." And being in the fear of the Lord all the day, they are kept from many an outbreak of desperate wickedness, the common result of walking in self-confidence. "For he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool."

Elisha, "the man of God," is at Damascus, and Benhadad the king of Syria was sick; and in his sickness he honors the prophet of the Lord-true picture of man, driven by necessity at last to that God whom he has all along despised. He sends his servant, or prime minister, Hazael, with a costly present, to inquire of the prophet, "Shall I recover of this sickness?" "And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the Lord hath showed me he shall surely die." There was nothing mortal in his disease, and there was no natural sagacity in the prophet; but the Lord before whom all things are open and naked, told him he should surely die. This deeply affected the prophet, and gave, so speaking, a cast to his countenance, that Hazael could neither understand nor endure his gaze. "And he [Elisha] settled his countenance steadfastly until he [Hazael] was ashamed: and the man of God wept; and Hazael said, Why weepeth my Lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" He did not think himself a dog. He was ready to resent the imputation. The thought of such deeds might have been abhorrent alike to his judgment and feelings. He was not aware of the deceitfulness of the heart. The prophet does not accuse Hazael of perfidy or of hypocrisy, but simply replies: "The Lord hath showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria." Hazael was ignorant both of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart. He knew not how many checks there are in the things around us, and from the position in which we are to hinder the outbreak of the desperate wickedness of the heart, which is unsuspected; because it lies, as it were, dormant, till aroused by circumstances. Hazael, as a, prime minister, had tasted power, but the sickness of his master now presented the opportunity of passing from the responsible power of a minister to the irresponsible power of a usurper; and did he know or, suspect the way to crime thus opened before him? Does the slave, groaning under the yoke of the

oppressor, suspect that oppression is in his own heart; and, if he changed places with his oppressor, it would break forth into action? Do we suspect, that the most sanguinary wars which have spread devastation over the fairest countries, and rendered whole populations miserable, spring from the same lusts which involve two individuals in personal altercation.

" From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members"! Is persecution peculiar to some particular form of religion, or the necessary result of attempting to bind the consciences of others by laws of our own, so that fealty to the " one Law-giver" becomes a crime? Did the suffering Puritans, driven by episcopal persecution to seek for shelter in the wilds of a new country, suspect that they carried into exile the principle of persecution in their own breasts, ready to burst forth against those who submitted not to them when they should be in circumstances to exercise authority? The heart is 'so deceitful as to hide from itself what is in it, so as to be taken by surprise at the outbreak of evil.

But it may be said, that Hazael being ignorant of God was ignorant also of his own heart. Let us turn, therefore, to the case of one who had known God in repeated mercies and marvelous deliverances.

The reign of Hezekiah affords relief to the spirit after the history of " that king Ahaz." At the outset, Hezekiah evinced very godly jealousy in breaking in pieces the brazen serpent, because that ancient symbol of divine mercy had robbed the Lord of the glory due to Him alone. Hezekiah had experienced, that the Lord's ear was open to the cry of His people, to his own cry as well as that of the prophet Isaiah, for deliverance from the proud Assyrian. He had also cried unto the Lord in the extremity of his sickness; and the Lord heard him and sent him word of recovery by the prophet Isaiah, and confirmed his word by a marvelous sign.

Hezekiah was not insensible of all these marked mercies and deliverances. He pours out his heart to God in grateful acknowledgment. " What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it. I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul." But did he go softly? In a little moment the scene is changed, and an occasion afforded for the manifestation of vain-glory, which Hezekiah had not suspected to be in his heart, and for the which the trials of his eventful life had not hitherto afforded scope. But now, Hezekiah, instead of being laid low in sickness, is in the enjoyment of health; instead of groaning under the oppressor, he is himself an object of admiration-ever dangerous to the soul of the saint. " At that time Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. And Hezekiah hearkened unto them and showed them all the house of his precious things... there was nothing in his house nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not." "And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah, king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth." "In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the Lord: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign. But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem." For fourteen years he had walked humbly with God, and magnified him. But on his recovery he was himself first magnified by others, and then he magnified himself, taking the honor to himself as the man for whom the Lord had wrought a miracle, Men are readily attracted by something marvelous; but they fix their wonder on some object short of God Himself. They regard the wonder and the subject of

the miracle, not the God who has wrought the wonder. " Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." " Hezekiah rendered not again to the Lord according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up." He had thought in his own heart, that if the Lord recovered him, it would be for him " to go softly" all his days. "Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart."

Many a heart, besides that of Hezekiah, has been deceived by the thought of carrying into recovery the deep realities which occupied the soul on the bed of sickness. Many a one, besides Hezekiah, raised up in answer to prayer with the honest intention of glorifying God by " going softly," has glorified God indeed, but in another way, by learning what was in his heart, justifying God in his sayings, bowing before him, and saying, " Good is the word of the Lord." Yet it is good when it does its painful office of " piercing even to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart." Good, O how good! when it reveals the grace of God abounding over the sin it has detected. " Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. He said, moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days."

Had Hezekiah died when the Lord bid him "set his house in order," he would have departed in the judgment of men as blameless; but he would have died in much ignorance of his own heart. Who does not see how much safer it is to leave " our times in the hands of the Lord," than to have life prolonged for fifteen years. The Lord in his wisdom generally allows his saints to live long enough to show that they are in themselves " men of like passions" with others, that He alone " makes them to differ" from others, that they have nothing but that which they have received, and that they are what they are only by the grace of God.

Hezekiah's restoration taught him in one way, that which " the thorn in the flesh" taught the apostle Paul in another, that (such is the deceitfulness of the heart) we are prone to turn the highest favors which God bestows to self-exaltation. The spirit of grace and supplication vouchsafed to Hezekiah in his sickness and so remarkably answered, was not persevered in on his restoration. The Lord left him. He rested upon his recovery; but we can only " stand by faith." If self-righteousness is an abomination before God in all men, what must it be in His saints, and yet he is little exercised in his own soul who has not detected the subtlety of his own heart, to be proud of any distinguishing grace which the Lord has given him. " And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God, but thou didst trust in 'thine own beauty."

Our God is the only wise God, and His manifold wisdom, which was shown forth in Hezekiah's recovery, and in Paul's thorn in the flesh, is shown in others in sickness and in health, in imprisonment and enlargement, in abounding and suffering need; all these circumstances furnish occasions-to us, to know what is in our hearts; to God, to unfold the inexhaustible store of His grace.

Let us turn to the frank, open-hearted, upright apostle Peter. Fervent in his love to Jesus, he was ignorant of the deceitfulness of the heart. The Lord's eye could look on Peter in the midst of a scene in which he had not yet been placed, even as the same Lord had shown Elisha that Hazael should be king over Syria. The daily companion of Jesus, witness of His miracles, partaking of His

more secret instruction, when he expounded to His disciples His parables, experimentally knowing the care of Jesus in providing for him and His companions, when he had sent them forth without purse or scrip;-Is he such a dog? Shall he deny Him? The thought is repelled with honest indignation.

Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." It was to Peter that the Father had made a special revelation of the glory of the person of the Lord, that He was the Christ the Son of the living God. And when the Lord Himself, witnessing the turning back of many who had followed him to a certain point, challenged the twelve: " Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God"? What, shall Peter deny his own confession, and the honor put upon him in the revelation made to him of the Father-impossible, he thought others might be offended because of Jesus, but surely not Peter. " Though all should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." Now the error of Peter and of all of us, is to take for granted that we know our hearts as well as the Lord knows them. We act on our own estimate of our intentions, instead of the Lord's warning. We watch not-we pray not for special keeping, where not only the Lord, but our own experience also has shown us our weakness. We trust to the integrity of our intentions; and we " enter into temptation," unaware that we are brought into the place. where the strength of our resolutions or the integrity of our intentions is to be tested. Let the scene be changed. Peter is sleeping in the garden when the Lord is in agony; " He could not watch with the Lord one hour." The Lord could draw the line, which Peter could not, and which it would be dangerous for His disciples to attempt to draw in their own case. " The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Weak in reality, although strong apparently; for Peter, aroused from his slumber to fleshly confidence, "stretched out his hand, drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest and smote off his ear." Brave action to fight single handed against a multitude-" But the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God," and to watch and pray, and to have no confidence in the flesh, is far harder. Jesus is deserted by His disciples; despised and rejected of men. Will Peter now stand by Him? Will he lay down his life for Him? Will he stand by his former confession? No. He equivocates, denies, curses, swears, " I know not the man." The Lord had now shown that He knew Peter's heart better than Peter knew it himself. He restores him with a look; but Peter went out and wept bitterly.

The history of Peter shows us the connection between the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart. Little did he know that cursing and swearing were there ready to burst forth on the occasion being opened. Is there a Christian of any experience who does not know the shame of confessing Jesus before men to be more powerful than the most upright resolution? How deceitful are our hearts in making us willing to pass as one of the company in which we are, instead of maintaining our vantage ground of confession unto Jesus. It is comparatively easy when we are among many who acknowledge Jesus also to acknowledge Him; easy to fall in with the common-place religious conversation, but for Christ to be the only object, for the Lord to be always before us, necessitates the cross. if we do not take it for granted on the authority of Him who "knows what is in man," that our " hearts are deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," so that we are led to watch and pray, we shall enter into temptation and make the experiment to our own cost, although it may lead us to " justify God in His sayings, and clear Him when He is judged." Let us rather marvel, that any are kept (for what can keep but the faithful power of God)

than at Peter's fall. " If any man thinketh that he standeth, let him take heed lest he fall." " The flesh is weak," by no means consciously weak, but the reverse; strong, bold, and confident. " Let not the mighty man glory in his might." Many are the instances of undaunted human resolution. But human resolution is not the spirit of him who is the witness of Jesus. It has need to be broken, and to know that it is but weakness. " Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterward. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." Had the Lord rushed armed to battle at the head of His followers, in all likelihood Peter would have followed Him reckless of danger. But such boldness is weakness; for the path of faith, instead of following Jesus to battle, has to follow Him unto rejection. Such was the path of the Master. " Ought not Christ to suffer,... and to enter into His glory." Such is the path for the servant, the way to glory is only through the cross. But when Peter had learned that the Lord knew him better than he knew himself, when he had learned to suspect the deceitfulness of his heart, so that he would rather the Lord should read it than he himself;-when Peter had learned the true secret of turning the Lord's omniscience to a practical personal account-" Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee-" then no longer prepared to glory in his " wisdom" or in " his might," the Lord could " signify to him, by what death he should glorify God," and say unto him, " Follow me." What Peter could not do in his own time, and way, and strength, the Lord enabled him to do in His time, His way, and His strength.

" What, then, shall we say to these things"? First, a Christian is " a truth-doer, and should habitually come to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." This will prevent not only his acting a character, but also that subtle snare of using the character he has among others as a blind to conceal his own faults. Secondly, we must remember, that God's end and object is to glorify not us, but His own Son Jesus Christ. This is ever the object of the Holy Ghost, and when He " writes up" the names of the Lord's people, he hesitates not to record their sins, failings, and blemishes, sometimes even without comment, that we may learn the impossibility of any flesh glorying before the Lord. Of the best it can only be said, " to the praise of the glory of His grace;" and if that is but very imperfectly learned here, it will be very evident when we shall know even as we ourselves are known. But lastly we are taught, both historically and doctrinally (it may be experimentally), that such is the deceitfulness of the heart, that no gifts of the highest order, no graces received out of the fullness of Jesus, no honest zeal for His name, no devotedness of past service, no activity of present service are a safeguard against it. We can only be " kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." And the unrescinded rule prescribed for our safety by Jesus is, " If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." The flesh in the saint is shown in its fearful evil, by its very contiguity to the Spirit. But the heart deceitfully thinks that it needs not to be continually guarded against, and it readily gives new names to old lusts and passions; but the verdict remains unrepealed, "the flesh profiteth nothing." While watchfulness and prayer are ever needed, he only will be blameless, and shameless, and without offense, who walks in the solemn conviction that he has to fear the outbreak of the foulest sins; and unless his soul be occupied with Jesus. The sin from which his heart would recoil, if deliberately presented, may be the very one into which he is insensibly led from one step of temptation to another. " Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

PRESBUTES.

## 2 Peter 3:7-14

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THE heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and basting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

## 2 Timothy 3:1-9

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This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boast, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unh without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, into vent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, he highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from e turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into how. and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

## Comparison of Adam With Noah

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THE first earth and the first heavens, having been overflowed by the waters of a Deluge, perished under the judgment of God. They yielded their place to the heavens and the earth which are now (2 Peter 3:6,7). In the Holy Scripture the beginning and the end of both these worlds is given to us, together with the details which belonged to each.

The history of the first world ends before the end of the eighth chapter of Genesis; that of the world which now begins then, and continues, with the exception of a few verses, nearly to the end of the Revelation. This first history seems indeed short, when it is considered that it contains the account of what passed: during 1650 years. But the ways of God are not as our ways, nor God's thoughts as our thoughts; and it becomes us to receive with humility, what He has given to us, and to study it with attention. If God has written a book, He has done it with the object of presenting Himself, of revealing Himself to us. This is the explanation of most of the difficulties which we find in the Bible, namely, the end which God had before Him in writing the book.

Let us examine first the beginning of Genesis. The first chapter (including the first three verses of the second annexed to it) gives to us the history of the Creation, and makes known to us the glory of the Creator under His name of GOD; the majesty of His being, His creative and eternal power, and His goodness. In the fourth verse of the second chapter we find, for the first time, the name of Jehovah; but this name is here joined with another, viz., with that of God (Elohim). It is the same under which He manifests Himself in the work of creation.

He calls Himself by the name of Jehovah-Elohim in His relationship with man set in the Garden of Eden. The happiness of Adam, as a creature blessed and in relationship with his Creator, is the subject of this chapter. Jehovah-Elohim confides to his creature (Adam) the care of the creation in the garden. Man is lord and center of a system. In the third chapter we have, first, the Serpent and the fall of man; and then the first rays of the light of divine grace in the declaration to the Serpent: "The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head;" lastly, man sent (in grace) forth from the Garden of Eden, lest he should eat of another tree, and abide forever a sinner. It ought to be remarked, that directly the human family is outside of Eden-the place of their blessedness as creatures-the name of Jehovah is found alone, without the addition of that of Elohim. In the fourth chapter, we have two great divisions of the human race, of which one part is for God, the other declares itself for the world. The fifth chapter is little more than a genealogy-all important as it is, and precious as are the details of it. The three following chapters (that is to say, the sixth, seventh, and eighth) give us the judgment of this first world, and its destruction on account of sin. The goodness and the power of God created this present world. His patience (based upon the excellency of One who was to come) was manifested towards it after its fall; but the evil having been fully developed, the just judgment of God came down, and the world perished. It may be remarked, that this mixture of evil with good, which took place at the close of this first world, was its capital sin. Sin having been brought into Eden, and having received a sanction from Eve and from Adam) God drove them out from the garden, and pronounced upon the creation a curse, in order to testify His displeasure.

After that, He separated into two distinct classes the posterity of Adam; but when this divine separation had been despised, and that these two distinct races had thoroughly confounded themselves together, then was the world judged by its Creator. Sin and the determination on man's part that all should be mixed together, ought (it would seem to me) to be considered, above everything, insupportable, in a world which had been created in order to show forth the attributes of its Creator.

Noah, the first man of the world that now is, was also the last Man of the first world. Born in sin, he found grace in the eyes of God, who showed forth His compassion and His mercy by him, and in saving him and his family. If the first world was in the beginning created by God for the manifestation of His own glory as Creator, as we read in the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans, and then given to man as innocent; the existence of the present world has to do rather with the showing forth of the patience and long-suffering of God [chap. 8:21, and chap. 9:11-17]; and it was put into the hands of a sinful man (as we shall soon see) in order to try if he was capable of governing in the name of God, and restraining evil.

There appears to me a contrast, in the first place, between the power committed to Adam and that entrusted to Noah; and, in the second place, between the normal state of the earth under Adam driven out of Eden, and that of the earth under Noah, come out (according to God's own invitation to him-chap. 8:6) of the Ark.

As to Adam, we find (chap. 1:26): - |As to Noah, it is written (chap. 9:1):-|

"And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth...And God blessed them, and God said unto them: Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."|And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them: Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air; upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hands are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And, surely, your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man. And you, be ye fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein." Remark particularly these expressions: - "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon all creatures;" and, "Surely your blood, the blood of your lives will I require;" and, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed."|

The animals, the birds, the fishes, were placed,

An exception being made of their life, In the hands and under the power of Adam and of his family. The food of man was the green herb, seeds, and fruits; that of the other living creatures on the

earth, the green herb. Adam's employment was to dress and to keep the garden. | Without an exception of their life, Under the fear and the dread of Noah, and of his family. To the food of man in the time of Adam, flesh without blood was added. |

| The responsibility of putting to death the man who should kill another was given to Noah. |

It cannot fail to be perceived, that in the case of Noah there was a beginning afresh: there was a new relationship between man, as head, and the creatures, with new privileges and a new responsibility. The charter of it was new likewise. And the strength of this power - this responsibility to watch over the life of man, and of all creatures in this respect - was the bringing in of a principle which is explained to us in the thirteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, namely: - the principle of magistracy; for the sword is the ensign of government: and the sword was put into the hands of a man in the good providence of God, for the government of sinful men. It is of the utmost importance to understand well the truth which is here presented to us. God, according to His counsel and wisdom, willed the maintaining of good order here below; and, in order thereunto, He placed the sword in the hands of Noah. The thought was as of God Himself, the Creator and Sustainer of all things (present in Spirit, though hidden from human sight) to place in the hands of a man the responsibility of governing amongst men, though sinners, and in a world not renewed. It is the basis of all government: and, notwithstanding that Noah failed in his duty (as we read at the close of the same chapter), the truth that man upon earth ought to be governed by a man is of divine appointment, and is likewise (as we shall soon see) a testimony to One who is to come.

As to Providence, I have another remark to make, which is connected with the expression of the two judgments which God pronounced upon the two earths:-

Chapter 3:17-19. | Chapter 8:21. |

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it (the fruits) all the days of thy life. (18) Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. (19) In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat (thy) bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." | "And the Lord smelled a sweet savor; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. (But) while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." |

It ought to be observed that Noah, as also his children, belonged to both worlds: their persons had been saved out of the ruin of the first world, and grace had given them entrance into the second. Dust they were indeed, and unto dust they were to return; but, notwithstanding the state of their bodies being the same, there was, nevertheless, a difference in the sentence of God upon the two different earths.

Because of thy sin - "Cursed is the ground." Though there is only sin in man, I will not again any more curse the ground. |

"Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." | "Seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." |

On one hand, it is a judgment, on account of sin, passed against the earth. | On the other, it is a declaration in favor of man, notwithstanding his sin. |

And what throws still more light upon this is the Covenant-the charter of this present world's privileges (chap. 9:8):-

" God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying: And I, behold I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the Ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said: This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud. And I will remember my covenant which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah: This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

What a contrast between the charter of the privileges belonging to Eden and the charter of the privileges of this present world! Human obedience to the command not to touch of a tree; the goodness of God in providence towards a sinful world-these are the two principles.

The Rainbow continues to this day, and is the ensign of this world, and proclaims it to be the world of the providence of God's goodness, notwithstanding the sin of which the rainbow is in itself the memorial.

When I consider these things, I cannot help seeing in the first world the manifestation of God as Creator, and in the second, the manifestation of God as the Preserver of men as sinners upon the earth-the God of Providence. As to both worlds, the testimony is restricted to the earth with the physical heavens which belong to it, and does in no way affect the heavenly places which belong to another subject:-that is to say, to the heavenly glory, concerning which there is no instruction in the Old Testament.

In the case of Cain, we find the ordinary error of the unconverted with regard to the protection of God. The heart estranged from God does not recognize that God has an object of His own in His providence and long-suffering patience:- that is to say, redemption; and that He alone can explain His views correctly. Their own ease and enjoyment being the object and end of men, they cannot suppose that God is not of the same mind as themselves;-nothing blinds the mind so much as selfishness.

It is beyond a doubt that the Lord Jesus is called the second Adam, and that He is to be the One that comes in in His place as Antitype, and that likewise (though He is not called the second Noah) He will nevertheless have to fulfill the duties connected with governing amongst men in a time to come.

## Section 2. Adam the Type of Christ

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### 1. The Lord Jesus as the second Adam.

1 Cor. 15:44-47. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening [life-giving] spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven."

As such He is the Head of a race:

Ver. 48. " As is the earthy such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

What a precious gift of the love of our heavenly Father is the written word, which gives us all the details of this blessed subject which we may well desire to know. In the first place there is a remark to make as to the description which God gives us of the creation in the first chapter of Genesis.

When describing the origin of the heavens and the earth, we read, -" God created the heavens and the earth" (ver. 1), but when describing the particulars of what took place in the first five days, it is always "and God said"; (ver. 3), [the first day] Let there be light; (ver. 6) [the second day] Let there be a firmament; (ver. 11) [the third day] Let the earth bring forth grass; (ver. 14) [the fourth day] Let there be lights; (and ver. 20) [the fifth day] Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life: (ver. 24) the sixth day begins in the same way, "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind,"-but the description of the creation of man which follows is not thus given. (Ver. 26), "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, etc. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, 'Be fruitful... and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl (see also chap. 2:7). And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils of the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

After this the distribution of food is related: one kind for the human race and another' kind for the remainder of the creatures. In reading the first and second chapters of Genesis it is 'to be remarked, that in the first place, in the beginning, man was made lord over all that was in

existence, to govern it in blessing, and his dominion was to be exercised over the creatures who belonged to the creation here below.

2nd. That in his primitive state he was a living soul. 3rd. That there was an inheritance prepared on purpose for him-the garden of Eden.

4th. That his duty there was to dress and to keep the garden (15).

5th. That the possession of all was given to him, and was to remain his on condition of his not eating of one single tree (17).

6th. That his authority over the creatures is recognized by God, because that God brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them, " and whatsoever Adam called every living creature that was the name thereof."

7th. That having no companion, the Lord God said, " It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him a help meet for him" (Ver. 18). (Ver. 21) " And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

Christ is the Antitype of Adam.

The fulfillment of each of these seven particulars is found in the antitype.

The fifth chapter of the epistle to the Romans tells us that Adam was "the figure of Him that was to come."

And it indeed is not difficult (with the Word of God open before us, and our hearts open to what is contained in it) to trace points of resemblance between Jesus the Son of Man and Adam who is called Son of God (Luke 3:38).

We shall see that it is Jesus as Son of Man who is the antitype of Adam the Son of God.

The force of the figure is most evident in its application to Jesus as Lord, and as to the Lordship of Jesus.

Phil. 2:5-11. " Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

How this explanation of the connection which there is between the humiliation and the glory of Jesus comes home to the hearts of the children of God!

Acts 2:36. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Eph. 1:18. " I pray that God would open the eyes of your understanding... that ye may know... what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet" (ver. 19-22).

Rev. 19:16. "And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh these words written-'King of kings, and Lord of lords.'"

All that we can say, with regard to the extent of His dominion of whom we now speak, is, that it is over the whole universe.. According to these verses, everything both in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

As Adam was a living soul, so also Jesus is, as second Adam, a life-giving spirit. That which was perhaps the distinctive feature of the first Adam was that he was a living soul; but it was not thus with Jesus, for to Him belongs a glory infinitely higher and distinctive, even that of being the life-giving Spirit. He is the only begotten Son of the Father and Son of God from before the foundation of the world. But in grace He has taken this glory also-a glory which supposes not only that He has eternal life in Himself, but also that He has the power of communicating it to whom He will. And this He could not do, to such sinners as we are, unless He had borne upon the cross the judgment of the wrath of God against our sins. For He did not become the resurrection in order to raise the dead (that is all that have died) out of their graves, without being also "the life" in order to give eternal life to all those who believe on Him.

John 5:19-29. " Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth: and He

will show Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, until the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

2 Cor. 4:3-6. "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."

Parallels according to 1 Cor. 15; between|

The First Adam|And|The Second Adam|

Death...|Ver. 21|The resurrection of the dead.|

In him all die...|22|In Him shall all be made alive.|

Sown in corruption...|42|Raised in incorruption.|

Sown in dishonor...|43|Raised in glory.|

Sown in weakness...|43|Raised in power.|

Sown in a natural body|44|Sown in a spiritual body.|

The first man, Adam, was made a living soul...|45|The last Adam was made a quickening spirit.|

Of the earth, earthy...|47|The Second Man, the Lord from heaven.|

As is the earthy, such are they also which are earthy...|48|And as is the heavenly, such are they also which are heavenly.|

As we have borne the image of the earthy...|49|We shall also bear the image of the heavenly.|

Flesh and blood...|50|The inheritance of the kingdom of God.|

The sleep...|51|The change.|

Death or desert...|52|Raised incorruptible or changed.|

Corruptible...|53|Incorruptible.|

Mortal...|53|Immortality.|

Death...|54|Swallowed up in victory.|

Death and its sting|54|Death without sting...|

The grave and its victory...|54|...and the grave without victory to the believer.|

For the sting of death is sin...|55|But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.|

And the strength of sin is the law...|55|

But how in every way does-the second. Adam surpass in excellency the first!

Let us briefly examine the contrast which is found in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans:-

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned - for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come" (ver. 12-14).|"But not as the offense, so also is the free gift; for if through the offense of one [the mass] many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification. For if by the offense of one, death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ. As then by the offense of one judgment came upon [rather 'toward' than 'upon'] all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, even so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offenses might abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."|

Let us now consider who will be His associates in glory - the joint heirs, through grace divine, of His blessed position. For this subject of the joint inheritance is that which has been most studied; and in all difficult subjects the door which is best known is always the one to go in at.

Perhaps the consideration of the double marriage of the Lord will help most minds to lay hold of that which is distinctive to "the Church."

Thus we are taught in the Word that Jehovah is to be known as the Bridegroom, the Husband of the Holy Land, and that the Church is the espoused of the Lamb.

The Earth married to Jehovah (Isa. 62:2-5):-The Lamb as the bridegroom of the Church (2 Cor. 11:2):-||

" And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness [O Jerusalem], and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken: neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah (my good pleasure is in thee), and thy land Beulah (married);\* for Jehovah delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For, as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." Jehovah had over the rebellious children the right of a (master) Baal (Jer. 3:14, 31-32.) " I was a master [bahal] unto them, saith Jehovah" [rather master than husband-lord]: but in Hos. 2:16, He says "And it shall be at that day, saith Jehovah, that thou shalt call me, My husband [Ishi]; and shalt call me no more, My baali [master]:" and (verse 19) "And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know Jehovah. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah, that I will hear; I will hear the heavens, and the heavens shall hear the earth. And the earth shall hear the corn, the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon Lo-Ruhamah [her that had not obtained mercy]; and I will say to Lo-ammi [not my people], Thou

art my people." Moreover, we find in Jeremiah that the Holy Land will lose the name of her virginity by taking that of her husband (chap. 23:5, 6):-" Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice upon the earth. (In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely): and this is His name whereby He shall be called [this king]: THE LORD [Jehovah] OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Chapter 33:14-16.) And we find the same name used in speaking of the wife as (in the 23 chap.) is applied to her husband:-" Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David; and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, THE LORD [Jehovah] OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." In the 45th Psalm, the King is Elohim. It is by this name, rather than by that of Jehovah, that He is there presented to us; but here it is Jesus as the Son; and the bride is the earth. For, like Solomon (the prince of peace for the earth), Jesus will be manifested according to His glory, as Jehovah and as Elohim; and the Holy Land will be under the protection of His powerful arm." "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ; but I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ." (Eph. 5:23.) "The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ also is the Head of the Church, and He is the Savior of the body: as then the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish..So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." (Compare this portion with that which is found in Gen. 2:21-24). (Rev. 19:16). "Alleluiah: For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb! And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." (Chapter 21:2.) "The Holy City [this is after the millennium], New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Ver. 9, 22) " Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain,\* and he showed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God... And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God 'Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." (Chap. 22:1.) " And he showed me a pure river of water

of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out - of the throne of God and 'of the Lamb... And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads. (Ver. 16.) I, Jesus, have sent mine Angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely... He which testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." These verses which I have just cited recall to mind another portion - that of John 17:20-26:-" Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."|

(\*\* This is during the millennium; and perhaps at the foot of this mountain is the Holy City upon earth, which is called (Ezek. 48:35) Jehovah Shammah - Jehovah is there.)

Here then, in detail, is the evidence upon which is based the assertion, that there are two marriages yet to come: - first, of Jesus the Son of man - God-man - the Man of sorrows, who was dead, but who is risen again and glorified: the Lamb and the heavenly church, as in the Epistle to the Ephesians - in one word, of Jesus with the body which (between the moment of His rejection by men and His return to reign) has been formed. And secondly, of Jehovah (Jesus in His divine glory for the earth) and the Holy Land.

The contrast between the two is most clearly established by comparing Duet. 28 and the first and second chapters of the Ephesians.

In Deut. 27:15-26, there is a succession of curses pronounced against the nation - terrible curses which are called down upon the disobedient Israelites - and

In the 28th chap. we are given the providential, national blessings (but still only what is earthly) which belong to Israel as obedient. "On high, above all the nations of the earth.. thou shalt be blessed;... in the city...in the field... in the fruit of thy body, of thy ground...of thy kine... of thy cattle... of thy flock. Blessed shalt thou be in thy basket and in thy store.. and thou shalt be blessed in thy going in and in thy coming out," &c., &c. Everything is of the earth, earthly, and they are all temporal blessings. But read further, verses 1-14:-"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: and all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the

increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy store-houses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and He shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord swore unto thy fathers to give thee. The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them: and thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them." Everything is of a nature suited to an earthly people. But in the Epistle to the Ephesians, that which is there taught us is: "Blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Everything is in the heavenly places, and they are all spiritual blessings: all well adapted for the body of Christ: all suitably arranged for those in whom it was God's good pleasure to show forth his name of God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; in like manner that the earthly blessings will be the glorious witness to the name of Jehovah.]]

To this brief sketch of the two different kinds of blessings (viz:-blessings on earth and blessings in the heavenly places), we may add that we are never spoken to about the church in the Old Testament; but rather, about the people of God upon the earth. The church, which is heavenly, was kept as a secret by God: a mystery which did not belong to the province of Israel: -a secret which God has revealed by means of his Son when rejected. After the rejection of the Son, Paul was the chosen instrument for the revelation of this mystery. The Apostle Paul assures us that the

truth of this divine, this heavenly church, had been kept by God as a deep secret until his (that is to say, Paul's) time.

" Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:25,26.)

(Eph. 2:20-iii. 12.) " And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner. stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy, temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of. the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body [i.e., with Christ] and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel; whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ: and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him."

These passages are too plain and simple to need to be explained for those whose faith is simple; howbeit, it may be well to make some general remarks, taken from the Old Testament, which may help to meet the objections most generally met with.

The promises made to Moses have not made of none effect those which God gave to the patriarchs; and the promises given to the patriarchs have not made of none effect those given to their forefathers. This is self-evident; for, to say the contrary is to make the promise of God of not so much worth as the promise of a good man, inasmuch as difficulties cannot hinder God from performing His will and fulfilling His promise if He wills it: whereas, a man of worth (though as being nothing more than a mortal man, he may lose the power of being faithful to his word) would cease to be a man of worth if he were not true to his word. But God cannot lie. It is impossible. What he has said he will fulfill. This is the reasoning of Paul in the 3rd chap. (ver. 15-18) of his Epistle to the Galatians. Though a narrow heart, and the thought that God had no respect to the Gentiles, as such, was the effect which the law produced upon Israel;\* nevertheless, this thought was neither according to the prophets, nor Moses, nor the patriarchs. The Israelites were, as a nation, the witnesses for God. The nations were without God in the world. To Israel belonged the light which flowed from the possession of the promises and of the ordinances of worship of the true God --the responsibility consequent on these things. "What advantage, then, hath the Jew, or what profit is there in circumcision? Much every way; chiefly because unto them were committed the oracles of God." (Rom. 3:1, 2.)

(\* It seems strange that such a thought should be entertained at a time when Israel was under the judgment of God, and the government of this world was in the hands of the Gentiles.)

If it be forgotten that the distinctive privilege of the Jewish nation was, to be the channel of God's testimony, the thread is lost by which God intended we should form a judgment concerning this people; but, because they were the channel of testimony and of blessing too, this does in no way prevent others being likewise blessed. The unbelief of Israel, and its unfaithfulness to its distinctive privileges, has in no manner made void the blessing. The unfaithful witness and the unfaithful steward has been set aside and judged (Rom. 11); but the blessing to which Israel ought to have borne witness remains untouched.

But that which I desire in particular to call attention to is, that the testimony which God has given from the beginning presents not only a blessing for the Gentiles (when the Jews will be blessed upon the earth), but also a blessing through the means of the Jews. They are even to be joined with them. But that of which the prophecies of the Old Testament have never foretold, is of a body taken out from among the Jews and Gentiles, and formed for the Son, during the interval which passed between the rejection and the death of the Messiah, of which both the Jews and the Gentiles were guilty, and the Lord's return. And this body is for the heavens, and not for the earth. Here is the testimony of the prophets with regard to the blessing of the nations when joined with Israel:-

Mal. 4:2-6, & 1:11||

Zech. 14:12, 16-21||

Hag. 2:5-9|Isa. 2:1-5, & ch. 52|

Mic. 4:1-3, & ch. 5|Psa. 148:11, 14|

Dan. 7:14-27|Psa. 2:1-12|

|Psa. 18:49; 22:23-28|

|Psa. 67:4-5|

And Moses has said: " Rejoice ye nations with his people." (Deut. 32:43.)

It would be true to say that Israel had been blessed more than all nations, since God has declared Himself their king; but, on this account, to say that God has despised the nations, and has had no thoughts of blessing for them, is quite another thing, and is not true.

The rebellion of Egypt and the hardness of Pharaoh's heart was the cause of the judgment that came down upon them: the conduct of Ammon, Moab, and Edom brought down on each one of them its judgment in particular. But when we consider that Israel will be the blessing for all the earth, and that the nations will be blessed through its means (when Israel will have found wisdom to prize that presence of God which was with it even from the time of its coming out of the land of Egypt), we see then that the blessing of Israel is not incompatible with that of the nations. And we may go still further; for if God takes a central place in Israel, in order to become the blesser of all the earth, Israel itself cannot have the blessing without the nations being blessed with it. There will be, without doubt, degrees of glory and of blessing; and that of Israel will be the highest. In these

three passages (Hab. 2:14, Isa. 19:24,25, and Ezek. 48:35) there are three concentric circles of blessing that of the nations generally; that of those nations who are most intimately related with Israel, and that of Israel itself, which is the highest of all. And there is not a single passage in the Word of God which supposes it can be otherwise when the blessing spoken of is one to be enjoyed upon earth. For there the Jew must always have the pre-eminence; since Jesus Himself, as a man upon the earth, was a Jew; and if, in the heavenly places, the sinner from among the Gentiles is on the same level with the sinner from among the Jews, it is not so upon the earth.

It is very important to see that Jesus, as the seed promised to the patriarchs, ought necessarily to be of their race a Jew; and that, as to things here below, all has always rolled around the Jewish people. If the blessings for the heavenly places are the most excellent, and if in heaven there will be no distinction, nevertheless, for the earth, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob looked for a seed which, according to the verses quoted by Paul in the 4th chapter of the Romans, was to be the means of blessing, first, for the circumcision, then for the uncircumcision.

It seems to me that, admitting this scripture, it is impossible-first, to lower the position of preeminence which God has given to Israel upon earth, and which is even to be the means of blessing for the Gentiles; or, secondly, to bring the Gentiles into the blessing which belonged to the Jewish nation before the day of Pentecost: or, thirdly, to deny that the nations will be blessed through the means of Israel, when the time of blessing shall have come in.

Upon such a subject it is difficult to stop; but, perhaps, sufficient has been said to show not only the contrast there is. between Adam and Noah, but, likewise, that it is in the heavenly character of His glory-not the earthly -that the Lord Jesus is the antitype of Adam.

The first man, earthy, is given as a type of the heavenly man. In the same way, Eve is the type of the Church which is to be revealed in the heavens, and we shall be glorified with Him in the heavenly places, as we see in the two last chapters of the Revelation.

## Noah and Christ

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It remains for us to examine under what character Noah pre-figures Christ: on what principle, and in what way, Christ is, according to the Word, pre-figured by Noah.

Though there is no doctrine the authority of which rests upon nothing but a type, nevertheless, it is well to remark that a symbol recognized by God, in the Word, as a type, has more authority than a symbol which, though in itself a description of things to come, has not had the name of "a type" given to it by the Spirit of God. As a child of God, I dare not deny that Adam is a type of Christ, because the Spirit of God says so positively (Rom. 5:14). I can then say, on the authority of

God's word, there is instruction for me about Christ in the history of Adam. But I dare not say it with the same boldness as to Noah; because the Spirit of God has not (that I know) said that Noah is the type of Christ. Nevertheless, by examining both the histories (viz., that of Noah and that of Christ), such a resemblance is found between them, as to leave a full persuasion that the Spirit of God has so arranged as to give details of Noah after the pattern of what He saw was to come in certain details as to Christ.

For example.-The destruction of the world where Noah was, is given to us by the Holy Spirit as bearing witness to the state of the world that now is (2 Peter 3:5-7).

Noah and his family being saved out of the deluge, are given to us as a symbol of salvation through faith in Christ. 1 Peter 3:18-21.-" Christ has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God; put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which [Spirit] also He went, and preached to the spirits [now] in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing wherein few, that is, eight persons were saved by water. The like figure\* whereunto baptism Both also now save us: not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ; who is gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God.

(The word translated "figure" is *αντιτυπος* (in Greek) and not the word (*tuπος*) type. But we see that in the mind of Peter there was a correspondence, which he would have us to observe, between the salvation of which Noah and his family were the objects and the salvation which is ours. The expression, a like figure whereunto, may have been used to show, that there is a correspondence in the salvation by grace.)

Noah and his family were hidden in the ark as we are in Christ. The danger and the fear of judgment cause us to hide in Christ, as the very same kept Noah and his family in the ark until the judgment was passed. The same judgment which destroyed the wicked saved this blessed family, and so it is with us.

The ark was of God; it was He who commanded it to be built; He protected it, and He caused it to rest upon Mount Ararat before the door was opened. In like manner, Christ came forth from God: we believe on Christ because God has commanded us to do so. It is He who is our Savior, and it is

He who has revealed to us Christ upon His throne, and we dare not come out from our place of refuge before he tells us. It would be easy to multiply points of resemblance.\*

(\* The judgment upon Israel, as a nation, in the end, presents in full development, and that in connection with Christ, what the present redemption, according to Peter, does in moral principle. See Isa. 54:9.)

When Noah came out of the ark, the sword of judgment was placed in his hands, for the restraining of evil in a world where God had declared His intention of manifesting His gracious providence.

During the millennium, Christ is, as to the earth, the Prince who will reign in justice; but the extent of His power is wide indeed. When He leaves the Father's throne He will take possession of the heavenly places, and He will drive Satan and his angels out of them (Rev. 12) How long will be his stay in the heavenly places we are not told, but there He will receive His bride and there the nuptials will take place (Rev. 19:1-10). From thence He will come down to the earth as King of kings and Lord of lords, always in the same thought of putting down the enemies of God and establishing righteousness. The Beast and the false prophet, the chiefs in rebellion, will be judged. He will remember Israel, and His heart will not be satisfied without blessing also the nations. He, who is, at one and the same time, called the Dragon (that is to say, he who has the power of the usurper amongst the nations) the Old Serpent (that is, the deceiver by means of subtleties and wiles), the Devil (or accuser), and Satan (the adversary), is taken and thrown into prison for a thousand years. There is an attempt also made by some of the nations before His power is acknowledged (according to Ezek. 38), and perhaps also by treacherous ones (as in Psa. 18:44, the strangers have yielded me feigned obedience or lied to me), but His reign is established notwithstanding over all the earth. This is the last of the dispensations, and will include, both in the heavens and on the earth, the principles of all those that have preceded it.

It is a subject for consideration, under what name Jesus will execute the judgments that are coming; whether it is the same as He will bear when Head over the whole earth during the millennium, or not.

The description of the conqueror sent forth by God, in Rev. 19:11-17, does not give us the glory of Jesus in His character of second Adam, nor, as it seems to me, of Noah, nor of Melchizedek. It rather recalls to us the position of Abram (Gen. 14).

The millennium is but a dispensation. It is not the eternal state. It is certainly the most important of all the dispensations; but still it is but a dispensation. It consists of two parts-- of which one is in the heavenly places, the other in the earthlies. The two portions; though closely united together, are still each of them distinct.

Above, there will be the Father's house, and the glorious courts of the divine government. In the Father's house, the Father and His only-begotten Son, with the adopted family (full in that day of the Spirit of God), will have their rest and enjoyment in affections perfectly heavenly, because they are perfectly divine\* In the glorious courts where God will be revealed with the Lamb in the midst of the Church, which (filled with the Holy Ghost) will become the Tabernacle prepared by God for His habitation, and will be also the seat of His government, and of the glory which belongs to the presence of the Divine Majesty. There Jesus, the Son of Man will appear as the Lamb, and

likewise as the Son of God, now Heir of all things, on account of His Service to God in His work of redemption.

(\* The presence of the person of Jesus, the God-Man, and that presence alone-can give us any just idea of the blessedness which awaits us. In Eden, man was set at a distance from God infinitely great; because the Creator is infinite, and His creature is finite. In Jesus, while, on one hand, we see in Him all the glory both of His Father and God; on the other, we see in Him, as Son of Man, a perfect enjoyment of all that which is in God and His Father. The new and divine nature which He communicates to us through means of His Spirit, is capable of tasting all that of which He tastes, and of enjoying all that which is to Him a subject of enjoyment.)

On earth below will Jesus likewise be manifested and glorified; but it will not be exactly with the same glories as those displayed on High.

On the earth He will be manifested-As Jehovah (Psa. 110:1 and 5, etc.); As God (Psa. 45:7, etc.);

As Jehovah, the God of Israel (Ezek. 44:2, Psa. 118:26, Matt. 23:39, etc.).

He will exercise all His offices likewise-

As Son of Man (Dan. 7.13-18, 27, etc.);

As Son of Abraham, or Head over the Household of Faith (Gal. 3:16-18, Rom. 11:26,32);

As Son of David or King of Israel (Psa. 132:11, 1 Kings, 8:25).

Jesus will exercise likewise all the offices\* which are necessary, whether for the bringing in of that dispensation, or for the regulating and sustaining it; or for the deliverance, at its close, of the vast body of believers which will be found in the midst of an unreal profession. In Him, likewise, will be manifested, and fully sustained by Him, all the responsibilities which God has entrusted to the hands of man from the creation up to the moment of the commencement of the millennium. From the beginning man has lost everything, and up to the end man will lose everything, by reason of his spirit of independence. Christ regains everything, and keeps all in his hands, because of His spirit of obedience and dependence.

(\* God, the Creator, has put man, His creature, to the proof in the most gracious way, by bestowing on him free gifts. He has bestowed on him a series of them; but man has shown himself incapable of profiting by them, for by a want of obedience, most criminal on the part of a creature, to the wise and good prohibition of his Creator, sin entered in at almost the first. First, God put into the hands of Man the garden of Eden; a scene filled with blessedness for man in a state of innocency; then, when sin had entered, God held forth a promise of One that was to come. He drove out from His presence the family of Cain, who became the founder of a world morally at enmity with God; but sin continued to increase on the earth. A little further on in the history, having saved Noah and his family by the deluge, He gave them a new earth in possession, even that which now is. A covenant was made with them in Providence, and the sword of judgment was put into their hands. The fall of Noah as an individual in these, his privileges, is found in the same chapter. He was drunk in his tent. Very soon after, the impious attempt to build the Tower of Babel showed the state of ruin in principle of this earth.

Then God gave the call to Abraham—a call which brings in the principles of the heavens; but if Abraham at the call of God left his country and idolatry, he did not leave behind him his kindred; he took with him Terah and Lot, and, alas! he failed in obedience, for, doing his own will—he went down into Egypt. Terah died, and Lot, ceasing to walk like a believer, is left behind; and Abraham alone becomes the depository of the promises both of the heaven and the earth by means of the promised seed. Father of the household of faith, both Jew and Gentile, and the nations outside, are to be blessed upon earth through this seed, and the heavens also are to be filled with blessing by means of the same. The promises and the covenants given to Abraham, are renewed to Isaac and Jacob; but in the case of each we see that the creature is utterly incapable of retaining the blessing. After this, God essayed to bless Egypt as well as the countries around it, through its means, by introducing there the Jewish people, who have been (since He divided the nations) the central object of His providential care upon earth. The result we only know too well.

In the case of each of the three patriarchs, it is the call of the individual as such, and the individuality is always kept up, because the hope of the promise is of one only seed. Nevertheless, the family of the individual is likewise always found—that is to say, the husband and his wife. In the case of Israel in Egypt, it is a company of families. Joseph went down into Egypt alone; he found there a family—a wife and children; and the families of his brethren were joined to him there. When they left Egypt, they were a great nation. And this nation God set in Canaan head over all the people of the earth; because God was to be their king. In giving them ordinances for their own blessing, God gave them a mediator,\* priests and prophets, a most suitable manner of worship for God as God of an earthly people—the Law, etc. But the nation was rebellious, and preferred the golden calf to God, and despised His ordinances. God, after having shown forth His long-suffering towards Israel, removed them from their place in judgment, and the supreme power in the earth was given into the hands of the image in Daniel. The heart of the Beast was given to this image, and it lent its power to the Jews for the murder of the Messiah—the Desire of nations. God made use of this image, and of Satan, who is the spirit working in it, for the chastening and the punishing of Israel; but whilst the sin of Israel and of the nations was coming to perfection, God gave a new thing to another witness, even to all who believe.

(\* The thought of a mediator, of a high-priest, of a prophet, etc., is not received from Moses; though these truths may be for the first time clearly presented to us under that dispensation. The need in man, which called for the offices, the services of such an one, existed from the very first. The first filaments of these truths are found when man is first found as a sinner in the presence of God.

If the revelations given by God are examined in the order in which they follow one another, it would seem to me, that in each succeeding step, there is more of God and less of what is human, in the place in which God would set man. Adam, after his fall, is left much more to himself, and with much less light than Noah; and under Moses, the details of the relationship of man towards God are much more multiplied and various. As now, it is evident that all is of pure grace, by means of pure grace, as the end is characterized by being pure grace.

The good word of the grace of God, the Father of Jesus, in the heavenly places—having for its foundation His resurrection and taking up into heaven; who on earth was put to death on the cross—this has been given to all who believe. For it is in the cross—the perfect expression of man's

hatred against God-that God has found the victim of propitiation for sin-the Lamb, who has been slain, risen, glorified; and from Him flows to all who believe, the gift of His Holy Spirit, But where is this witness? What has become of this Church? The heart of man has not known how to divide between things which differ; it has not judged the flesh and the world which have crept in secretly into the house of the living God: Satan has entered in, and has taken possession of it; and the Church, which calls herself such, has willingly sheltered itself under the skirts of the image of Daniel, or under the protection of the four beasts. It is also her desire that the Law should be the root of all blessing. The kingdom established in mystery has failed in the hands of man; and all, as we see in the Revelation, is very soon to be judged; must be judged, in order to give place to Him, who alone has been faithful to God. And Jesus will very soon bring in that which will be the perfect antitype of ail that has gone before it. The paradise 'of God will be safe in His blessed keeping. The distinction between the family of God upon the earth and those who are driven out from his presence will be sustained. He will maintain the rights of God upon the earth. He will bless the heathen through the means of Israel; will be king, mediator, and high-priest for Israel upon earth, while at the same time He will appear in the heavenly places with a heavenly church.

And since all is of grace-all in order to show forth the grace of God, and the glory which belongs to Him as Redeemer, so He will not be alone in whatsoever way He is pleased to manifest Himself. Having saved by faith and His Spirit a remnant out of each dispensation, He will cause them to appear with Him in His glory--blessed happy witnesses of grace towards a lost race.))

The audacity and the folly of independence of God, and the beauty and value of dependence are thus manifested.

As to these two principles, it must be added to the creature's shame (in his spirit of independence) that obedience was but duty on his part to his Creator, and it is even, the creature's own glory: but to the praise of Jesus can it be said, He was voluntarily obedient in the position of the humbled servant, and even took it of His own free will, in order to glorify God and His Father, and to show how blessed a thing dependance is, by the salvation of poor sinners.

Two other important truths remain to be noticed:-first, that all that He will do on earth during the millennium He will do not only as being of one mind with God in his counsels, but also in His character of servant of a God not seen to be present. Secondly, that the millennium brings before us (on this same earth where sin has abounded) not only the contrast between His conduct as God's faithful servant, and the conduct of man, faithless to all the trusts which God has committed to Him, but also (alas! to our shame) that dispensation will give us another specimen of what man is.

The sin of man will be shown in its true light, and the root of sin will also be shown, and man as a sinner will be without excuse. When Christ was upon earth the world had nothing by which to take hold of Him, and Satan had no power against Him. And why? Because He was God's perfect servant. His will was, to be always in subjection to God's, and God's only. The answer will be made to me, Yes: and because His flesh was not wicked as ours is. True! but how is it that our flesh has become wicked? Ah! it is because Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden (whose flesh was innocent and pure) renounced their position of dependance. They thought and chose for themselves. But this is not all. God in His grace has presented us with a testimony as to the work of His Son as the Savior. God does not now demand from me obedience as He once exacted it in

the garden of Eden, but He addresses Himself to me as a poor sinner. What He desires is, that we, poor sinners, just as we are, should take the position of dependance. He desires that Jesus should be honored as the Savior. What can we do for the glory of God? We are only poor ruined sinners. This is true. But if it is God's good pleasure that His Son should be glorified by the salvation of poor sinners, to refuse to believe is not only to refuse to be blessed, but it is refusing to glorify the Son of God in that which I can glorify Him (for I am a poor sinner), it is persisting (to my own proper ruin) in the spirit of independence of God. God be praised that we have found to our own blessedness the value of dependance! For, by believing in Jesus, and in the grace of God through Him, we have found that neither Satan, nor the world, nor the flesh, can do anything against us. The strength which faith in Jesus gives to a poor sinner, is beyond the strength of the flesh, of the world, and of? Satan. It is the will which holds fast man in his enmity against God. Man would in everything be God, but God will not give His glory to another. That which now passes every day upon this earth in its state of estrangement from God, will likewise take place on this same earth in the very light of the Divine presence in the millennium, and thus the real root of sin will then be uncovered.

In the dispensation to come-all that which now acts upon the flesh to strengthen it against God will be removed, and everything that could teach it the value of obedience will be present. A fresh trial will be given to man; and it will be seen that nothing is wanting but the opportunity to spew it, that, if left to himself, he would prefer to be the companion of Satan (if only he can do his own will) rather than be blessed by renouncing his own will for that of God. After terrible judgments, Satan will be bound (Rev. 20:1, 2). The world whose god he is (2 Cor. 4:4), and prince (John 14:30), will be delivered from his tyranny. All creation will rejoice, instead of being, as it is now, subject to vanity (Rom. 8:19-21); but not only is the absence of evil promised, but also the presence of all that is good. Jesus will have it in possession, and what must be the state of this world when made ready for Him, and when ordered and ruled by Him! The earth will be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2:14); Israel, and Egypt, and Assyria, will in a special manner be blessed (Isa. 19:24,25).<sup>\*</sup> But Israel, nevertheless, will have a glory distinguished from all the rest, and Jerusalem will be the center of all its blessings (Ezek. 42:48). This is where the glory of the heavens and the glory of the earth will be united (John 1:51; Isa. 4:4-6).

(\* This is the extent of the land promised to Abraham.)

In that day man will see what are the fruits of the obedience of Jesus shed abroad (to the joy of the Savior's heart) amongst the poor. Man will rejoice in it; he will feel the blessedness of it; but all this experience cannot alter his flesh, nor make a lasting impression on him. Satan comes out of his prison, and all the ends of the earth follow in his train in open rebellion against God and His Christ. This is what the flesh is, yours and mine, dear reader, in itself.

1. Noah, as has been already remarked, was, so to speak, the man belonging to both worlds. Thus, in the millennium, we see that Christ will be both in the heavenly and the earthly places, and in each of these, his spheres of glory, there will be that which belongs to both the old and the new system. In the heavens, the new things, in themselves perfect, will be manifested in the old heavens still unchanged. On the other hand, on earth the old things will be set directly under the order and power of the new things. Though upon the earth men will not be in glorified bodies, and

man there will not necessarily be renewed in soul and in spirit. But the general state will not be as up to that time-viz., a state of darkness with some rays of light, brilliant in themselves, but in appearance weak by reason of the contrast with the thick darkness which reigns. Light will be shed abroad everywhere, and the darkness will be hidden. Christ will be there, and the fullness which is in Him will shed itself abroad through everything in blessing, in holy blessing, and blessing all around it, but in a world which is, not changed. This must be particularly observed. Within the city in the heavens all will be perfect. There will be no sin there; God himself will be there and the Lamb. For those who shall be found in this city, there will be no fall at the end of the dispensation. All within the city will be perfect. But it is not the same with that which is without the city, though it be found in the heavenly places. All that is there is not perfect. The heavens have not been changed; and if righteousness which remaineth forever will be manifested within the holy city, it is not necessarily the same throughout the heavenly places. Glory can in itself be perfect without the circumstances of its manifestation being so likewise, as was perfectly the case with the Lord Jesus in the transfiguration. On earth redemption will display itself during the millennium as being still in development. There its manifestation will be not only displayed in connection with a dispensation, for sin will be still upon earth, and redemption will be there seen still developing itself. In heaven another thing is seen as to its blessedness. God does not come into the earth except in His relationship with Jesus the Savior. Sin is found there. Even at Jerusalem (Isa. 65:20) and perhaps close to the temple (Ezek. 44:22,25) there will be judgments which will show this; but where sin is, there redemption is not fully accomplished.

2. If the dispensations be examined in succession, it will be seen that there are intervals between them; intervals in which the one just passed is judged, and the one to come is in principle established. It is very difficult to understand these intervals. In the first place, in appearance they partake of the principles, the nature, and the character, both of that which precedes and of that which follows them; but they are not exactly either of one or of the other; a certain action of God is displayed in them, and God is beyond all dispensation. Who can comprehend what passed in the time that Jesus was upon earth? One of these intervals is found between the dispensation that we are in and that which- is to come. And if the retrospect of the last of these intervals makes us feel our ignorance, the difficulty is not less when we look at that which is to come. On the contrary it is increased; first, because it is the future with which we have to do; and secondly, because the ripening of sin in the present dispensation, and the glory of the dispensation to come, are both much greater than the sin of the past dispensation and the glory of the present one; and thirdly, because the manifestation of the Divine presence will be greater, for in the last interval Christ, contrariwise, rather sought to hide His glory.

The heavenly places are now in the possession of wicked spirits (Eph. 6:11,12), and the earth is under a power not of God. Evil is coming to perfection in the Jewish nation, among the Gentiles, and in that which the Church boasts itself to be, and is so called. Very soon the cup of their iniquity will be full. Deliverance and judgment are at the door. When and how will the next of these intervals commence? Between the moment that the Lord leaves the throne of God, His Father, and the establishment of His kingdom down here upon earth, all that passes is within, it seems to me, the coming interval -the overlapping of the two economies. The forming of a new witness to the Jews and to the Gentiles--the manifestation of grace for a remnant out of both of these -the judgment of Babylon, of the Beast, and of the false prophet-the judgments upon the earth-Satan

bound, etc.-would all seem to me to be during the interval; and I do not otherwise understand the purifying of the earth (Rev. 19:11 to 20:3, and Dan. 7:9-12). But the purifying of the heavenly places (Rev. 22) and the rapture of the saints, are these within the coming interval or not?\*

Perhaps the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, as evidently containing in principle all that takes place between the first coming of Jesus and the establishment of the new heavens and the new earth (for ver. 28 is after the Millennium), might aid us.

(\* The question is of interest, because, as it seems to me, it involves two important matters, viz., 1st. Are these two things wrought by God for Christ, He being still hidden in God on the throne, or are they the first expressions of the service of the Son of man coming out in service from the throne 1 and 2ndly, Are these two things connected primarily with the mystery, or with the kingdom? I add that what seems to me to constitute the great difficulty in connection with the subject is our want of light upon the kingdom set up in mystery.)

The difference in the experience of Enoch and Noah, both believers, has been well remarked upon. The first was taken at once into the glory of God in heaven, without having either seen the judgments or tasted of death; and this is the calling of the Church. The second was saved out of the midst of the divine judgments pronounced against His evil generation, and against an earth which had corrupted itself, and at length is found upon earth. This is what awaits Israel. The first was the man for the heavens; the second the man for the earth.

I would add, that the second, namely he who was saved out of the midst of the judgments, took no part in the execution of the judgments. His history as to the earth, which was given into his hand, begins at the conclusion of the judgments.

It is a subject for consideration, under what name Jesus will execute the judgments that are coming, whether it is the same as He will bear when King over the whole earth during the Millennium.

The description of the conqueror sent forth by God in Rev. 19:11-17 does not give us the glory of Jesus in His character of second Adam, or of Noah, or of Melchizedek. It rather recalls to us the position of Abram (Gen. 14).

Even before Noah came forth from the ark grace in God had shown itself, for God remembered him, and made a wind to pass over the earth. The waters were assuaged; they decreased and were abated; the ark rested as soon as possible on Mount Ararat. God sent to him, in the mouth of the dove which he had sent forth, an olive leaf plucked off. God invites him to come out of the ark, and gives him the earth in possession.

" Bring forth with thee every living thing,.... that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth."

" And Noah builded an altar, and offered burnt offerings upon the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savor; and the Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more" (Gen. 8:21,22).

" And God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Gen. 9:1).

If Christ begins to manifest Himself in the character of Noah, before the judgments are poured out, and that the bringing in of grace is before His entering into possession of the earth, then the connection that there is between the name of Noah\* (Rest) and Jesus as the Peace will easily be seen (Isa. 42:1-8, Mal. 1:11).

(\* it was Lamech who called his son Noah, saying, " This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.")

3. Sin was not in the place where God set Adam, so there will be no sin in the place which is the antitype of Eden-the paradise not on earth, but the paradise of God Himself in the heavens. There was sin in the place into which God brought Noah, as there will be in like manner on the earth during the Millennium.

4. The appearing of Christ upon earth the same as in the case of Noah, is followed by a declaration of judgment to be exercised. The sword, or the right of putting to death, which God placed in the hands of Noah, recognized that sin was there. It was the order of God's government for the restraining of evil, but still ever for the good of man. Government there will be, in one sense, in heaven, where there will be no sin; for God is the Author of order. But the sword supposes sin, and that the power of God is there in order to restrain it.

This is what Christ will do. He will maintain (even through the means of judgments) peace and righteousness. He will reign in God's name for the sake of man, as He once suffered, because He would glorify God and save man.

Instead of becoming drunk like Noah in his tent, where he discovered to his own children his nakedness and shame, the joy of Christ, the true Nazarene, will be divine; and the more this joy will be disclosed, the more, at the same time, will Christ be revealed as the only refuge, the only robe of righteousness, the only One that is worthy.

5. Neither will the sign of the rainbow, that token of the covenant and of Divine Providence, be wanting to Him. But instead of being an accidental thing, which the light of the sun and the memorial of judgment produces from time to time, it will be the ornament of the person of Him who sustains all, and will sustain all in His reign in blessing, ever turning away the wrath of God by the righteousness of His reign.

He will reign amongst the nations-the despised Nazarene will reign; and He will bless, according to the desire of His own heart, all those who seek the glory of' God. He will not allow of the tower of Babel, that expression of the confederacy of the flesh against the judgments of God. He will have the extent of the conquests of Nimrod under His scepter, and all the habitable world will acknowledge Him.\*

(\* In a Jewish map which I have seen, the kingdom of Nimrod is traced out as containing all that which God promised to Abraham; and this kingdom will be under Jesus, as Son of Abraham. But that which will be His right, according to what God gave to Noah, will be the whole habitable earth.)

The wife of Adam had a name proper to herself, that is to say, "Eve," (The Mother of) All Living. In the counsels of the grace of God, Jerusalem from above is recognized as such, and we shall reign with Him; but the wife of Noah is not recognized as such, she has no name.

The closing scene will be according to the Divine purpose beforehand. For, after having shown that this expression of His divine grace and condescension, in a way quite new both in heaven and earth, has not had the effect it ought to have had upon man, the Lord will close up the whole by allowing Satan to come out from his prison, in order that His own power to keep His own, and the true character of man when left to himself may be fully recognized.

To sum up all in few words. It would seem to me, that the contrast between Adam and Noah will be again found in Christ, in the two spheres of His glory during the millennium. In the heavens He will be in principle the second Adam during the millennium, I say in principle, because I acknowledge that that which is shown forth to us in the heavens during the millennium is to have its full unfolding after the millennium. Upon earth Christ will be ruler for God.

That which follows the millennium is of all interest, but it is not my subject now. The character of Christ's reign, and the manifestation of His grace in a way quite new within it, are also of more than interest, but I dare not touch upon it now. I shall be thankful if these feeble remarks should be the means of directing the attention of any one more competent than myself, to skew the connection that there is between the first position in which the different members of Noah's family were set and their position at the end. Their position at the time of the Lord's appearing it is easy to trace up to a-certain point, and is of the highest interest in studying the word of prophecy.

## Amos

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The prophecy of Amos is one of those that speak of the moral condition of the people, and especially of Israel, who, as we have already seen in the historical books, represents more particularly the people, as such; while Judah was but as an appanage of the house of David, although containing always a remnant of the people.

This prophecy, which does not extend so far down in the history of Israel, as that of Hosea, is less fervent than the latter, sin is not pursued with that consuming fire of jealousy and of moral revenge, which characterizes the burning and broken style of the prophet Hosea. Nothing, doubtless, can be more decided against evil than Amos; but, although very simple, he speaks, as it were, from higher ground. In Hosea, we see the anguish of heart, produced by the Holy Ghost in a man who could not endure evil in the people whom he loved, as being the people of God; while in Amos, there is more of the calmness of God's own judgment. There is much less detail with respect to sin. Certain prominent transgressions of a special character are pointed out, and the most complete and absolute judgment is proclaimed. Afterward, quite at the end, the restoration of the house of David, and of Israel likewise, is announced. We may remark, that, before the judgment of Israel and Judah is declared, that also of the surrounding nations is pronounced; and this, on account of their hostile and cruel behavior to the people of Israel, and that also which was essentially cruel in them, and opposed even to the sentiments of humanity; for God takes cognizance of all these things.

Syria is to be carried away captive into Assyria. The means employed for the judgment of the others is not mentioned. Gaza and the Philistines, Tire, Edom, Ammon, Moab; pass successively in review; and finally, Judah and Israel. God enters into much more detail with respect to the sins of His people. He had indeed specified that which characterized each nation judged; but with Israel, He goes into detail. We may here again remark that which we have seen elsewhere, that these judgments of the Lord fall upon the nations that are established on the territory promised to Abraham, and belonging, according to this gift of God, to the people of Israel. God purges His land of that which defiles it, and consequently, alas! of Judah and Israel likewise; but at the same time asserting and retaining His own rights, which He will exercise in grace on Israel's behalf, in the last days. We see here the folly of the hope entertained by the enemies of the people, in seeking their ruin with the idea of finding their own advantage in it. Doubtless, God can chastise His people, for He must make His own character manifest, but the malice of their enemies brings His judgment upon them also.

With respect to Judah, the Lord especially points out their contempt of the law, and disobedience of His commandments.

In Israel, the sin specified has a character more independent of the law (the reason of which is easily understood, if we consider the condition of that people), and connected with that departure from the fear of God, which allows man to give way to the selfishness of his own heart, and to oppress those whom God regards. They sell the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of

shoes. They care not for the sufferings of the poor, but even at the altar-supposed at least to be that of the Lord-they lie down upon garments pledged through poverty, and make merry with the fines inflicted for transgressions. Nevertheless, God had brought them up out of Egypt, had destroyed their enemies, to put them in possession of their land, and had given them the tokens of an especial relationship with Himself; whether by persons set apart for Himself, or by those whom He had sent as messengers to them; but they had caused the former to defile themselves, and had commanded the latter not to prophecy in the name of the Lord. The heart of God was crushed, as it were, by their sins; and His judgment should overtake them. The charge of despising the poor; is often repeated in this prophecy (2:7, 3:1, 5:11, 8:6). And this in especial connection with Israel.

After having specified each one of the nations, that were found on the territory promised to Abraham, God addresses Judah and Israel together-the whole family whom he had brought up from Egypt. These only had the Lord known, of all the families of the earth; therefore, would he punish them for their iniquities. A solemn, but very simple principle. If we are in the place of testimony, of testimony to God, it is needful that this testimony should be in accordance with the heart and the principles of God; that it should not falsify His character; that our walk should agree with our position. And the more immediate this testimony is, the more jealous will God be, with respect to His glory and our faithfulness. Judgment begins at His house. If there was evil in the city, the Lord would act. Two cannot walk together except they are agreed. Two important declarations are attached to this principle. On the one hand, if God intervene, and make His great and terrible voice to be heard, there is a cause. On the other hand, God would not act without warning His people. He would do nothing without revealing it to His servants the prophets. But the lion had roared, should they not tremble? The Lord had spoken, the prophet could not be silent. This was the condition of Israel. It is this latter kingdom that, for the moment the Spirit of God particularly addresses. There should but a few little fragments be left of them, even like the morsels of a lamb that might be taken out of the lion's mouth after he had devoured it. Finally, in speaking here of Israel, the Lord specifies their idolatrous altars, and declares that all the glory of the people shall perish. We may again remark here the way in which the kingdom of Israel is taken for the whole people, although Judah is spoken of and judged in its turn. See verses 9, 12, 13, 14.

With the exception of the two first chapters, which go together, each chapter in Amos is a distinct prophecy. The 4th presents the oppression of the poor, and the worship which the children of Israel rendered at will in the places they had chosen. God also would act as he saw fit. He had indeed already done so, nevertheless they had not returned unto Him. He had repeated His chastisements in the most significant manner, but in vain. Therefore He calls on Israel to prepare to meet Himself.

Chapter 5. After having deplored the ruin of Israel, He contrasts the places of their false worship with the Lord, the Creator, and exhorts them to come unto Him and live. But Israel put off the thought of the evil day. Evil had the upper hand. The wise man kept silence, for it was an evil day. Nevertheless, the Spirit calls to repentance. It might be that the Lord would have compassion on the affliction Of Joseph. Yet there were those in the midst of all this iniquity who professed to desire the day of the Lord. The prophet tells them that it should be a day of terror and of judgment; of darkness, and not of light. They should fall from one disaster into another. The Lord took no pleasure in their offerings and sacrifices; He could not bear with their solemn feasts; He desired

judgment and righteousness. But the people had been the same from the beginning; it was not Himself that they worshipped in the wilderness, but their Moloch and their Remphan, which they had made to themselves; and they should be carried away captive, beyond even the land that was now the object of their dread. This last appeal of the prophet involves deeply important instruction. The evil principle which was their ruin, had been amongst them from the beginning; the interposition of God's power had checked it, and had turned aside its effect, but there it was, and with the decline of faith and godliness, when human interests no longer restrained it, the same evil had reappeared. The calves of Dan and Bethel were but a renewal of the calf they had made in the wilderness. The people of Israel showed themselves in their true character, notwithstanding all the long-suffering of God; and the judgment dates from the first act that displayed what they had in their heart. Here again, we see all Israel looked at morally as one, when the ten tribes are spoken of. But this is made evident in a clear and striking manner by the whole prophecy.

Chapter 6 dwells upon the false confidence that deceived the heads of Israel. A similar judgment to that of Calneh and Hamath might fall upon Israel. Their chief men gave themselves up to luxury, as though all were prosperity. They had no sense of the affliction of Joseph. They should be the first to go into captivity. The Lord would give up Israel to desolation. He would abhor the excellency of Jacob. For they trusted in that which was but vanity-in their golden calf. But He whom they despised would raise up an enemy that should afflict them from Hamath to the borders of Egypt.

Chapter 7 God had long waited patiently. More than once he had been on the point of giving Israel up to judgment. The intercession of the prophet, that is to say, of the Spirit of Christ, which wrought in the prophets (an intercession, indeed, that owed its efficacy to His sufferings; see Psa. 18), had arrested the scourge. But now the Lord would arise to judgment, with the measuring-line in His hand, and nothing should turn Him aside. With the house of Jehu, Israel should fall. In fact, this is what took place. It may be that the preceding judgments apply to the downfall of the family of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat; and to that of the family of Ahab. Israel had been raised up again, after each of those events, but not so after the house of Jehu had fallen.

A prophecy like this was out of place in the king's chapel. A religion, arranged by the policy of man, without the fear of God, cannot endure the testimony of truth. Bethel was the house of the kingdom. The priest reports it all to the king. Let the prophet go away to Judah. There the Lord was owned, and the truth might be proclaimed; but this was not the place for such unpalatable truths. The king was the ruler in all religious matters; man was master. But the Lord does not renounce His own rights. Amos was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet. He had not this function from man, nor from the desire of his own heart. The Lord, in His sovereign will, had appointed him, and his word was the word of the Lord. The priest who opposed it, should suffer the consequences of his rashness, and Israel should surely go into captivity.

Chapter 8 renews the declaration, that the end of Israel was come, on account of their iniquity. God would no longer pass it over. The prophet announces likewise the distress the people should come into, from being deprived of all guidance from the Lord. They who trusted in the vanities that Israel had set up for themselves, should fall, and never rise again.

Chapter 9 presents the Lord Himself as directing the judgment in such a manner that Israel should in no wise escape it; God treating them as he would the nations that were strangers to Him, as the

Philistines or the Syrians, whom, in His providence, He had brought from other lands. Nevertheless, God did not forget Israel. He executed the judgment Himself, so that while Israel should be sifted among all the nations, not one grain should be lost. The wicked, who did not believe in the judgment, should be overtaken by it.

In that day, that is, in the day of the Lord's final judgment, He would raise up, not the tabernacle of Jeroboams and of Jehus, although He had given them a place, for a time, during His long-suffering government, but (fulfilling His own purposes of grace), He would raise up the tabernacle of David His elect, and rebuild it in its glory; He would raise it entirely from its ruins, that his seed should possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen that are brought to know the name of the Lord. At that time the Lord would also bring Israel back from their captivity, and re-establish them in full blessing. They should enjoy the fruits of their land. The Lord would plant His people upon their land, and they should be no more pulled up. It was the land which He Himself had given them.

Thus we find, in the prophet Amos, the judgment of the kingdom of Israel; but this judgment applied to the whole of Israel as a nation, and their assured restoration, in connection with the re-establishment of the house of David in the last days-a re-establishment accomplished by God, which nothing should again overthrow. He would plant them, and none should pluck them up.

In general, then, this prophet sets before us, not great public events in the government of God, but the ways of God with His people, in view of their moral condition; the ten tribes, or the kingdom of Israel, being looked at as representing all Israel, as a responsible nation. The link of their condition at that time, with their original position, when, through the grace and power of the Lord, they had come up out of Egypt, being the golden calves of Sinai and of Bethel.

The prophecy closes, as we have seen, with the re-establishment in blessing of the whole people, under the house of David, according to the sovereign grace of God, who changes not. It should be, for the whole nation, the sure mercies of David.

## Connection of the Cross With the Entire Development of God's Ways With Man

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Whatever brings out the perfectness of the blessed Lord's work, and the way in which it is adapted to the whole moral condition of man, while glorifying God in respect of that condition, and thus bringing man into association with God's glory-whatever skews the connection of the sacrifice of the cross with the entire development of God's ways with man, confirms the faith of the saint, and enables him to admire the wisdom of God with increased intelligence and a deeper spirit of adoration. I send you, therefore, a few, I trust, plain thoughts, as to the way the cross bears on the previous history of man, the manner in which it is linked up with it all, in connection with some of the statements of Gal. as to the order in which law and promise came. In the first place, to say nothing of the eternal counsels of God, or of the promise of eternal life, given us in Christ Jesus before the world was (precious as the consideration of it is as founding our hopes on the sure thoughts of God Himself) we have, from the outset, when sin had entered, the blessing and the deliverance established in Christ the second Adam, not in any promise to the first. "The seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." The seed of the woman was the second Adam, and as is evident not the first. The first is quite passed by. Man, the first Adam, was neither righteous nor holy. He was innocent, which excludes both righteousness and holiness. He had not the knowledge of good and evil. Righteousness discriminates between good and evil in the relationship in which we stand towards others, whether God or the creature, and acts in the sense of responsibility according to the claim which such relationships have on us. Holiness hates evil intrinsically in itself: delighting in purity, in God's nature, it abhors all that is discordant with it. God is righteous, because He appreciates infinitely all that is due to every relationship in which any being stands to another, and, above all, all beings, to Himself. The highest manifestation of righteousness, the absolute manifestation of it in perfection was His receiving Christ to Himself. He is holy, because he perfectly knows good and evil, delights in good and abhors evil. We should at once be morally shocked, if one spoke of God's being innocent, i.e. ignorant of good and evil, and justly so. Now man was innocent. He enjoyed the goodness of God with thankfulness, alas! how short a time, and his ways towards others would have been the fruit of natural relationship where no evil was. Affection and loving care would have flowed out without being cast on a sense of duty, because affection had ceased to prompt what the relationship in its perfection supposed. But this was not to last; he soon fell into the knowledge of good and evil, and a bad conscience which feared to meet God. He was no longer innocent. Conscience has a double character which we do not always distinguish. The sense of responsibility to another, and the knowledge of good and evil in itself. The latter element was absent from Adam's mind before his fall. The sense of responsibility was there the debt of obedience, it was in the nature of his relationship with God, but distinguishing things as good and evil in themselves had no place in his mind. To have eaten of the tree was no evil whatever in itself, he would have eaten of it as innocently as of any other in itself. God had forbidden it, and all depended on that command. Responsibility to obey, Adam innocent was formed to understand. To avoid a thing where there was no command because it

was evil, was unknown to him. He was innocent, ignorant of evil to be avoided. In his mind nothing evil in itself existed to be avoided.

He got conscience by the fall, which made it a bad one. Henceforth he distinguished things as wrong in themselves. He was in many things a law to himself, his thoughts accusing and excusing one another. If he forgot God even-it is hard to forget Him altogether when passion is over, natural when passion acts; for passion is forgetfulness of Him and of duty-but if he forgot God, conscience was there to tell him of wrong done. Righteousness, however the maintenance of it might be dreaded, had now its place and claim in his mind; and holiness, however absent it might be from him, had a meaning and a name, through his knowledge of the evil it abhorred, which made it terrible in God, in whom it could not but be found. Such was fallen man. Lost, ruined by his perverse will. He had listened to Satan, and trusted and believed him rather than God, whose favor he had willingly sacrificed for the pleasure of eating an apple, and the presumptuous hope of being as God in His knowledge of good and evil. As a principle, he got that knowledge in subjection to the evil he knew; and with the loss of his sweet natural relationship in innocence to God and all around him.

He was fallen, sinful, disobedient, guilty and under judgment. To such a sinful and rebellious being, promise could not be, and was not made. It would have been sanctioning evil with blessing.

But a blessed hope is set before him as the object of recovering faith. The second Adam is set up: to him the promise (if promise we should call it) is made. He is announced as the destroyer of the serpent's power, as the first Adam had been the victim of its subtlety. The seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.

Thus, the first dealing with man after the fall, was the setting up of the second Adam, the Lord Christ, as the destroyer of him who had subverted the first. The first was passed by. He was neither the vessel of promise, nor the heir of blessing. Individually, he may have laid hold on the hope of the second Adam, but there was no restoring promise to himself. Another was set up in his place, to whom and for whom faith should look.

Such then was the position of man; sin, conscience in the sense of knowledge of good and evil, and, sin being there, a guilty and defiled conscience, and the revelation of a deliverer. The perverse will which had brought in the sin was not corrected by the conscience of evil nor the revelation of a deliverer. It expanded itself with the expansion of humanity, and corruption and violence filled the earth.

And here I must distinguish, without enlarging upon it, between God's government of the earth and the result of sin as to relationship with Himself, and the salvation and deliverance which is the remedy for it. As regards government, i.e. present effects upon earth, the ways of God, man, instead of paradise, finds an earth of toil and pain, and woman sorrow and grief of spirit in that which was natural joy to her. As regards the full effect of sin, both are alike driven out from God's presence, and the way of the tree of life closed to them. They themselves dread the God who should have been the spring of joy to them. The deluge which closed the scene of antediluvian wickedness was the judgment of the earth, the display of God's government of it. Eternal salvation and glory is quite another thing, as is everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power. All, it is true, will be in Christ's hands. He will judge and govern, and He is the

eternal Savior; but the two things are quite distinct, though brought into connection in His person, and so in the saints when the glory comes. The just distinction of the two will clear the mind on many points.

But God pursued the development of His ways in grace for the instruction and blessing of man.

Having called Abraham, and led him out from his country, kindred, and father's house, and appropriated him to himself as His own, so to speak, in the world, as taken out of it; He gives him the promise. He becomes the father of the faithful, and the root of the olive tree of God. The chosen and called one becomes the depository and stock of promise.

Here positive promise begins, not merely the revelation of a deliverer who should destroy the works of the devil on the one hand, and a conscience knowing the evil in which it walked, on the other, but a positive promise to a given object, "in thee," so that the grace which called him out of the world, singled him out also as its heir and the vessel of the blessing of God in it.

The promise was unconditional and absolute. God gives it as the revelation of a purpose He will accomplish, and addresses it to Abraham, so as to fix the person in whom it was to have its accomplishment. God interferes in blessing, reveals His intention to confer it dependent on His own faithfulness alone. He blesses because He is pleased to bless, and blesses him whom He calls out to enjoy it. The promise extends out too, remark, to the whole world as to the sphere of its application. "In thee shall all nations be blessed." It is universal in the sphere of its application, absolute in its character, and its accomplishment dependent on the sole faithfulness of God.

In figure, there was a development of this, which casts fresh light on the ways of God. Isaac is offered up, a remarkable type of the offering of Jesus, of the Father's not sparing his Son. He is received again from the dead in a figure, and presents a risen Christ after the accomplishment of His sacrifice. Thereupon the promise is confirmed to him. The promise of the blessing of the nations was not given to Abraham and his seed. It was made to Abram alone in Gen. 12, and confirmed to the seed alone in Gen. 22; and so in Gal. 3 it reads in the original, "and to Abram were the promises made and to his seed." So again, the promise which was confirmed before of God to Christ (not in Christ). Hence it is the apostle insists upon its being one, for the promises to Abraham, as father of the Jews, were made in common to him and to his seed together; and it was promised, that his seed should be as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

Whereas, the promise of the blessing of the nations was given to Abram first, and then confirmed to the one seed Isaac, figure of Christ sacrificed and risen again, with no mixture of any one else nor mention of a numerous posterity.

But to return. The promise was absolute and unconditional, the announcement of the accomplishment of blessing on God's part through the one promised seed, an accomplishment dependent on His own faithfulness alone. The question of righteousness in those who were to enjoy it was not raised. God's grace in blessing was revealed, and we may say, with the apostle, in Christ; but the sin of those who should enjoy it was untouched. Conscience left without resource or without raising a question indeed about it. The revelation of a deliverer and the promise of God were now brought together, but the state of him who was to be blessed was, not entered on in any way. Such was the force of the unconditional promise made to Abraham. It made the blessing of

the nations certain, the question of righteousness was not raised. God had promised to Abraham and confirmed it to the one seed. His faithfulness would perform it. After this came the law; redemption having been prefigured in the exodus and the passage of the Red Sea. The law raised the question of righteousness; it claimed it on the part of God. The promise was addressed to those under it, on condition of obedience. "if you will obey my voice indeed, and, keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine, and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation..... And all the people answered together and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." Here, then, the blessing was made dependent on the obedience of man. The mediator was not of one but between two parties, and the covenant rested not simply on the infallibility of one who promised, but upon the obedience of another party also. For God is one; a mediator implies two parties; and here the accomplishment of the blessing rests on the condition of the obedience of the human party. The law then raised the question of righteousness which the promise had not at all. But on man's part there was utter failure as to it; and the law worked wrath and brought men under a curse. Thus, up to Christ, we have conscience, promise and law. Law coming in by the bye (παρρησιγηθε) after the certain and infallible promise to the seed, to raise the question of righteousness on God's part with man; stating the rule of it if man was to accomplish it for God, what creature-righteousness, if such were, ought to, and must be. It came in between the promise and its fulfillment for the necessary and important object, an object which could not be passed by, of righteousness before God being laid down as needed, to make good God's claim of it against man, but against man already a sinner. I may add, before speaking of Christ's death, that He came as a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises to the fathers (for circumcision was not of Moses but of the fathers), that is, he presented himself as the accomplishment of the promises made to them in connection with men living in the flesh; so that, if received (that is, if man had not been utterly and wholly alienated from God), the blessing was there both for Israel and all nations to be blessed also in the promised seed-the gathering of the peoples to Shiloh come in Israel-the staves of beauty and bands would not have been broken. But the truth was, man was an utter sinner, his carnal mind enmity against God; and Christ, whatever grace He came in, could not but be God manifested in flesh, and light in the world. Without law, he was lawless; under law, a law-breaker; and, when light and grace came, yea God Himself in loving-kindness and truth, the rejecter of all in which blessing was. Thus, however, promise also was rejected by the Jew who had it, and all was utterly lost for man, there remained no link between him and God; or rather the proof was now afforded, that there was and could be none between God and man in the flesh. This, for He was perfect love, was, I doubt not, the sense of what was expressed by Jesus in the words, " I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" The love was there full, perfect, active in His heart. He showed it in all that He did, in all it could be shown in, but as to the proper effect of its power, its true object the reconciling man to Himself, it was, so to speak, driven back into Himself; blessed be God! unweakened but driven back, finding no response in man's heart, nothing to which it could attach itself there, in the selfish enmity which reigned there. For His love, He had hatred.

But the death of Jesus opened the full flood-gates to reveal all God's love and accomplish all God's purposes. He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He glorifies God about sin there, and accomplishes righteousness in the highest and divine sense, that is, meets the fullest claims, and secures and makes good the perfect display of the divine

nature and character, and that in respect of sin. So that grace reigns through righteousness, and not merely to present blessing but to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And now see how the death and present position of Christ meets the whole previous unfolding of the grounds on which man stood with God. Sin is put away by the sacrifice of Himself; conscience is perfectly purged according to God's own knowledge of good and evil; righteousness established before God, the accomplishment of the promise established in His person. Man had no righteousness for God, but Christ, dead and risen again, is of God made unto us righteousness. The true heir of promise is there, and can take all the promises up in righteousness which gives us also a title to enter into them, His position answering to Isaac's when the promise was confirmed to him after his being offered up in figure. All the promises of God are Yea and Amen in Him, and we are in Him. God having established us in Him who has taken his place in the power of a new life, as the Head of a new race belonging to Him by faith, righteous in Him, as we were sinners in the first Adam. And this reaches out (according to His promise) to sinners of the Gentiles as to the Jews, through the putting away of sin, and the communication of a life as new to one as to the other. There was no link between God and the old man, nor union between a sinless Christ and sinful flesh, though Christ was a true man come in the likeness of it. But there is a link between a believer and Jesus risen, in a new life given to the believer, in which, by the Holy Ghost, he is united to Him who in righteousness is before God in heavenly places. Christ's death writes death on all, absolute death; all are dead. There is nothing in man, as he is in himself in common with divine life in Him (hence the Apostle knew Christ no more in that way, present in the world, alive in the midst of men in the flesh, the Messiah of promise alive here below); but in that same death there is the answer to the whole condition of man in the flesh as a sinner; and, in taking the new position of life in accomplished righteousness in resurrection, Christ lays the ground of righteousness in a new way (God's righteousness not man's, though wrought out in Him who was and is a man, and recognized by setting that man at God's right hand), so that grace can go out according to it, to the glory of God by us. Thus, sin is put away, conscience purged, the curse of the law gone for them who were under it, righteousness wrought out, that the blessing and the promise might come, in all fullness on believers through Jesus Christ. All that was brought out in need before on man's part or promised on God's, was such, on one hand, and finds its accomplishment, on the other, in Christ, and all the moral elements on the ground of which God had dealt with man brought out and established in grace in Christ; promises which man could not take up in righteousness, nor God righteously confer on him, yet which He surely must fulfill as His own promises now run freely in all their fullness, on the ground of an everlasting and divine righteousness, and flow forth from divine love to believers, found as sinners among Jews or Gentiles, according to the import which is given to these promises by the death and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. The order is: -sin\*-conscience (death and separation from God)-promise-law, raising the question of man's righteousness (law broken and promise despised)-Christ's death (sin put away, the law's curse removed, conscience purged, righteousness divinely wrought out), and then risen as the head of a new race in the power of the Spirit and eternal life-the promises enjoyed according to the divine counsels and divine righteousness; Christ being Himself the heir, after the pattern of the offered and risen Isaac, and believers in Him cleansed from sin and divinely righteous, by that which was wrought before they were grafted in Him, after the power of a new life and in the energy of the Holy Ghost.

(\*\* Here Christ is already announced, and Adam passed by, looked at as head of the race.)

## The Dispensations

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Genesis informs us that Creation was completed in six days, and that God rested on the seventh.

This corresponds with the dispensations: the millennium forming the seventh period.

The eighth day, in scripture, always has reference to the resurrection, or new state: so with the eighth or eternal period. Observe this: we have

1. The Adamic dispensation. Man in innocency.
2. Man fallen. God's grace in giving promise.
3. Noahic. Government after the judgment of the flood.
4. Abrahamic or Patriarchal. Separation from idolatry.
5. Mosaic. The Law.
6. The Gospel. Heaven opened to faith. Heb. 10:19-25.
7. The Millennial. Heaven opened to sight. John 1:51.
8. The Eternal. The NEW Heavens and NEW Earth. Rev. 21:1-5.

W. C. B.

## Chap. 1

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The apostle seems here to dwell on the purposes of God with regard to us. He does not so much speak of the means which God has made use of in order to reconcile us with Himself (the satisfaction that has been made to His justice though the Spirit dwells thereon likewise); but the subject is specially the blessedness in which God has placed us in His counsels of grace.

It is certainly a blessed thing for us fully to understand the means which God has made use of, in order to bring us to Himself; but God has made known to us these things, in order that we may be occupied with the things to which we are called. It is in the enjoyment of these things that we put on the character of the Christian, and that the soul grows. They enter into our very existence; and when the heart has laid hold of them, there is much more of the Christian and of Testimony in us, so that, by the power of the Holy Spirit working in us, there results a much clearer and stronger point of attraction for the world.

Those who dwell in Spirit in Heaven partake of its Spirit, and go on increasing in the things which they find there. They are in relationship with God—they enjoy what God has given, and that is certainly most precious; but above all, they enjoy God Himself; and here is the exceeding grace of Him who desires that we should always dwell near Him, and that we should know His thoughts and His counsels: This is what we should desire and seek after, and thus we shall understand better what is well pleasing to the Lord, and what is worthy of Him. Such are the subjects of which the apostle speaks to us in the chapter which is before us.

## Verse 1-3

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In Jesus Christ, the Head of the Body, we are blessed with all spiritual blessings. It is there God sets us; and we know it, beloved, we know it, but more in theory than in practice.

## Verse 4

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As I have already said, the apostle here not only speaks to us of the means, but of the source of our blessing in the unspeakable counsels of God, and of the end which God proposes to Himself; for it is said, " That ye may be holy and without blame before Him in love." This is the thought of God about us: He wishes to have us before Him, and to have us there happy and for Himself.

There is only one thing in which God does not suffice for Himself, and that is, in His love. His love has need of other beings besides Himself, in order to make them happy. He desires to have before Him beings in harmony with what He is, and He sets us before Him "holy and without blame." This is what He is Himself, He who is the Holy One, He who certainly is without blame; for it is impossible to find any fault in Him. He calls Himself the Holy One; He is love! Well! He sets us holy and without blame before Him in love. Precious And most important thought for us! He has resolved that the Church should be such that He could take delight in her, and behold in her, before Him, the reproduction of Himself, the most perfect happiness possible: He sets before Him beings like to Himself, in order to make them as happy as it is possible; He communicates to us His nature, and takes His delight in us. In order for that, He makes us " holy and without blame in love"; and these things are accomplished here below by the Spirit, though the effects are not fully shown till above in the place of perfectness. So, where is. our place even now below? Before Him; and this place is not a joy only, but the most precious thing that can be imagined, to be before Him!

We do not like to be before Him when we are not holy; but when the conscience is cleansed by the blood of Christ, we are truly happy before Him. In order that we may be happy before Him we must be holy, we must understand the tastes of the divine nature-our nature. We ourselves must find our happiness in being " holy and without blame in love." The apostle John shows in his first epistle (chap. 4:13), that the divine nature is produced in the Christian: the Christian has received God's own Spirit; it is a man who loves, and God is in him and he in God. What is granted is nothing less than the communication of the divine nature, by which we dwell in God, and God in us, " That we might be holy and without blame before Him in love."

What we shall be above ought to be our aim here below, not as a task imposed, but as being made partakers of the divine nature to the glory of God. Now if we would realize these things, our thoughts must be above, according to the nature of the grace which we have received. It is most strengthening for us to think of the things which are above-of their source, of Jesus, of the fulfillment of this purpose of God in glory.

## Verse 5-7

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The apostle has ever this adoption in view; God wills to have us for Himself before Him through Jesus, according to the good pleasure of His will, as His children. Now this is the glory of this grace which has placed us there. In these verses Paul speaks to us of the basis, of the means which God has employed, and on the certainty of which we can count. He speaks of it as of a settled thing, as of a thing which we possess, and the possession of which, indeed, is necessary to us, in order that we may partake of all that of which he is about to speak to us.

This is the door by which we have come in; and having passed through the door, in Jesus, I have the certainty of being in the house. But it would be sorrowful to have Jesus only as the door, though it is precious to understand that. If we are not sure of a hearty welcome, and of the love of the Father, we depreciate the riches of His grace, for "we have redemption by His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (ver. 7). If in uncertainty we do not enjoy this grace, we do not really acknowledge it; and in order to do so we must give ourselves up entirely to God, to the power of the love of Him who tells us to come inside. Here we may remark, that the Spirit, whilst declaring to us very plainly what is the means of our salvation, does not reason upon it as elsewhere, making known to us its character and its sufficiency; but He speaks of it as of a privilege that we possess; he tells us what we have in Christ, before sheaving what belongs to those who enjoy the effect of this redemption. We have redemption; and instructed in all things, we wait for the redemption of the body, in order to enjoy it. The only thing that we have to do is to contemplate the riches of the grace of God; this will be a means of drawing us close to Him.

We have seen in the preceding verses the purposes of God with regard to us, and the means which He employs to render us partakers of them, namely, Redemption through His blood, according to the riches of His grace. Now what we have before us is the portion we have now here below; the understanding of the mystery of God.

## Verses 8, 9

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God has given us of His grace in all wisdom and prudence: He is not content with only giving us this portion, by bringing us into it hereafter, but He wishes to give us, now here below, the knowledge of it in all wisdom and prudence, according to His good pleasure. We have not to do with a God who sets us before His justice, but with a God of grace who acts according to His own thoughts. God wills that the Church should not -be only such before Him, but that it should be also, here, below, the depository of all His counsels; that it should have the understanding of the mystery of His will.

## Verse 10

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Gives us the explanation of this mystery. God gathers together in one all things in Christ in the dispensation of the fullness of times. All that which preceded was preparatory; the Law, the Prophets, etc. This verse speaks of the fullness of times, when God will arrange all things according to His mind, by setting Christ at the head of all things; and it is by being united to Him that we are made partakers of the inheritance. God acts of His own will to bring about what He wills. All shall be gathered together in one in Christ. It is by Him that all has been created, and by Him all is to be reconciled; and this is set forth here as the result of the counsels of God.

## Verses 11, 12

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There are two parts in this mystery: 1st. All things shall be put under the Headship of Christ; 2nd. The church, which is His Body, will have part in the inheritance; we shall be before God according to the perfect, Lion of His nature. Christ having been put to death, God and the sinner have met together; but here it is rather a question of the accomplishment of the mystery of the will of God for the glory of Christ. The church will have part in the inheritance. "In whom," it is said; "we have obtained an inheritance;" but the whole of the mystery is not the church only, and this is very simple if we receive the thoughts of the Bible; not, indeed, that we shall understand the whole extent of the glory, but we shall see that all things created are to be gathered together in one in Christ.

In the Epistle to the Colossians, Christ is presented as Creator, the person of Christ is in the prominent place rather than the counsels of God as to the church; Christ is the first-born of every creature, and the first-born from the dead; Head of His body which is the church; but here, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, it is the privileges of the church in Him which we are given to know. In the sixth verse, it is said that what we possess already is to the praise of the glory of His grace; and in the twelfth verse, where he is speaking of the glory to come that is before us, it is said-" that we should be to the praise of his glory." The church has a portion quite apart and most glorious. All things are to be gathered together in one in Christ. The church being united to Him is made partaker of the inheritance, that we should be to the praise of His glory. The glory of God is understood by its being seen in us; and the world will then see that we have been loved as Christ is loved.

Verse 12 might seem a difficulty, where it is said - "We who first hoped in Christ;" but he is here speaking of the Jews, who have believed before the revelation of Christ to the nation, at His second coming, and before the national call to the Jews at the end; such of the Jews as have believed, as have hoped beforehand, they are glorified with Him.

## Verses 13, 14

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The thirteenth verse is spoken to us; it is not only both Jews and Gentiles who will partake of this inheritance; but the church is given to know the will of God, by the gift of the Holy Spirit. This it is which distinguishes Christians who, having believed, are sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise. The Holy Spirit becomes a seal. We cannot receive the inheritance before Christ; the Spirit is given to us whilst waiting for it as a seal; God sets His seal upon us, and this is a proof that a Gentile has part in the promises made to Abraham (for instance, Cornelius).

There is a difference between regeneration by the Spirit and the presence of the Spirit as a seal. A person must have believed, for God to be able to put His seal on him; the Spirit may act before this, as for instance, in breaking up the heart, but it is not as a seal. Sometimes the power of the Spirit produces fruits in us; at other times it humbles us, makes us sensible of good and evil; but this is not joy. The fact is, that this work is even more precious than the joy itself, because these are sometimes things in us which are not judged before God on account of the very joy. When God has given us the enjoyment of the true object which we ought to enjoy, He begins to break up the heart, in order that the work may be deeper. The Spirit makes us sensible of the things which are not according to God, and this knowledge of oneself is necessary in order that we may know God. I do not say that if we were to walk exactly as God would have us, this work could not be carried on without the loss of the joy; but it is not generally so with the Christian. It becomes needful for God to turn us toward Himself and to work inwardly, that we may discover what our carelessness has prevented us from seeing. Often this exhilarating joy of a Christian is found in one who has not judged things that ought to be judged in the presence of God. The wants and the desires which the Holy Spirit produces by regeneration, are not the seal of the Spirit any more than the joy which flows from the affections being occupied with a new and divine object, nor even the fruits which the Holy Spirit may produce when He dwells in us. The seal is the Holy Spirit Himself, given to that faith which is in Him who is our righteousness, and is the answer to all our wants; and then we have peace and joy. It is the Spirit in us who is the seal.

We ought not to be surprised, if we find it is the intention of God to spew us ourselves; at such times we do not see God, because He is making us see ourselves. Many persons think that the full and unwavering assurance of our salvation tends to make us careless as to the state of our souls; but this is a mistake. The Holy Spirit has set His throne in our hearts, and if we will judge ourselves we shall not be judged. It is He who makes us fully enjoy God, and who makes us judge what is not of God in us; who alone sets us in the truth, and gives us the assurance of what is accomplished for us. God in us, by His Spirit, judges the conduct and the heart; but this does not prevent this Spirit being the seal which God has set upon us, the witness of His perfect and unchangeable love towards us, the strength of a life of liberty, the Spirit of adoption. We partake of it with Jesus; God put His seal upon Jesus Himself when He was in this world, after His baptism by John.

The Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance. And here let it be observed, that the Word, in the New Testament, always employs the word us when it speaks of Christians and of the things which concern them. The prophets saw that the things which were revealed to

## Verse 16

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It is a happy thing when our prayers are givings of thanks; we realize then the certainty of our privileges. If we think of the wretchedness of the saints, we are overwhelmed by it; but if we think of what Christ is for the saints, we give thanks; we realize what God will do and does, for them and in them. God cannot be unfaithful to the love we have for all the saints (1 Cor. 1:4). Paul could handle the sword of the Spirit; he would not have known how to deal with the Corinthians, if he had not begun by taking notice of the good which grace had wrought in them. How different is the Christian's way of acting, thinking, and judging, from the way of the world! There is not an expression more remarkable than that which Paul makes use of in this verse, in speaking to the Corinthians; Paul was determined to act according to the Spirit of God. It is not that God can make light of sin and not judge it; no, He will judge it severely in the saints, if there is evil among them; but it is important for the church to handle it as God handles it.

## Verse 17

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We find here two names attached to God: 1st. He is called the God of our Lord Jesus Christ; 2nd. the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The prayer of the third chapter is in relationship with the second of these titles, that of Father; that of the seventeenth and the following verses of this chapter with that of God.

The apostle also presents before us God as the Father of glory, that is to say as the source, morally and in power, of all true glory. At the same time he sets before us the Lord Jesus entering as man into relationship with God, a bond which causes all the affection of God to rest upon Him, as the object in whom all the divine thoughts center; this is why Paul says, " The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory."

I can consider Christ as a glorified man, whose right has been established by God over all things; this is what Peter does in his epistles; he looks at Christ as a man whom God had regarded in this manner; having raised Him from the dead. John, on the contrary, sees Christ in the glory of His divine person, one with the Father, and as the sent One. In our epistle, Christ is presented to us as the object of the counsels of God in whom the power of God is displayed. It is precious for us to see what is our position in Christ, to see that we are placed, as being His body, in the same position as Himself. The counsels of God concerning Christ and His body, is what is contained in this epistle.

The prayer which begins at this verse, expresses the desire that we should enjoy the understanding which is given to us of the counsels of God, of the hope of his calling, of the riches of the glory of His inheritance in His saints, and of the power which has placed us in this enjoyment.

## Verses 18-23

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The union of Christ with the Church, is a union so real that the body must be there, in order for Christ to be complete. It is man in resurrection who occupies this place; and this doctrine is essentially practical: it gives the whole power of God in a life of resurrection here below, which sets us above the flesh. If we do not realize this life, we walk as men; and the lively understanding of this life of resurrection brings death upon all that is not heavenly. The power of faith makes us walk in high and heavenly places; and it is nothing less than the power of God (the same power which raised Christ from the dead and set Him at the right hand of God), which works in us both to will and to do. In these days, the Church has not miracles for its portion, but the power of the Spirit in the invisible world.

Herein is the understanding of the mystery of Christ. All things will be gathered together in one in Him; and, being united to Him, we likewise enjoy this inheritance, God redeems and inherits all things in Christ, and God establishes Christ the heir over all things as man; but the Church is the body of Christ, united to Him in the enjoyment of this inheritance; therefore it is said, " the inheritance of God in the saints."

In Christ all is manifested-in Christ the Son, Heir of all things; it is on Him that all hangs. But in the counsels of God, it is in us also that these things are manifested-in us, the saints; with whom God surrounds Himself in order to enjoy the fullness of His glory; as it is written, " to the glory of God by us."

But there still remains one thing essentially necessary to our enjoyment of this glorious destiny which belongs to us in the counsels of God; it was not only needful to reveal to us the counsels of God, but also to raise us to the height of that which is given to us, by placing us in a position, in a state whereby we are made capable of this enjoyment. Christ is the Heir of all things, and we are His co-heirs. In what way are we associated with Him so as to share in the inheritance of the glory? How did He Himself (the One who in grace partook of the consequences of sin on the cross), become raised to enjoy the glory? God raised Him from the dead, and set Him according to His merits, and according to the dignity of His person, at His own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. He has taken the Man who was dead, and has set Him at His right hand in the glory. Man, in the person of Christ, is raised above all except the throne, by which He has been raised. And is he alone?-No. The same power which raised Christ, and set Him at the right hand of God; the excellent greatness of that power which raised the Man who was dead to the right hand of God, works with the same might in him who believes.

This is what raises us to the capacity and to the position where we can enjoy, and where we do enjoy, the glory of God in Christ. For if God has set Christ over all, by taking Him from among the dead, He has given Him also as Head to His body, which is the Church. We partake in this glory as being the body, the members of Him who inherits it; we partake of it according to the same energy

which has set Christ there; Christ thus exalted, is Head over all things, and

Head of His body, which is the Church. The members have their part in the inheritance, by virtue of the working's of the same power in them, which wrought in Christ when He was taken from among the dead and set at the right hand of God. The body is complement to the Head; it is in this sense its fullness. Christ fills all in all: this is His glory. It is He who divinely fills the whole universe-the Church is the body of Him who does it.

This great and wonderful truth is unfolded practically and morally in the second chapter. But before going further, let us here remark, that there are two things in which the operation of the Holy Spirit is manifested in the Church-these are wisdom and power; but the one is manifested at the present time more than the other. It is said, that Christ is the wisdom and the power of God; if you take the most advanced Christians, you will find in them more of wisdom and knowledge of the ways and counsels of God than of power. In the beginning of the Church, the great mass of believers were less enlightened than at present; but the power was greater, for the devils trembled. Though this power is precious, inasmuch as it is a testimony that Jesus, as man, has conquered Satan; yet the most precious thing is wisdom; and so much the more, as what we have now to do is to discern the evil and separate from it, and not to establish a new dispensation. However, God always gives that which suits the need of His Church.

And it is the same thing that we see in Joseph; first, when persecuted by his brethren; afterward, when in Egypt. That which characterized him was his wisdom; his knowledge of the thoughts of God. This is what is now given to us, even the thoughts of God. The position of the Church is known by spiritual understanding; by wisdom I know what is my portion...my affections are drawn towards what God has presented to me for eternity. The Church, in a special way, has need to understand this; she will then avoid the wiles of Satan. In Israel, when the enemies had the upper hand, it was knowing the thoughts of God which sustained those who were faithful. We see that the prophets of Judah, to whom God had entrusted His thoughts, did not perform a single miracle. Understanding of the thoughts of God will make us humble. It is a lowly position to know that we have nothing but what is in God. The effect spiritually, will be to turn our hearts towards Him who is our portion; and that will draw the Church away from all that is of the world; because God is about to take her up out of the world, that will force her to find her sources of joy and strength only in Him. Here, however, there is a character of power attached to this knowledge. It is the power of the resurrection which places us in the same position as. Christ in heaven. That is our position, if we have spiritual intelligence: how power and wisdom are united r It is a work of power in us, and not our own wisdom.

## Chap. 2, Verses 1-3

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We (we Gentiles) were by sin, morally there where Christ actually and outwardly placed Himself for sin; we were dead in our trespasses and in our sins. There we were walking according to the course of this world; floating with the stream according to the powerful and universal influence of Satan, who penetrates everywhere and reigns over everything, like the air, which is His seat; we were walking according to this spirit which is now working in the children of disobedience, in those who still continue far off from the deliverance wrought by the Lord.

But was it only for the Gentiles? Far from it; the Apostle tells us, we also, Jews, we were walking in the same lusts; and by consequence, according to the moral truth of our nature, we were, says he, children of wrath-heirs by nature of the wrath of that God who could not mix himself up with sin. All were children of wrath. It was their desert, according to their nature, which was opposed to God.

## Verses 4-7

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The Apostle has shown where all men were; he has done away with all distinction, by spewing what the nature was which was common to them all; and has brought all men to the same level, by bringing down the Jews through the lusts of the flesh to the same level morally as the Gentile, whom the Jew despised. Such was man in himself; Jew or Gentile. But God who is rich in Mercy, when we (for all, Jew or Gentile, are now taken together) were dead in our trespasses and in our sins, God has quickened us together with Christ. If the sin of their common nature united them all in the same position before God, his grace has set them with Christ, quickened together with him, and thus together also as to one another. The resurrection unites in one in blessing those whom sin had really put far off from God. Thus God had raised up together, and made sit together' in the heavenly places in Christ, believers whether from among the Jews or the Gentiles. Thus the Church enjoyed the fullness of blessedness in Christ, according to the power of the resurrection and the ascension by which God had set Christ at His right hand in heaven. Sin united sinners down here in one common misery; grace has raised them to one peculiar and common glory, according to the power which had raised up Christ to this glory from the grave.

But if children of wrath, if thieves and Mary Magdalenes are found in the same glory as that conferred on the Son of God as the reward of His service here below; if even we ourselves are found -Participating in it, it is in order that God may spew, in tie ages to come, the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us by Christ Jesus. When angels and principalities see a poor sinner and the whole Church in the same glory as the Son of God, they will understand as much as it is possible for them to understand of the exceeding riches of the grace which has set them there.

Verses 8, 9.

All is the gift of God. It was not even through works that we had part in this glorious salvation, but by faith, and that again the gift of God, that no man might boast. The gory of such a grace must all turn back again to God. He will make us understand that we are, indeed, blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places. What could we have more, than to partake in the glory and the inheritance of Christ himself, according to the power which has set him there. So we see that the portion and position of the Church are heavenly. It is inasmuch as dead and risen with Christ from the dead, that she enjoys all His privileges. It is there, above, that she enjoys them. She is heavenly by the very fact of her existence.

## Verses 10, 11

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The Spirit presents to us another aspect of this work in contrast with the thought of any labor on our part, in order to obtain this glory. We are, inasmuch as we partake of that, His work, created by God. The works of man are excluded from it; ourselves are His workmanship..1s it then that works are left, and by the Christian? No: they have their place; we are created for good works which God has before prepared (for all is of Him), that we should walk in them: they are not the works of the law, that the man which does them should live by them; but God having created in us this new and heavenly nature, has before prepared works; a walk suitable to them. The consequence of this work of Christ is, not only that we are created anew for this heavenly position; but, moreover, it sets us here below in order to make manifest His power. These two great blessings flow from our being considered by God, as being really the body of Christ; that is to say, that we are possessors of the same glory there above, and that we are the dwelling of God here below. The Church will be the fullness of Christ in glory, when all things will be subjected to Him; while waiting for it she ought to manifest the power of Christ in this world.

Such is then the order, the ensemble, and the effect of this work of power wrought out by grace, according to the rich mercy of God, which has set us in the heavenly places in Christ, as the body of Christ; the fullness of urn that filleth All in All; for it is no longer question of Jew or Gentile, but of spiritual blessings for those who are quickened and raised up together with Christ, according to the exceeding riches of that grace which has set the sinner in the same glory as the Son of God. What ought we not to be, since we have been made partakers of such privileges; and that according to this great love with which God has loved us?

## Verse 12

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The Israelites were as far off from God morally; but as to their position they were not without God in the world; God was there, the covenant was there, as also the promises; whilst the Gentiles had nothing. The Gentiles were far off from God; outside the pale of the Jews, there was no way for them to draw near to God in a way that would be pleasing to Him; they were altogether separated from Him. We see, however, through the history of the Jews, that in after times God intended to act otherwise; several signs, obscure certainly, showed that God had another thought; as Rahab and others are examples of.

## Verses 13-16

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The blood of Christ does away all difference between those who were far of and those who were nigh. It is evident that the Jews, having put to death the Messiah, had destroyed every link between themselves and God; the middle wall of partition was broken down. They were like the nations, and more guilty than they. All that had belonged to them was entirely destroyed, and set aside by the death of Christ. That which had made the distinction of the Jew consisted in the ordinances, by excluding the Gentiles who had no part in them. Now there is no longer need to know whether one is a Jew or a Gentile, for we see in verse 15 that the end of God is to take Jews and Gentiles in order to make one body of both. He has broken down the middle wall of partition, and wishes to form not the commonwealth of Israel again, but a new body in His presence, taken from either by the cross. It is evident that he who approaches to God by the cross has done with the Jewish ground. The apostle insists upon this point, that God having laid this foundation in Christ, means to have but one body before Him; and then he shows how that is accomplished here below. If I draw near to God through the blood of Christ, I am a member of His body.

Verse 17.

God had made peace, through the blood of Christ, between Jews and Gentiles, by reconciling them both to Himself by the cross: it is a new thing, a new man in Christ, in Jesus Himself. The apostle says it is the cross which has done it, by breaking down the middle wall of partition; and this oneness was established in principle, the moment Christ died. It is the cross has as done it; all difference is destroyed. The uppermost thought with God was to gather together in one, one glorious body in His presence; but in order to do that He must make peace and break down the middle wall of partition; this is what was done by the cross of Christ. It is remarkable that it should be said that it is Christ who came to bring us peace, for it is not His spirit, but Himself who brings us peace; this peace which is before God, which is accomplished. It is by Him that we have the enjoyment of it. Christ does not only produce good results in us; but He brings to us the good news of the peace which is made, and He brings it with Himself. "He came and preached peace to them which were afar off, and to them which were nigh."

## Verse 18

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In this verse we see what is the way in which we draw nigh to God; the order of the Spirit in the heart is the inverse of that of grace. The Father acts by the Son, the Son in us by the Spirit, and we who have the Spirit, it is by the Son that we address the Father. I cannot pray to God without the truth of the Trinity being manifested; it is not an abstract doctrine, it enters into the practical relationships of every day. Now it is the Spirit which makes the unity, there where He works, it is the bond of the oneness of the body. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers."

## Verses 19, 20

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It is necessary to observe that the prophets here spoken of are not the prophets of the Old but those of the New Testament. Paul speaks of the apostles and prophets as forming the foundation. The question here is as to building upon it, not as to laying the foundation. The church is not built upon the prophets of the Old Testament; it is built since the death of the Lord Jesus, and the foundation on which it is built, is Christ who was crucified. All the Jewish ordinances barred the way against those who were not of Israel; the Jews had cast themselves away by putting Christ to death; the veil was rent: till then God's foundation had not been laid, the first stone of the church was not placed; and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob saw that afar off; they had believed and embraced the promises, and they will be in the heavenly glory; but the church had not then begun upon earth. it is upon earth that all has taken place; sin entered there, temptation also; the law was also given upon earth; Christ came into this world, the Holy Spirit also. By the Holy Spirit we can enter in within the veil; now that the foundation is laid, that is to say, since the death of Christ, the Holy Spirit, who makes us able to do so, has been given to us. If we leave that, all is confusion, the church has no distinctive feature, nothing which distinguishes it.

The word prophet of the twentieth verse has led many into a mistake. Here it is quite a new revelation that is spoken of, and which could not be spoken of before. It was a hidden mystery; God could not reveal the church during the Jewish dispensation; the existence of the church then would have denied the special position of this people Israel, God could reveal that the Jews would be rejected and punished, and from the moment He brings out that, He turns back to the mercy which will cause the Jewish nation to return into blessing. This is what will take place when the Jewish people will be the royal people upon earth, when Israel will be restored by a new covenant. But this new man, this new revelation, is that those who believe and belong to Christ become members of His body, and they are in the blessedness which belongs to it. Verse 19 expresses that we are in the house of God; and from verse 20 it is evident that in order to begin to build, the corner stone must be laid. This is what we have seen before, and now we come to the result of it.

## Verse 21

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We are not yet the temple of God; the church will be the habitation of God in glory.

## Verse 22

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Is what we are now; we are the habitation, the tabernacle, where God dwells by His Spirit, as of old, in the midst of the camp of Israel; hereafter we shall be a glorious temple. Whilst waiting, we are the habitation, the dwelling of God. All the blessedness of the church flows out of that. If we have the consciousness that we are the habitation of God, how can we defile the tabernacle? There is not a blessing more important than this; it is even higher than those which relate to our inheritance in the glory.

When the apostle has spoken of God dwelling in us by the Spirit, he prays that we may be filled with all the fullness of God; and there are here two things to remark: 1st. The glory to come, and the church having part in this glory; 2nd. The habitation of God in us being united to Christ, we are the habitation of God by the Spirit; it is our present position; we have what is most blessed in this position. If we grieve the Spirit, we dishonor God who dwells in us; God then cannot act. When Satan, by means of error, has got entrance into any part, the church is troubled on every side. It is this power of Satan which has invaded the church of Rome. How precious it is that we should be the habitation of God, and how solemn a thing it is to have such a God in the midst of us! From the moment that there was an Achan in the camp, God could not act, He could not go forward; Israel was beaten because God was there. It is the same with the church of God; and if we forget it, God does not forget it. It is a precious thing to remember that though we are in wretchedness, God is with us; as it is said in Hag. 2:4, when the Jews began to build, "Be of good courage, for I am with you;" whatever be your state of ruin, I am with you; My Spirit is with you as in the day that I caused you to come up out of Egypt. There is nothing but faith which can reconcile these two things-wretchedness and the love of God.

## Chapter 3:1-6

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The apostle had set forth in the preceding chapters the hope of glory and the oneness of the body of Christ; he had presented the Spirit given as the seal and earnest of the glory, the Spirit as the center of the oneness; and, while waiting for this glory, he has presented the church, not only as the co-heir of this glory in hope, but as being the habitation of God by the Spirit during the present time. Paul, in these two chapters, spews us first the glory with Christ; and afterward the church, the Bride of Christ and habitation of God by the Spirit. Now, introducing the Gentiles unto the oneness of the body, the apostle says, "I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles." All that follows from the first verse to the end of the chapter is in parenthesis, as is seen by the first verse of the fourth chapter, "I therefore, the prisoner." What is said at the beginning of this fourth chapter is connected with the end of the second chapter, where it is seen that we are the habitation of God, the dwelling of God; this is the calling of which it said, "I beseech you.... to walk worthy of the calling with which ye are called." In such a position we are always humble; and this it is which is to walk worthy of the calling revealed.

At the beginning of the chapter there are two things to observe: personal humility which leads us to walk in oneness; and the individual gifts. There is one body, one spirit, and the gifts alone are different in the members of the body. The third chapter is an unfolding of this truth, that the Holy Spirit dwells in His habitation, which is the church. Paul says: "I, Paul, prisoner for you Gentiles, etc.;" and the consequence was that since, as to the church, Paul would not place the Jews above the Gentiles, by reason of the malice of this people, he became prisoner for the love of the Gentiles; here is the testimony which Paul gives about it. "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel." It is wonderful how slow Christians are to understand the largeness of the counsels of God; for Paul was obliged to say even to the Ephesians, who were certainly a blessed church, if they had the understanding of the ways of God as to him, Paul; "If so be ye have heard."

In general we are obliged to be much more occupied with the details of the Christian life than with the great principles of this life. God is patient; but it is sorrowful that the state of the church should be such. Because of the want of spirituality, the spirit cannot go on to unfold the riches of the thoughts of Jesus; He is then forced to be occupied with the walk that the Gospel may not be dishonored. The understanding of the counsels of God depends on the faithfulness of the walk, and what will be the consequence of this faithful walk? It will be a state of struggle with all, especially with all that Judaizes. It is impossible but that in the actual state in which the world is, opposition should not be shown against the one who is faithful; and the fact of having more light excites opposition even with Christians. (Paul is a striking example of it).

The apostle often repeats this: that the church has not been revealed in the Old Testament. Certainly, the prophets of the Old Testament confirm the blessed position of the church, inasmuch as this truth is based upon the blessing of God being extended even to the nations. Blessing which they (the prophets) had testified of.-(Psa. 18:49; Deut. 32:43; Psa. 117).- There, it is the

Gentiles who are to rejoice with His people; but what the church is, is never spoken of. In the Colossians it is said of Christ: "Christ the hope of glory"; whilst that Christ whom the Jews expected, was to be a Christ personally present; a Christ who was to bring in the glory (this will take place at the end); so that a Christ who was only a hope when he was there, was a thing which could not be understood. It was a mystery, of which the prophets had never said a word; they had spoken of a Christ who was to accomplish such or such things, but never of a Christ in us, the hope of glory of the Church. Christ in us is the practical and actual point of this mystery.

In Rom. 16:26, the Apostle teaches the same truth, that the Church was a mystery, unknown before the death of Christ. God had always had the thought of the Church; but it was hidden. Paul, in his communications to the Gentiles, rests upon what the prophets had said of the grace of God towards the Gentiles, and he quotes these prophets (Rom. 15:9-12). It is certain that a Christ promised, and who was to be rejected, is clearly revealed in the prophets; but we know that this was an enigma for the Jews ("We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever"); and the thought of a Christ who had other members, and those too among the Gentiles, would have been still more incomprehensible. The Church is united to Christ, and if we wish to find it in the Old Testament, we must seek Christ Himself, and see it in Him. See, for example, Isa. 50:8: "He is near which justifies me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together; who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me who is he that shall condemn me?" and Rom. 8:32, 33.

This challenge to all the world-because it is God who justifies us, which in Isaiah is spoken by Christ Himself- is in the Romans applied to the Church. God only sees Christ; and these things are applied to us as being united to Christ. We are accepted in the Beloved. The thought of a people united to Christ by a spiritual life, or rather, of a people united to Christ by One Spirit which was in Him and them, was never touched upon in the Old Testament. Christ Himself had not this position as Head of the body; and consequently the Spirit was not yet thus given.

The Apostles and Prophets, the foundation upon which the Church is built, are not the prophets of old; for we see here it is things now revealed to these prophets that are spoken of, in contrast with the times past; they are then the prophets of the New Testament. In 1 Peter 1:12, it is written, that the ancient prophets knew it was not for them that these things were written; and verse 6 of this chapter explains to us this mystery, namely, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs; he declares to us this good news, that the middle wall of partition was broken down by the death of Christ; that all that which had made the difference between Jews and Gentiles had disappeared, and that Jews and Gentiles were made one in Christ. We see the difficulty the Apostle Peter had in admitting this truth (for example, Cornelius); Paul was obliged to resist this Apostle to the face. The ancient Jews had great difficulty in acknowledging this glorious truth, and the oneness of the Church.

## Verses 7, 8

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The Apostle, seeing the excellency of that which had been given to him, sees himself less than the least of all saints; and it ought to be the same with us. The sight of these excellent things lessens us in our own eyes; and this humility will be the consequence of the realization of our privileges. What a glorious testimony that all distinction should be done away! Jew and Gentile-all that belongs to man falls when in the presence of the Counsels of God in Christ. Paul, while contemplating these counsels, saw that he was nothing. The name Gentiles expresses that all was grace. The promise made when the first Adam had sinned, is a promise made to the second Adam; the second Adam will bruise the serpent's head.

The unsearchable riches of Christ are those riches of which we cannot fathom the depth, so immense are they; and the glory which God will give to Christ, according to what He is, and according to the worth of his work, this is the measure of these unsearchable riches. All has been done by Christ and for Christ; all has been created by Him and for Him; and the fact of having presented

Christ to the Gentiles outside the limited revelation of the ancient prophets, brought out the riches of Christ as unsearchable; God can stand in presence of the power of sin, and in Christ, as man, display the power of His grace for the manifestation of his glory.

## Verses 9-11

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These are the counsels of God in Christ, and the position of the Church; never before had such wisdom been seen. Man might have been struck with wisdom in the creation; with the interposition of God in the deluge; Noah kept; Abraham called; the law given; other wonders accomplished; the government of God over His Jewish people. In all these the wisdom of God was manifested; but here is a wisdom altogether different. A heavenly Church was not even known to angels.

The Jewish people having rejected the Messiah, God's plan as to the earth was suspended; a new thought is brought in; a people whose position is after such sort that they have no place whatsoever save in heaven. Now God does not punish according to a rule distinctly revealed to man; there is no immediate government of God upon earth, though He still acts in Providence; but there is a people, in suffering it may be, but heavenly, in the midst of the world. God's ways are of a new kind.

It is striking to see what is now the position of the Church set in sight of heaven; it is in the heavenly places she bears witness; her conflicts (Eph. 6) are in the heavens; her blessings are there also (Eph. 1); and it is there again that she is seated (Eph. 2); the witness borne by the Church in the heavenly places, gives importance to the present testimony of the Church down here. I do not here speak in thought of the glory to come; but in thought of God's dwelling in the Church by the Spirit.

Christ came-He was rejected: quite another wisdom was then manifested. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be heirs in the glory; but they have not been gathered together in one body in Christ like the Gentiles, according to the purpose of God before the world began. The fact of our election before the world was, adds nothing to the sovereignty of God; if God had elected us in time, his sovereignty would have been the same; but election before Time-before the world was, shows that the Church is NOT of the world, since she was before the foundation of the world in the counsels of God. Neither the position of the Church, nor her life hang upon anything in this world; the world is but the sphere through which she moves.

Verse 12.

This verse is the practical consequence of what has preceded. This position being based upon the love and upon the work of Christ, we are before God with a good conscience; with a conscience perfected forever. I am in Jesus, in the presence of God, by the faith that I have in Him-that is Jesus. Certainly, if I grieve the Spirit, the Spirit will be in me a Spirit of reproof; but Christ has finished all. The work which He has done, is perfectly finished according to the thoughts of God, and he is in His presence according to the efficiency of these thoughts and of this work.

## Verse 13

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The Apostle begins his address to the Gentiles by saying: "I desire that ye faint not ..." In how high a position were the Gentiles placed! Instead of being troubled in seeing the afflictions of Paul, they were to be strengthened by this means; for it was for their sake that Paul suffered, as a witness of the privileges which God vouchsafed to them; because he thought of them. The effect of ignominy in the world is to discourage those who are following it more or less; but he who is faithful like Moses, esteems that the reproach of Christ is better than all the treasures of Egypt, for it is our glory. God might have been pleased to be satisfied with Jews; but He wished also for Gentiles.

## Verse 14

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This prayer is addressed to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; it hangs on that intimate relationship between the Father and the Son into which we are brought. At the beginning of the Epistle there is a prayer of quite a different character; and which is addressed to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## Verse 15

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This verse includes the whole of intelligent creation, blessed before God; it embraces all the different races, Jews and Gentiles; not only God gathers the Jews in one as He did under the name of God, but, under the name of Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, He gathers in one all the nations dispersed at Babel, and all the hosts of heaven. The Lord Jesus has received, as man, power over all men; the angels even will be subjected to Him as Son of the Father; therefore it is said, " Let all the angels of God worship Him!"

## Verses 16, 17

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It is more than glory that is spoken of here; it is the fullness of the riches of His glory. This is what the apostle desires for them, in contrast with a Messiah in the midst of the people: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Christ, set in glory, brings the Gentiles into it, and this is how we have part in these riches; but in order to enjoy them, He must dwell in our hearts. The moment that God exalted Christ the link with every family in heaven and on the earth was manifested and even formed, for it was new. The portion of the Gentiles, as well as the whole church, is to be united to Christ Himself, of whom every family is named (verse 15), He is Head of the church, the manifest center of the glory of God. The apostle desires that the efficacy of this power should be in us; not only that grace which comforts and which is most precious, but likewise that we should realize Christ exalted.

As Son of God, Christ is the first name in this family which the Spirit reveals to us, that Spirit by whom we are strengthened in the inner man; for our feeble hearts, though they are converted to God, would be incapable without His help of entering into this glory and the extent of these counsels; the trials of the flesh are not an obstacle to our realizing these things, the more the apostle suffered as prisoner, the more he entered into this mystery of the glory of Christ. His imprisonment was the cause of this epistle, as well as those to the Colossians, Philippians, and others: it is thus that God provides for the needs of His church. We ought so to lay hold of Christ glorified, as that He should be there with us; His presence ought to be realized and acted on constantly in the heart.

Verse 18.

The thought from the beginning of the epistle is not of Christ as making satisfaction to the justice of God; but that power, that flow of love for the accomplishing certain counsels of grace, of which he is the fullness for us. Then Paul desires that having understood the accomplishment of this thought in the person of Christ, we should understand the power of this mighty love which has glorified Christ by linking His glory with the blessing of poor sinners. When we apprehend these things, we understand that all is love, and that we ought to live upon the love which has done all.

It is by entering into the love which is the source of it, that we understand the immeasurable expanse which is spoken of in verse 18; that love of God whose thought is to put all things in subjection to Christ, and to glorify the church with Him. When we have understood this love, we can, in a certain sense, measure the ways of God which have brought us in there where God displays Himself, for it is not told us of what he is describing the height, the breadth, the depth and length; but it is love which 'has introduced us and orders all things. The Spirit includes the whole church, which is very nigh to God in this glory; it is impossible that any of its members should be set aside.

## Verse 19

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What is said here is specially for us. The apostle desires that we should realize the love of Christ, which passes knowledge; and that we should be strengthened to understand this love and to be rooted in Him, in order that we may be filled with all the fullness of God. If I am placed in the midst of infinity, I am not at the end of this infinity; I am in infinity which I do not comprehend, which I do not measure, and I have no smaller measure than that: it is nothing less than the fullness of God. God fills all in all, and I am full of Him, and all this by the Spirit; whatever be my littleness, I am in this blessed position. The Jews had no idea of this relationship which is named in heaven and on earth; but as for us, we cannot go outside this wall of enclosure with which God has surrounded us, and which is God Himself; and this depends on the presence of the Spirit, making the church the habitation of God. God cannot be less than Himself; He does not cease to be Himself, The Spirit dwells in the church; she becomes the vase of that which nothing can contain.

## Verse 20

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Sometimes when we ask that God would grant us more than we can ask or think, they are blessings outside us which we desire; but here it is blessings in us, it is the power of the Spirit in the church, this it is which sets the church in the height of her position, and makes us feel our littleness.

Verse 21.

What is said here does not relate to the fullness of the glory to come. The hope hangs on it; nevertheless, it is not the hope here which is in question, but the realization of the inner man, the habitation of God as a present, real thing. The essential thing exists already; and it is that which is most intimate and most exalted, namely, to be filled with the fullness of God; Christ who has finished all is there, the Spirit of Christ dwells in us. Paul sees in this verse all the extent of the counsels of God.

It is comforting for us, that this realization of the inner man should be wrought out by a power which works in us in the midst of the weakness of the vessel, because it is the will of God. What we have to desire is to be strengthened in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, that we may seek the glory of Christ in the church, and that all glory should be attributed to Him, if so be we have understood that it belongs to Him. If it is asked, "Is the glory of Christ in the church?" we hardly know how to answer. God grant us to desire this glory!

## Chapter 4

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We have here the present and practical application of the principles which form the subject of this epistle. The beginning of this chapter joins on to the end of the second chapter, where is shown to us what the calling of the Christian is. The apostle beseeches the Ephesians to walk worthy of this vocation. That which is its special mark is, the habitation of God on earth by the Spirit. The whole conduct of the Christian flows from the church being the habitation of the Spirit. When the Spirit is presented as the seal, this is more for the individual; it is not the church which is sealed, but she becomes the habitation of God, as does the individual also. The conduct of the Christian ought to flow out of the presence of God. There is a conduct which becomes this presence; not only ought I to obey God, but there is a manner of acting which flows out of this presence, and which is the expression of this dwelling of God in us. When God was in the temple there was something in particular which was suitable for that presence. We are His temple. The presence of the Spirit in us becomes power as much as motive. There are things which become the temple of God. The estimation that we form of one another depends on the same thing.

## Verses 1, 2, 3

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The apostle does not speak of obedience, but of the Spirit which leads to it; the practical effect of the presence of God by the Spirit, is humility. Love always makes itself nothing. To have bad thoughts about oneself is humiliation, but not humility. Humility is produced by the presence of God; we are occupied with God and not with ourselves; God is there to comfort us and to bless us; the pride of man being broken down there is gentleness. This making nothing of oneself produces patience and love. When we know ourselves to be nothing, we have the consciousness of the strength of God; and more than that, there is the activity of love.

Consciousness of the preciousness of the presence of God, gives us the energy of the Spirit of God, which makes us careful to keep the oneness of the Spirit, that is to say, the union of all the members of Christ as one temple in which God dwells in this world by His Spirit. The moment that I forsake this, the unity is broken. In the flesh we are two, in the Spirit we are one; and when, by the Spirit, we enjoy love, there is this desire to keep the oneness of the Spirit. The flesh is never peaceful, whereas in God all is peace and quietness.

It is remarkable how often God is called the God of peace (see Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:20). The bond of peace is indeed the result of being thus in the presence of God; it is on this account that the apostle adds, " There is one body and there is one Spirit." Oneness is a thing which is actually realized on earth, the outward unity of the body in one expresses what there is within. If this bond of peace is wanting, the oneness of the Spirit is not kept.

Verse 4.

Paul turns back to the thought put forth in the first chapter, "The hope of glory." This same Spirit which has given the same hope, has given the oneness of the body; this outward unity which manifests the Spirit as well as oneness in the glory. There is but one body here below.

## Verse 5

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This verse describes the circumstances belonging to this oneness-all its interior and exterior relationships. It speaks of baptism as being the expression of the common faith.

## Verse 6

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The apostle adds, "In you all." One God and Father in us all; that is, His abode in us. "Through all," expresses the thought that He is every where in us all; He dwells there; He is there in His power, identifying Himself with His own. Spiritually He is in us, and as Ruler He is every where. They who are partakers of this oneness, are united to Christ as Christ is to the Father; thus the Father is in us all (ex. John 14:14). What a bond in this new creation! God Himself dwelling in us, in a body of weakness and of death! This is why we groan, being of the present creation, while at the same time we have the first fruits of the Spirit; we groan according to God, not only because of the misery which we feel as men, but according to God who will very soon deliver this world.

## Verse 7

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The apostle now comes to the members of this wonderful body; Christ is the power which unites this body to Himself; and He is also the energy in each one of its members. If I speak of the church as a-body, there is more glory; the unity of the body connects itself with nearness to God rather than with our individuality. We ought to look upon the members of the body as in action for the good of this body; evangelization produces also this same end by bringing souls to the Lord.

## Verse 8

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It is the same expression as is employed (Judg. 5:12) when Barak returned from delivering the captives of Israel, leading captive those who had led them captive. The people of God were captives of Satan; Christ has triumphed over Satan, and has led him captive, and has brought along with Him the church delivered from his chains. Satan was the master, and Christ gains the victory over the strong man and delivers the church. Having delivered it from the power of Satan, He can communicate to us this same power which gains the victory over Satan. God has set this power of victory in man, in order that it may energize. Christ had the title, and when He shall return, even those who are not converted will be delivered, because Satan will be bound; but now he is not so. The church is the place of the manifestation of the Spirit for the destruction of the power of Satan; and this shows the importance of the presence of the Spirit in the body, presence which delivers us from the power of Satan, and makes us grow up into all that which is of the Head, even Christ. In Psa. 68 these gifts are also spoken of in connection with the Jews, when Israel will be re-established in glory; but Paul here makes no mention of the second part of the verse, omitting, "Yea for the rebellious also," because in the Ephesians all distinction is at an end, and has come to an end in the church. Now it is the whole connection in heaven and on earth; now it is gifts for men; the Jews were "the rebellious" (technical expression for the Jews); but hereafter they will be so no longer, and the Lord God will dwell among them.

## Verse 9

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This verse sets before us the glory of the person of Christ, who has gone up on high in order that to faith there should be between God Himself and the power of death nothing which is not filled to faith with the power of redemption. The believer on earth is placed in this power of redemption, finding Christ every where. Christ having descended into Hades, God has set Him at His right hand in order that He should fill all things. We see by this what will be the perfection of this work when all things will be reconciled by Christ. What an infinitely important position is that of the church, as the body and depository of the power of Christ! How little does she correspond to it!

Verse 10.

We have seen how Christ has come, then ascended up again, and who will hereafter reconcile all things. In the meanwhile, inasmuch as He is head of the body, He gives these gifts for the accomplishment of this special part of the mystery, namely, the edifying of His body; and it is of this part especially that mention is here made. God has desired to make us know what is the final end, the union of all things in Christ, and that of the body with Him. This great end is the position of the church as the center of the glory; and Christ now employs the power with which He is filled for the edifying of this body. The consequence of this is, that He speaks of its members which serve for the edifying of this body, and of its members, which make it move and act. It is not then miracles, testimony of power borne to the world, which are here spoken of, but the joints of the body, in order that it may grow up into Him.

## Verse 11

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Paul is not speaking of gifts, but of those who were themselves these gifts; he speaks of the gifts which edify the body, and not here of the Spirit distributing these gifts according to His will: Christ filling all things we are His members, partakers of this blessing. This is the difference between what is taught in 1 Cor. 14 and in this chapter.

## Verses 12, 13

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There is a difficulty which connects itself with this, namely, the duration of these gifts; we might have thought they should have been continued till the perfecting of the body of Christ. In order to be able to apprehend the part of this passage in which this difficulty is, we must enter into the state of the church. The Lord did not return immediately; in the epistles He is always represented as about to return immediately; this is why Paul looked at all the saints in the presence of His coming. He looked at the perfecting of the body for the return of Christ as a thing to be accomplished in the present time. We know that this has not taken place (John 21:22). But in truth the Lord cannot be untrue to the edification of His body; and here the question is not about the manifestation of the Spirit in power, but the communication of blessings on the part of the head by means of its members.

The Apostles and the Prophets served as foundation, we can perceive this; and the others remained for building up even after these had departed. The ministrations which have lasted are those of evangelists, pastors, and teachers. What is said in the first place in the twelfth verse is the general and proper end of the gifts. Then follows the manner in which this grace, which flows from the Head, for the perfecting of the saints, ought to act: it is by producing a ministry which is to work in building up the body; an evident proof that ministry is to last until we are all brought into the presence of Christ, and that this is brought about by the principle of the oneness of the body and by its edification as such. It is then important to see the end of this ministry.

The thirteenth verse speaks of the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God-in the which we have fellowship. Difference of views there may be; but as it was said to the Philippians, "God shall reveal even this unto you." There is, therefore, the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. Ministry is the means to it, and this ministry always exists. If attention be paid to what is said about ministry, it will be seen that when the apostle speaks of the perfect man, he does not allude to the perfection which follows resurrection, but to the perfection of this knowledge. We have seen that this is connected with the basis which the Spirit has laid for all these truths; that is Christ fulfilling all things and dwelling in us here, below. The Holy Spirit, who dwells in the church, makes each member to grow according to that which is in Christ and according to the measure of Christ. As there is unity in the body, there is also the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son. Here, the Spirit's thought is to make all the members grow according to the revelation of the glory of Christ; and this shows us what our desires ought to be, and what we ought to desire for our brethren. Christ has grace enough in Himself for this. We should desire that all Christians near us should be full of knowledge, even to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; and this knowledge of the revelation of the glory of Christ here below, naturally produces fruits, Such is the meaning of the word perfection; the question is as to knowing Christ; Christ is altogether perfect as risen from the dead; the Christian is so when he has risen up to that position of Christ. Paul said, " Not that I have already attained." But he had attained to that spiritual joy, that knowledge which revealed to him the object set before him. When it is thus with the Christian, he is in peace, and he can grow as to practical conduct; he has the

consciousness of being in that which is infinite, of being in the enjoyment of Christ before the Father, according to the accomplishment of all the counsels of God. As to his soul before God, he no longer travails, so to speak, as when he drew nigh to God, conscious in himself of his need of expiation. As to his soul, he has nothing to search after; all being accomplished, he finds himself set before God, in that fullness itself, even in reference to all the circumstances which may befall him: he knows that Christ has all power in heaven and in earth.

Verse 14.

If I have nothing to seek, I rest in quietness; the place I am in is the fullness of the knowledge of God, sheltered from the deceivableness of men. The Christian, who possesses Christ, no longer seeks Him as one whom he has yet to find, though he seeks to grow in those things into which he has been brought; but in the Church we see souls in a state very different from this, which is indeed sorrowful: generally, Christians need to be brought back to the position which has been purchased for them. A Christian is perhaps blessed with salvation, but he is occupied with the things of the earth; he has cares, and ministry must then be occupied with the sorrows which result thence. But where there are believers whose affections are full of Jesus, they can go onwards, and there is progress; because where souls are living they seek after fresh graces. If we walk in individual faithfulness, we are able to be occupied with the things which are before us; when this is not the case, we must be occupied with our own misery, and it is sorrowful to be occupied with things which are a loss in comparison of the knowledge of Christ. If we walk according to the knowledge that we have, we are lively, and the things which are before us attract us onward; we can, forgetting present things, be occupied with the grace that is in Christ.

## Verses 15, 16

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Each member acts in its place; each part has its place. This place may be a hidden one, but it is not the less important; the thought presented is that of the growth of the body. A soul which is lively builds up others; the Spirit acts in souls which turn not back; the Gospel working produces inward blessing. We see, as we have said, in the place where all fullness dwells all becomes grace, even trials; because they make us enjoy with intelligence the counsels of God. If any evil occurs, it becomes only the opportunity for manifesting the love of Jesus, and this serves to strengthen faith.

But all consists in our growing up into the Head; this is the only true growth which is in the knowledge of Jesus; because this knowledge is that of grace. The Spirit acts by the word (through faith and understanding of the things of God), all the while it is my life which grows and communicates to me a developed manifestation of life.

But let us go back to what we have a right to expect from the children of God; I am here speaking of the oneness of faith and of the knowledge of Christ. If love dwells in us and we think of the members of Christ; that will lead us to ask that they may grow according to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. But alas! many are often more occupied with this present life than seeking the growth of souls. Love is of God, and it is always powerful. If we were in a healthy state, we should grow in God. Faithfulness in the walk is necessary, if we would not grieve the Spirit; there must be the hidden life, that is to say, the heart must abide in Jesus; in a word, Christ should be the end of all our life. There is enough love in Jesus to make His members grow.

If we had sufficient love, we should draw out of Jesus what would produce this growth in others; and we need it in the present time when there are so many things that dim the testimony of the saints. Our part really is to be separate from evil; we must see Christ so clearly as to be able to say: This or that is not of Christ; and if persons are overwhelmed by cares, it is impossible that Christ should be discerned by them so as to deliver them from things which are like Christ, but which still are not Himself. What we have to seek after is to be sufficiently spiritual as to be able to realize what Christ is; the effect of this will be subjects of intercession, which will doubtless cause sorrow of heart, because the faults and failures of the members of the body are borne there; but nevertheless, where love is in action, there will be always joy.

Verse 17.

There is a principle here, which it is of importance to have a firm hold of, it is—that the whole conduct of the Christian flows from salvation, and is not in order that he may be saved; it is not that we do not gain something, or that Paul does not exhort us to run towards the mark (1 Cor. 9:24); but the whole walk of the Christian ought to be the manifestation of a new life. The moment that we hear an exhortation as to conduct, and that we do not hear it as addressed to a saved person, the Gospel is displaced. All must be addressed to me, as a child of God; this is why the apostle says, "I beseech you," etc.; it is because of this grace that I beseech you. The moment that I mix up an

exhortation with the freeness of salvation, man is not in the position in which Christ has set him; it may have the appearance of piety, but the fact remains, that if I exhort and at the same time admit a question about salvation, I deny, and I have not a right consciousness of, the state of ruin in which man is, any more than of salvation.

## **Verses 18, 19,**

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This is the commentary, and the center, of all that we have just said. Man is alienated from the life of God. In the times in which we live, men would be ashamed to do what was then done openly; but this changes nothing as to the fact: whether a man is alienated from the life of God, or a heathen, it is the same thing.

## Verses 20-23

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This is the truth which is in Jesus: if we are saved, we are created anew. And the verse which follows explains to us this truth, namely Jesus, who is Himself the new man.

## Verse 24

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Here is the truth of the new man in us. The question is not of changing what we were, but God has given us a new life, eternal life. We have seen the manner in which the Church is united to Jesus; the truth which is in Jesus is the presence of this life in the Christian. We ought to put off the old man in us, and to put on the new man. This hidden life must manifest itself in all that the man puts on. The old man is in itself a captive, a slave of sin, and a prey to the lusts which lead him away. Moral discernment is wanting. But where the new man is, there is also spiritual intelligence. We are renewed; and this intelligence judges of things according to God. Man is free in the things of God; God is found there; we are capable of seeing things which are suitable for God. " There where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." We then have the consciousness of the beauty of the things of God, and it is a man who discerns them. The man who does not act by the power of the Spirit acts according to the flesh.

We are created according to God. God is formed in us. Christ was the image of the invisible God; He manifested in His ways the character of God. Also the Christian is a new creation. The apostle speaks, in this verse, of the power of God, which has produced that life in which we enjoy God. God has set His seal upon us; it is quite a new thing; the lusts of the old man are no longer in question, but the energy of the new man; that understanding which speaks according to truth.

## Verse 25

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In this verse is seen how everything hangs on our union with Christ. There is evidently no bond either of love or of the spirit with one to whom I lie; but if I lie to my brother, it is as if I deceived myself. The power of the life of Christ is also power in all the details of the Christian's life. We are members one of another.

## Verse 26

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We see here that in the acting of the new man there may be such a thing as being angry (for example Christ in the case of the man who had the withered hand, Mark 3:5); it is then indignation against evil (see 2 Cor. 7:11). If it is the anger of the new man on account of evil, then, as soon as the evil is removed, the soul returns to its rest; but if anger lasts, then there is bitterness, and the soul not being able to return into its rest, it shows that evil is there; for this reason it is said: " Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

## Verse 27

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This verse shows us that we ought not to open the door to Satan. If it is the flesh that is acting, then the wicked one can touch us; but he cannot total the new man, he cannot entice it (1 John 5:18). If I give way to a thought which is not of God, then I give place to Satan; if I give way to anger, the enemy is there: we are then hindered in service, troubled in prayer; and that is not to be wondered at. When our thoughts have been filled with present things, when we have been occupied with them not in their connection with God, we have given place to Satan; but if we have been occupied with our work with God before us, then this work in no way takes possession of our hearts as an object; our faculties are free; our affections are fresh; and, when we return to God we are entirely God's, having only acted in order to fulfill His will. How much time we lose! This is why it is said, "Watch unto prayer." We should do whatever we do for God.

## Verse 28

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It is interesting to see how God takes the most difficult materials in order to form something out of them. He takes the heart of man such as it is, in order to make of it a new thing by the life of the new man, which He introduces there; it is the Spirit which worketh these things, because it is the Spirit of love, which is there.

## Verse 29

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Here is seen the contrast between the old man and the new: it is one or the other which speaks, it is murmuring or giving of thanks. The matured Christian would only speak for edification; the new man, acting under the influence of the Spirit, will only take part in things which are for edification.

## Verses 30, 31

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It is precious for us to know that the Christian has been sealed for the day of redemption, for the day when his body will be raised. When Christ shall have accomplished all that for which He died, our body (for Christ has redeemed it) will be raised, which has not yet taken place. It is said that Christ has been made to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; redemption is put the last. It is not here the price paid for the purchase that is spoken of, but the result of this purchase. There are two things to be remarked in what follows: the new man and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not created, He is an independent Being in us; we must not grieve Him: all that which accords not with the Holy Spirit is not suitable for the Christian. On the other hand, we see that we have full assurance; God has set His seal upon us; and this strengthens faith. We enter into the thoughts of God; we do not only find there the motives of holiness, but also the power of holiness. That which assures me of redemption puts me on my guard not to grieve the Holy Spirit. If we are in the presence of our Father, His love prevents us from falling. It is thus that the Holy Spirit seals us for the day of redemption, and guards us from evil.

## Verse 32

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My foundation being what God has done for me, I have the consciousness of the goodness of God. If I am blessed myself, (see 1 Peter 3:9) I can show love to others: feeling that God has pardoned me takes away all bitterness from my life, from my manner of acting. Our Father having forgiven us, desires that our hearts should be in freedom towards all, and that we should act in peace and love. It is sweet to be thus set with God, representing in ourselves the character of God.

## Chap. 5, Verses 1, 2

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The first verse hangs on the preceding chapter; as God has forgiven you, forgive one another. " Be ye therefore followers of! God, as dear children." The general principle is-Be ye followers of God, follow Him, walk in His steps, act on the same principles as He does. Inasmuch as we are the family of God, we ought to be like God our Father. There is something very sweet in this principle, and very different from that of the law; it produces in the heart quite other feelings; it is affection, it is the goodness of God which constrains us to walk. The apostle here introduces a principle which flows out of the last verse of the preceding chapter, that is to say, to walk in love, to follow God, to follow Christ. If God is love, Christ is also the expression of this love toward us; we ought also to leave all for our brethren (1 John 3:16). The motives of this conduct are expressed in the first and second verses, which we have just read. We ought to follow God according to the heart of a child; and the effect of this love of God in the heart of a Christian is, that he gives up himself to the needs of his brethren. This is what was seen in Christ. Having the life of Christ, the divine nature and the power of Christ, we ought to offer ourselves up to God (Rom. 12:1). It should also be remarked, that that which descends from God in love re-ascends always to God in love and devotedness to Him. What a blessed thought; and why do we not thus live? for this is what we ought to be in our service for God.

### Verse 3

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Paul supposes the Christian in that atmosphere of God, in which there are no thoughts but those becoming saints; and we see here the place which money holds: the heart of man thinks that it is pleasanter to be rich than poor; but here it is said that covetousness should not be so much as named among us. We see also to what extent, when in the presence of God, the standard of morality is different to what it would be if we only had regard to men. The apostle considers these things according to the Spirit of God, according to the thoughts of God, according to Christ working in him, Paul. The consequence of this is, that it is according to what is becoming saints that we ought to act; we are the followers of God.

Verse 4.

In the presence of Christ we shall find jesting unsuitable; it is not that he who walks in the light of God's countenance is not happy. There is not a cloud on the joy of him who is in the presence of God; but such a Christian feels what the things are which are unbecoming to him who is to follow God. That the world should find such things suitable is natural enough: but " as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of a fool; this also is vanity" (Eccl. 7:6).

## Verses 5-7

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A covetous person shall not inherit the kingdom of God. The covetous person in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. v., is placed, as to discipline, in the same position as fornicators, idolators, etc.; but it is more difficult to act towards a covetous person, because with him the sin is more hidden than seen outside. All these things are the flesh; but for him who walks after the spirit they are judged. The natural man would rather have two crown-pieces than one; but the new nature is delivered from such lust; it finds not in such things its enjoyment. The Apostle says here: "The kingdom" of God and of Christ." He follows the thoughts which are according to God and to Christ; If I think of God, it is Divine light; if of Christ, it is this power manifested in a man. It is precious for us to be able to say: it is there where I am, associated with them; I am in the same atmosphere as God and Christ; it is, then, in this position that I judge all things. We ought not to associate with that which is not of God, because God is not there, and because we should no longer be in the atmosphere in which we are able to judge of things.

Verse 8.

It is thence that you have come out, says the Apostle. It is not said in darkness, but that those who are now partakers of the Divine nature had been darkness; but now ye are light. It is the nature of God, of which we have been made partakers, which makes us see all; and it is thus that we are light in the Lord. Just in so far as we are in Jesus, it is thus that we walk. He that follows me, Jesus saith, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life; but he that walks in the night stumbleth, because there is no light in him: the natural man has no light.

Verse 9.

The nature of God and of Christ, when it is manifested in man here below, has for its character gentleness, meekness, practical righteousness, and truth. In the truth, each thought has its place before God; Christ was the truth; each one of His acts answered to what He Himself was, and to what God Himself was; either He was manifesting God or He was, as man, Truth before Him. Each of my actions ought to answer to what I am in God: it is the subjection of the inner man; I ought to consider others in all my relationships with them, according to this righteousness and this truth; that is, according to what one is before God, and there there is neither unrighteousness nor untruthfulness.

Verse 10.

This verse is connected with what is said about light in the 8th verse; the 9th is in parenthesis. This is what we have to learn in our conduct. It is often said, that it is difficult to discover the will of God; but this is because we are not ready to meet with difficulties, and then we cannot find out His will. In this verse we have that moral state of soul which loves to please, which realizes the spirit of the walk, and which realizes the wishes of God in order to be acceptable to him; it is thus that, as children of light, we show real thoughtfulness about Him whom we desire to please. In the 9th verse it is the fruits which are the natural productions of the life of God in us that are enumerated;

but in the 10th verse, it is the manner in which God works in us, our eyes being turned upon another than ourselves. This work of God in us is thus carried on; a child, while observing his father, learns what is pleasing to him; he learns what are his ways; he knows what he would like in the circumstances which turn up. Thus we prove what is acceptable to the Lord.

Verse 11.

The experience of righteousness in us produces an entire separation from evil; it produces fruits of holiness. Paul insists upon the necessity of having no fellowship with the works of darkness. A Christian cannot join himself with these things.

Verse 12.

By this verse is shown to us to what an extent our evil nature will go.

Verse 13.

This is the effect of light in Christ and in the Christian. We see nothing in the dark; but the light manifests all. The natural man would be ashamed to do in the light what he does in the dark-things which would be done openly among the heathen. Christianity has necessarily destroyed, up to a certain point, the grossness of sin even with those who are not yet converted. The Christian is in the light which - manifests all. This light applies itself to every connection which he could form with this world.

Verse 14.

The men of this world are dead, and the Christian who walks according to the spirit of this world is as if he were dead, slumbering amidst the dead, dreaming, it is true, sometimes, about his wretched position; but as to action, he is there amongst the dead, he does not know what to do, and how should he know? The same may be said of all that, in the Christian, which morally can be called sleep: it is a most sorrowful state in contrast with that which is described to us above. Christ cannot enlighten a soul thus placing itself among the dead; Jesus can work in order to awaken such, but he cannot give light to them that are asleep, to those who do not awake from among the dead. Since the light makes all manifest, there is a needs-be that the Christian should awake, and Christ will give him light. It is Christ Himself who is the source, the expression, and the measure of light for the soul that is awake. What use is light to him who will walk in darkness.

Verse 15.

In heaven there will be no Take heed; there we may give free way to perfect joy; there all is holy; but down here, in this life, in the midst of evil, we must take heed; we must use wisdom. The man of the world, in order to avoid evil, must become skilled in the knowledge of the evil. The Christian has no need to think about evil; he must be wise without the knowledge of evil, as it is written: "Simple concerning evil, wise as to that which is good" (Rom. 16:19), because full and Divine knowledge of good in the midst of evil is what Christ gives. What He Himself was here contains no familiar acquaintance with evil; the child of God ought to possess that wisdom which is simple as a dove-spiritual wisdom.

Verse 16.

This is likewise wisdom; it is to gain time in order to do good. The same expression is used in speaking of the Magicians, the Chaldeans, in Dan. 2:8; they gained time in order to conceal their inability; they had the prudence of this world. We need wisdom in order to be able to do good. in spite of Satan, whose power makes the present time one of difficulty. If we have this wisdom for good, we shall escape the wiles of Satan, we shall leave his nets on one side and pass on; we shall do the good that God may give us to do, we shall have time for God. If we are in God's light, we shall walk in the simplicity of that which is good, and God will be with us. Let us think of God as Father and on what Christ did, in order to do like unto Him. If sleep overtakes us, we must awake, and Christ will give us light.

## Verses 17, 18

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The 16th verse has shown us that we must redeem the time. The days are evil when God allows Satan to exercise his power, and they are so in general until Jesus returns; but there are times when God permits the enemy to govern more directly, and others when He puts a check on him. The evil days are a chastisement, a humiliation for the Church; but he who is faithful has his way pointed out; he ought to redeem the time, to seize the opportunity of doing good (Neh. 6:3): this is why it is said (ver. 17): be not unwise; but there is also an energy, a force in the spirit which pertains to us, which is contrasted with the excitement by which the world. thinks to produce faith-excitement which is evil-an evil course of life, the true character of which the 18th verse shows us. When the spirit descended upon the one hundred and twenty at Jerusalem, the world said: "They are full of new wine." The power of the spirit, in truth, does put a man beyond the power of what is natural to himself; the words rise to his lips as a fruit of the spirit's action, and he is the subject of a joy which flows over. In him who is full of the Holy Ghost there is what is not natural to man-something altogether extraordinary.

Verses 19, 20.

It is quite another life, it is a joy outside of the world's range, it is a company apart, in which the world would have no pleasure, no enjoyment. The Spirit is there in power. When Christians have life amongst them, occupying themselves with the things which are properly theirs, instead of hesitating in spiritual things, then the life grows; the consequence is, that we see things according to God, we are able to give thanks for all things; we live and we dwell there.

Verse 21.

It is this spirit of gentleness which recognizes Christ in a brother, and that spirit of submission which does not exalt itself; it is when Christians are united and mingle one with another that they realize these things, for individuality is often pride.

## Verses 22-24

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What is said in verse 22-24 is strong; for, as is often the case, the wife may have more wisdom than her husband, but the effect of this wisdom will be for the wife to leave to her husband the place that God has given to him; for if the grace of God acts in the heart, the order which God has established reigns always, and if the wife governs, God is not there. But if this particular wisdom of God is recognized, the order of God is maintained, and blessing is the consequence.

## Verses 25, 26

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There are always in the word positive directions, and it is never well for us not to follow them. We may remark here three things as to Christ and as to the Church, which flow out of the love of Christ for the Church: 1st, He has loved the Church and given Himself for it; 2ndly, That He might sanctify it by the word; 3rdly, That he might present it to Himself a glorious Church, etc.

## Verses 27, 28

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Christ will present the Church to Himself in glory. The order in which these things are placed gives such assurance. Christ does not sanctify the Church before having redeemed it. No, it is when she belongs to Him that He devotes Himself to make her such as He would have her to be. We may remark here, it is not said that God loves the Church; nor is mention made of that loving kindness of God which seeks to save souls, though his goodness is acting towards all men in sending Christ to them. "He so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but should have everlasting life." But there is another thing which is not properly the goodness of God, either in the sense of providence, nor in that of the love in his nature. God in his counsels desires to enter into a certain relationship with His own people; God desires to have children, and Christ a spouse. They are affections based upon a relationship which exists. If God has made us His children He cannot do less than love us as such; once this relationship established, He cannot fail in it. It is never said that Christ has loved the world, while we have seen that God has loved the world (John 3:16). See also the character of the providential goodness of God (Jonah 4:11). This goodness of God, which watches over all His works, is precious; we ought to act in the same way as men, we ought to love everybody (Matt. 5:44- 48).

But there is another thought besides that of this goodness of God: there is a love, the consequence of an established relationship. God having set us in this relationship, the affections of God and of Christ flow forth naturally towards us who are the objects of it. God loves His children with a love which will never deny itself. Christ has made himself responsible for all the debts of His spouse; and more, the Church being the spouse of Christ, she has lost Her earthly citizenship and acquired a heavenly one. Christ has become the one responsible for all that His Church has done and will do; the Church, as the spouse of Christ, has lost her individuality, in order that she may pertain to Christ, her heavenly bridegroom, Christ, as the anointed man, felt a distaste for the world; He would none of this world; He could not have His affections there. The Christian, in like manner, ought not to be able to bear the world as to its objects of desire and its walk. Christ has given himself in order to satisfy the justice of God and to conquer, for the Church's sake, the power of Satan; having set her free, He is occupied with her, and as she is not what He desires, He sanctifies her. The spirit of God makes allusion here to a practice among the Jews, who purified themselves by washing in pure water. It is by the word that Christ cleanses and sanctifies the Church; all the revelation of what God is, is thus applied to the heart. This is why Jesus says: "I sanctify myself for their sakes;" I set myself apart, as being the expression of all the thoughts of God, and I communicate them to mine, that they also may be sanctified through the truth. Christ is not untrue to the thoughts of God. The Word is the means of communicating them, it judges all in us and manifests what is in God. This is what Christ did here below.

The final object of the work of Christ for the Church is to present it to Himself "Glorious, having neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing."

There is reference here to the second Adam and the Church; of which Adam and Eve were the types. Whilst Adam slept, God built for him a wife (this is the literal force of the Hebrew word) and presented her to him when he awoke. It is the same here, whilst Christ is hidden, so to speak in God, God builds the Church, and when it shall be perfected, it will be presented to Christ, or rather He will present it to Himself being God and second Adam at the same time.

It is a precious thing to see that Christ so well knows how to take His measures that there will not be the least thing in His spouse which will not satisfy His heart; she will not have a wrinkle when He presents her to Himself; and this is based upon this, that He has given Himself for her; not only he has given His body unto death, His life, but also Himself. There is nothing in Christ-not an affection, not an element of wisdom, an energy of devotedness, not a thought, a perfection-not one thing in all the self-devotedness of Christ for the Church-upon which the Christian may not count.

## Verses 29-31

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There is in the twenty-ninth verse something more than that which precedes; not only Christ purifies the church by the word, but He nourishes and cherishes it; He considers its weakness; He shows tenderness and love towards it to nourish it as being His own body.

## Verses 32, 33

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It is said in the thirty-second verse, " This is a great mystery." What the apostle had at heart, were the relationships between Christ and the church. We see in the verses which we have just read four things: 1st. Christ gave Himself for the church; 2nd. He sanctifies it by the word; 3rd. He presents it to Himself without wrinkle; 4th. He nourishes and cherishes it, by giving all that He has for it, in order to show how dear it is to Him. He loves it as Himself. It is precious to have the inward consciousness of the affection of Christ for the church. This is an important truth, and it is essential to distinguish the difference of this love, which belongs to relationships which God has established, and the goodness of His nature towards all. The consequence of it is that Christ undertakes the whole work; we are only His, entirely His. It is not a law, but a tie which binds us to another, that is Christ. The moment that the power of man works, it is no longer Christ who has taken all upon Him for us.

## Chapter 6:1

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We cannot enter into the force of this expression, obedience in the Lord or according to the Lord, unless we take our place before the Lord with spiritual understanding. Christ, when He was with His mother and Joseph, had the power of the relationship in Himself; this power of judging good and evil led Him to obey. It is in like manner with us: we ought to obey as to that which regards our relationships in this world. We must understand our position in Christ, in order to be able to obey. God formed these relationships from the beginning; natural relationships are of God, but sin has corrupted all. Now this is what the Lord does: He does not bring in a remedy for this state of ruin, but He introduces a new man, having given himself without sin in order to take away sin; and this new man is Christ. It is evident then that this new man recognizes what God has done in establishing these natural relationships; but in a manner superior to these very relationships. So when Christ began His ministry, He recognized nothing in this world; but He submitted to all, as an individual, perfect in the midst of this evil. When He came into this world, He said: " Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business."

Nevertheless, He submitted to those who stood to Him in the relationship of parents, until God called Him to His own proper service. He acted as from God, as superior to the obligation. The Christian, in like manner, by his union with Christ is superior to his obligations, inasmuch as he has with God a new relationship beyond nature; but he recognizes this obligation according to the intelligence which this new relationship gives to him, and the consequence is that He is infinitely more obedient, because He obeys as from God. But it is impossible that I do evil as from God, or that I prefer anything before the authority of Christ. I am made more subject according to the perfection of God in Christ; and likewise by the introduction of the new man, the strength of the obligation is maintained, but according to God. In order to act as Christ did in the world, we need spiritual discernment; God cannot deny the obligations which He has created; but if I act in these relationships, as being from above and not from below, I shall obey with all my heart; but in a superior position, which does not allow of the evil into which I might be drawn by those with whom I am in this relationship, because I could not do evil " in the Lord": it is a most simple principle.

## Verses 2, 3

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Paul refers to this promise, which has often been a difficulty to some, as though temporal promises now belonged to a certain line of conduct. The citation only shows us how much God estimated obedience under the law; however, I believe there is a blessing belonging to obedience to parents. But in the order of the government of God, in the ways of God with us personally in this world, there are important things which modify this. The Jewish system was the expression of the government of God in this world, and the blessing belonged to him who honored his father and mother.

Verse 4.

This is an important truth for parents, and which flows from the church being a company apart. It is evident that God desires that the children of Christians should be brought up as Christians. I must act as a Christian with regard to my child, and not other wise; I must exercise towards him the discipline of God, and bring him up as a disciple—we do very wrong if we act otherwise. It may so happen that parents are converted at the moment their children are growing up, it will then be more difficult for these parents to bring them up in the manner we have just said. But God is faithful to direct these parents, and to guide them according to their need; it will be a subject of prayer for them. In the verse before us, the apostle supposes children whom parents are beginning to bring up.

If a Christian mother introduces or allows her child to go into the world, she must expect a strong re-action when her child is in the midst of the world; but God is faithful to the mother who acts faithfully according to the instructions of the Lord. The moment there is a duty, God is there, and God is faithful to make us succeed, though we may have to pass through many a painful hour. But, alas! we like what is most easy; neither is it right for us to use the word, as a law to make a child obey. We frequently hear parents say to their children that if not good God will punish them, thus putting them under a law; this ought not to be. I ought to be a Christian with my child. God cannot bless parents who make a severe law of the Christian religion with their children, and much less when they allow themselves to go back to worldliness and worldly motives. They ought to be Christian as to their children, and to act towards them according to the truth into which God has brought themselves,

## Verses 5, 6

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The expression, as unto Christ, is striking. What is not done according to God ought not to be done; but as to our own will, we must have submission and spiritual discernment, to know when submission ought to be absolute. When there is no evil, by submitting myself, I act as from God, without asking whether the authority is wise or not; I am wise in obeying; and so, every time that the question is as to obeying my master, I do it without troubling myself about what he tells me; I do what he wishes, no matter what; I do it as in the sight of God-I do it for God.

Verse 7.

It little matters where God has placed me in this world, provided I serve Christ; and this principle can be applied to the most ordinary things of life; even if I light a fire, I can do it as for the Lord; and how honorable that makes it! What I do, is for Him, and because He wishes me to do it; and I do it with good will for the Lord Jesus, serving Him with love.

Verse 8.

The Christian religion has found its way into the midst of evil, and given liberty where there was none; it has given it even to the poor slaves, and that without taking them out of their state of bondage. The Gospel does not touch that position. Paul acknowledges slavery as a right, when he sends back Onesimus to his master, telling him that in grace he would treat this slave as a brother. Christ comes in where sin reigns. It is a power superior to all here below, and which subsists in the midst of what is found here.

Verse 9.

Ye are slaves of Christ, and servants of Christ, and with Him there is no acceptance of persons; ye servants, ye can serve Him, however low your condition be as to this world; and ye masters, ye ought to serve Him whatever are your advantages here below.

Verse 10.

Here is strength! What joy to be able to say: If I am weak, Christ is my strength. We do not enjoy this strength when we are at a distance from the Lord, and when we parley with circumstances, instead of retiring into Jesus by prayer. If we gave ourselves to prayer, all would soon be overcome.

Verse 11.

We must put on the whole armor of God; for if we have only truth and not righteousness, or only righteousness and not truth, the devil may reach us. The first counsel which the Spirit gives us here is to have on the whole armor; and the second the whole armor of God; because the arms of man are useless against spiritual wickedness. The man of the world does not know that he is the object of the attacks of Satan, and in truth he is rather his slave than the object of his attack; but the Christian is the object of his attack, and if he is not clothed with the whole armor of God, the

darts of the enemy reach him. None can resist him but the one who is thus clothed, for Satan is always there using wiles and artifices; he is often as a lion, but more habitually as a serpent, and he tries to reach us and introduce the point of his weapon; he seeks to deal his blows wherever he finds a part of the body unprotected, not clothed with this armor of God.

Verse 12.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood, that is to say not against man, as the Israelites, who had to fight against the Canaanites; no! but against spiritual wickedness, against the powers of this world. When the flesh acts in the Christian, Satan can attack him; the flesh has no power whatsoever against Satan. " He that is born of God keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not" (1 John 5:16). We have a perfect example in Jesus. The new man in us is never tempted. These evil powers are in the heavens, whence they are not yet driven out; and in their wickedness they act not in a gross but in a spiritual manner. Christ is still sitting down and his enemies are not yet put under his feet; but we have this promise, that the God of peace will bruise Satan under our feet shortly. It is of all importance not to be terrified by him, for in Christ we gain the victory over this enemy of our souls; but it is needful for us to be aware of these ambushes, and to know this power which is acting against us.

That which guards us is the power of the Spirit in the path of obedience. The presence of the enemy in the heavens has spoiled and continues to spoil all the good that God ever committed to man; this is true, even in Christianity here below, because the heavens are not yet changed; the atmosphere is evil. But it is said: "Resist the devil and he shall flee from you." If Satan meets Christ in us, he flies, for Christ has conquered him; but the flesh does not resist him. If I am in the flesh the enemy overthrows me, as we have an example in Peter. Peter, after his fall, could strengthen his brethren; because he had learned to know himself and his weakness, as well as the power of the grace of Christ. It is well to remember that when walking in the Spirit, we are sheltered from the darts of the enemy.

Verse 13.

In the preceding verses, it is the general position of the child of God, in evil days, that is looked at. Here it is the armor more in detail that is spoken of. We have seen two things: 1st.-That we must be armed with the whole armor; and 2nd.-That we must be armed with the whole armor of God; this armor alone can resist the attacks of the enemy. There are times when we are attacked by the enemy, and when God permits that we should be more or less tried. The whole of this present dispensation is the evil day, during which Satan is allowed to exercise his power; Christ is absent from the earth, and Satan is allowed to exercise his power in it. There are moments when we enjoy in peace communion with the Lord, without being disturbed by the enemy-then all is peace; but there are times also, when we are made to feel the power of Satan; the power of Christ also, without doubt; but it is in order to fight. This is the reason it is said, " Take the whole armor of God." It is the resisting the manifest attacks of Satan that is here spoken of; not only as in the case of the Israelites, of gaining certain victories - of conquering certain territories, and of making progress in the country; this is not the immediate thought of the apostle. Inasmuch as we are filled with the Spirit, we already possess all things; while at the same time we have to carry on a warfare in the heavenly places. Satan tries to destroy our confidence, to withdraw us from enjoying Christ, and to take from us the consciousness that we possess all things in Him. What we have to do then in this

position, is to stand firm; all is ours, and if we stand fast we have all. Satan tries to prevent our standing; this is why we are told to put on our armor and to stand fast.

Verse 14.

In this verse the means of resistance are set before us: we must have our loins girded about with truth, or else we shall be like a ship with its sails spread, but no ballast-it would founder; the ballast, which produces the equilibrium is necessary. It is written, "Sanctify them by thy truth; thy word is truth.." and further on, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth." Christ set himself apart as the expression of all the truth of God in man; not that He had only the knowledge of the truth; Christ was himself the truth. We ought not only to know the truth, but our affections should be filled and governed by it. If our hearts are full of Jesus, we are sanctified by the truth, as it is in Jesus, which sets us free and which sanctifies us.

The word reins expresses all that is within. The inner affections, the inmost thoughts are turned towards God, the heart is with God; all that is not of Him being judged; I am in communion with Him, I am in his presence, taught by Him. The Apostle urges that our thoughts, our affections, should be governed by the truth; that that which the Spirit teaches us should reign over our hearts. This is what we must begin with; the heart must be at large, set free from the power of every lust and of every spiritual error; at liberty in the truth. We cannot be happy if we allow our hearts to go after all that presents itself to us; for then, in our service, we are not able to resist Satan. Perhaps we are not aware of the evil; the effect of it is not at first felt, but in an evil day it will discover itself. (See Job.) Satan roams around us, and seeks to overthrow us; this is why we must not allow our hearts to go abroad after everything, without paying attention, or without being on our guard; because Satan will have thereby power over us in the evil day. The established Christian discerns good and evil; his thoughts no longer wander about here below. If our thoughts are in Heaven with Jesus, we are in safety. It is impossible for us to be happy here below, if we do not walk in holiness. There, in heaven, we shall be able to let loose our hearts, because there will be nothing there but holiness and the glory of God; but here, in the presence of the enemy with such deceitful hearts, we must have Truth to govern them: "Having your loins girt about with Truth." It is the application of what is in Christ to the affections, in order that the heart may have the understanding of spiritual things, and walk according to Christ.

Be it observed, that all we have just said is true of each and every Christian; for he is in the truth, he has righteousness by faith, he possesses the Gospel of Peace. But the Apostle desires that we should use these graces in our practical walk. If our hearts are guided by the Spirit of Jesus, we have the consciousness of walking in practical righteousness in all that concerns us; Satan will have nothing to say against us in the evil day, nothing which will weaken us in our conflicts with him. If the conscience is not good, if righteousness is not realized, we have no strength; we must hide ourselves in the day of battle. When Satan attacks the children of God, he does it according to the holiness of God, and they would be overthrown, by having things on their conscience about which a worldly person would feel no uneasiness. The Spirit acting on the conscience cannot but give to holiness all its strength; and for him there is but the holiness of God. Also the nearer we are to God the more will Satan seek to surprise us. It is impossible for any one to have a just estimate of the holiness of God unless standing fast in grace, and unless firm against the attacks of Satan. If we do not walk before God according to the light, which we profess to have, God's strength is

not with us; and frequently even God withdraws the light in which we did not choose to walk. If we have failed in anything, we must have recourse to grace. If habitually we walk in the Spirit, as soon as we have stumbled we shall judge ourselves before God; before Satan attacks us; for God is good and faithful in His grace, and we shall be calm. Christ was ever with His Father, and when the evil day came, He was calm (see, for Him who has failed, the example of David, Ps. 32:5. "Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin," etc.) That which the Spirit commands, is to be clothed with the breastplate of righteousness; because with this armor, we have nothing on the conscience. A man cannot handle his sword if he is ill: God begins then, as we have said, by strengthening the man himself; then He speaks of the testimony which he ought to bear. God will have the soldier prepared for the battle.

Verse 15.

He who is holy and righteous in his practical walk is the one who is in communion with God, who is at peace and restful in all his connections with God, and vigilant as to that which is good, knowing that Satan goeth about; but he is without fear, knowing that he walks together with God; and having nothing which disquiets him in his walk, the consequence is that he is at peace. This title of peace is one given to God more than any other (1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:20; Rom. 16:20, etc). There is one thought which is predominant in the character of God, it is peace. The soul which is thus in God is full of peace; he enjoys fully the gospel of God; he enjoys this grace; his soul is in peace, and coming forth from immediate communion with God to walk through this poor world, in this spirit of peace all his steps are marked with peace; this character sets its impress on all his walk in this world. God having given to the soul this place before Him, He begins to teach it to walk; and the walk of such a one here below partakes of this gospel of peace, of this peace which we first enjoy with God through the gospel, through the work of Christ, and which, setting us in communion with God, makes us happy in that which is good, and enables us, by this communion, to overcome the sin and rebellion of the heart. All that we meet with makes manifest in our walk by the Spirit the peace which we enjoy. It is beautiful to see a soul which brings the power of this peace into the world.

In this faithful walk, the Christian meets with the fiery darts of the wicked one; the more faithful he is, the more also will Satan seek to trouble him; if he can cause a wicked thought to cross the heart, that is a dart! but the soul of the faithful is at peace; nothing can trouble him, though Satan tries to disturb this peace. If secret self-complacency glides unto the heart, it is the enemy who seeks to take away our confidence. We see Christ in this calm and perfect confidence, in the midst of His suffering (John 18:11); peace keeping His soul, not that He could feel joy in drinking the cup, but he felt it in receiving the cup from the hand of Him who gave it to Him; nothing could shake His confidence; all the darts of Satan were quenched on the shield of faith. At the moment when He was broken-hearted, crushed by the iniquity of men, He said, " I thank thee, O Father!" (Matt. 11:25). When we meet with a trial, instead of complaining of others and reproaching them, we ought to take refuge in God; but frequently we do the very opposite, we distrust God; if we meet with difficulties, we reflect on God, and reproach Him with the iniquity of man; Satan seeks to produce mistrust; this is why the apostle says we must take the shield of faith.

Verse 16.

Entire confidence in God is needed. From this position we see all the storms below us, we are at peace; but if we have not this confidence, there are things which trouble us. This is our position; we are on the earth, the flesh still in us; Satan is in the heavens, but Christ is still higher, at the right-hand of God. Christ (in order that faith may be put to the test) has not yet driven out Satan; but if by faith we lay hold of the

truth that Christ has done everything, that He has gained the victory over Satan, and that He is gone up far above all heavens, to the right hand of God, we are then above all circumstances. I know Christ; I am near to God: I see things according to God and not according to circumstances. We see in Numbers, when the water failed, Israel threw the blame on God, and Moses thought about himself and his own personal importance. We frequently behave ourselves in the same way in affliction, but it is a want of confidence in God; Satan would like to break the links between us and God; but God has given us evident proofs of His love by giving us His Son, who has all power in heaven and on earth. Satan cannot take from us this grace; but if our loins are not girded about, our communion is interrupted.

Verse 17.

The salvation of a soul, once brought nigh to God, is a settled thing; it is a helmet, a defense which guards him from the attacks of the enemy. There is a difference between this blessed position and that of working for salvation. In my battles with the enemy, I have on my head the assurance of salvation; He cannot touch me, I have eternal life; Satan cannot break in upon that; this gives boldness in the conflict; having the consciousness that God has saved us, we go on, the head lifted up (not proudly as to the fear of God), but trusting in Him, fearing nothing. Such is the case when we have the affections on Christ; we are so set as to be enabled to go on with boldness, by power being given to us to use the armor of God. This is what God desires for us. It is a blessed position, to stand fast in the conflict. Truth applies to the judgment in the inner man; practical righteousness guards the conscience from the assaults of the enemy; the power of peace gives a character to our walk; confidence in the love of God quenches the poisoned arrows of doubt; the assurance of salvation gives us boldness to go onwards.

We have seen in what precedes, that the apostle begins by setting before us that which gives inward strength, viz., the armor defensive against the attacks of the enemy. Now he speaks of the offensive weapons, and begins with the sword of the Spirit, as the means of resisting the power of Satan in the evil day; he speaks of the sword as a means of standing; the helmet is placed before the sword, because if there is not this confidence, this assurance, we cannot even handle the sword of the Spirit. All the threats, the warnings and precepts as to sanctification, become so many means, in the hands of Satan, to lay hold of us by, if we have not the confidence that God is for us; without this confidence, Satan can use even the Word of God to overthrow us. This word is called the sword of the Spirit, not of the understanding, but of the Spirit in us. It is the Spirit of God who alone can handle the sword of the Word. It is the Spirit who recalls the suitable passage at the moment of temptation (we have a striking example of it in Christ, in the hour of His temptation). We may reason about the things of God, but that does nothing for us against the enemy; the Spirit must act in us and apply the word. It is evident that if we have grieved the Spirit, if our loins are not girded, the Spirit cannot be there to handle the word; on the contrary, in that case, Satan employs it against us. If the Christian has not this happy consciousness of being for God, he has nothing to

say when Satan presents a temptation before him; the smallest warning of the word troubles and overthrows him, because the word is not through the Spirit, a weapon in his hand against the enemy; but it is in the hand of the enemy against him. It is true that God uses the word as a means of convicting of sin, and thus awakes the soul by acting on the conscience; but every time that this word is not made use of on the principle of grace, it is not the work of the Spirit of God. If this conviction of sin leads us to mistrust God, it does not proceed from Him, but from the enemy; the Spirit convinces of sin through the word, but it shows the refuge in Christ; it does not drive to despair.

The word is represented to us as a weapon for us to handle, for it works in two ways: first, the Spirit, in using the word, can act in us by presenting to us the object which fills our hearts with joy and hope; but, besides, He can use it when He would convince us of sin. The Spirit will indeed show us what are the consequences of sin, but He will never tell us that Christ is not sufficient for our soul. The Spirit cannot deny the testimony which He bears to the glory and to the work of Jesus in grace; He can use the holiness of God to produce in us the deepest feeling of sin; but He will never tell us that God is not a God of grace towards us. To the Christian who has peace, and to whom the love of the Father has been revealed, it is perfectly clear, that if he has any other feeling about sin, it is not the Spirit of God which produces it. If we have failed, the Spirit will make us sorrowful, but He will never tell us that the Master of the House is not our Lord; this thought would be the fruit of unbelief. But here the Apostle goes a little further; he supposes faith to be in exercise, and he places the word in the hand. Satan will tell us that we are not able to use the sword of the Spirit. Then this same spirit, who recalls the passage, silences Satan. Again, look at Christ in His temptation, Christ who never lost His confidence. The Spirit was there in power. Christ had his loins girded, and He had on the breastplate of righteousness; He was calm and knew how to use the very passage which was suitable for the circumstance. Paul supposes a Christian who is standing fast in this power of the Spirit, and who completely stops the mouth of Satan, when he tries in a thousand ways to make him fall. Such a Christian having all the defensive weapons, is able to handle the sword of the Spirit, and when the Spirit in him is not grieved, He bears witness to the favor of God. The word of God is the most powerful of the weapons of the Christian's strength.

## Verses 18-20

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The second weapon which is given to us, is prayer in the Spirit; it is that prayer which springs from the energy of the spiritual life when the Spirit is not grieved in us; the same Spirit, which acting in us, uses the Word, becomes a Spirit of intercession and seeks the interposition of God in favor of the saints, and of the work of God in the world. It is a soul at ease in the presence of God—a soul watching, instead of allowing itself to be surprised; and its prayers, instead of being complaints, will be according to the power of the Spirit; we can then use prayer as men who have watched, and who have found in watching, subjects for the intervention of God. We may be afflicted, cast down, without being under the power of the enemy.

If I hear bad news, whether relating to the Church of God, or to a brother, it will make me sorrowful, and cast me down, as it did Paul, who had fightings without and fears within. But though thus sorrowful, if Satan has nothing in us, the consequence of this depression will be communion with God, instead of having allowed our affections to wander; we are in the presence of God, we watch with Him in order to speak to Him; but if this is not the case, Satan will take us unawares in moments of carelessness. If we walk with God, this will cause prayers according to the mind of God. The broken heart finds in Jesus the full certainty of God's favor. The Philippians, in their suffering state, had met with God instead of being frightened by it (Phil. 1:28); and though afflicted, if I am in the power of the Spirit, it will only cause more lively intercession. It is precious to see what is produced by affliction, even by chastening; if our walk is spiritual, it will only be an opportunity for gaining the victory, and for driving away Satan. All the members are united to the Head, and by His Spirit interested in all that concerns Him. They cannot always act themselves in such or such a case; but they can, like the centurion, say to Christ, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed."

As we have seen that the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit, so also what importance does the Lord attach to prayer? There are two kinds of prayer: that which is the expression of our wants, and that which is made in the energy of the Spirit, and which is infallibly answered. Whether for handling the sword of the Spirit, or for prayer, the Christian life must already exist; in order to be able to pray for others, our own life must be with God. There is amongst Christians too little intercession; because they come to a meeting for prayer, after leading a life of languishing, absorbed by present things. The consequence is, their prayers discover the weakness of the individual, and not the work of the Spirit for the good of the Church. Too often, alas! it is a settling as to our own failures. If we were watchful therein in our daily walk, our prayers would be intercessions, instead of supplications each day for our own faults. What we should desire is, that our individual prayers should be such as to enable us to pray for all saints; without this they will never have this powerful energy of the Spirit. Satan will find some means for overthrowing Christians. How desirable this makes it that there should be some able to bring in the aid of God. The more, whether it be an individual or a body of persons, we are faithful as to our position in this world, the more shall we be exposed to the ambushes of the enemy; and if we do not thus keep close to God, the enemy will find some way of making havoc. We see here, that the most faithful

and advanced Christians feel their dependance upon God, and on all saints. The apostolic gift of Paul, depended in one sense on the prayers of the saints; God intended it to be so; in order that the Church might be united in its affections (2 Cor. 1:11). The apostle was in a prominent position, and perhaps he received power through the prayers of a poor bed-ridden woman; but all hidden fruits will be seen in the last day. It is an encouraging thing to see, that God honors the hidden members which are the least honorable to the eyes of the flesh. This thought encourages us to walk humbly in our place. Frequently there are persons hidden out of sight, who are the means of blessing for those who are in a prominent position. We ought to think of the praise which God gives, and not of that of men. The only thing in our service is to glorify God. If my heart, which no one sees, does not beat, I cannot run. There are individuals

who are truly the heart of the Church; it is not often the things that are seen, which are the most precious in the sight of God.

## Verses 21-24

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In these last verses, we have the expression of the tenderness of Paul in sending Tychicus to the Ephesians. We see how he counted upon the affection of the saints.

## Fragment: Circumstances and the Holy Spirit

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God has prepared in each time circumstances suited to the impulse which his Spirit would give. All the circumstances were prepared for the reformation. Just so were they all also prepared for Christianity. The blindness of philosophy can only see the circumstances, and cannot see the power of God which acts in them.

Incredulity is always the same; but those who act from faith know well enough that they are guided by quite another thing than circumstances; often, indeed, in their simplicity, they know not that circumstances do favor them, save in the sense of the promise that all things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to his purpose; and such are not among the feeblest. If one must speak as a man, I should say that the man who has but one idea ordinarily does more than he who knows how to philosophize upon everything. The energy of the one and the abstraction of the other (who judges everything) are rarely united.

That Christians in general yield more or less (alas!) to the influences which surround them, is commonly true. Yet, often, the contrary is the case; and where wealth and worldliness reign, those who seek to leave all for Christ's sake, may, perchance, be accused, not of radicalism, but of being aristocrats, who were discontented with what was national, and may, by the philosophers, be considered as a reaction to the extreme of democracy.

No matter, if the Spirit acts, God produces the fruits of His grace, and the world judges them, passes on and perishes in its own wisdom. Christians may fall also under the influence of the philosophy and systematization of the age. May they that are ours avoid that as they avoid politics. Scientific reasonings upon passing events neither save souls nor raise the fallen Christian. We are the servants of God; God will prepare and direct every circumstance, we need not concern ourselves therewith save to admire the good hand of our God. Our part is to follow the impulse of the Holy Spirit and to guide ourselves by the word of God.

The Holy Spirit, when he acts, knows how to touch all the chords of the human heart and to adapt himself to them in grace, reserving to God all His rights and all His sovereignty; but it is God alone who knows how to do this. Power is needed.

The power and the grace of the Holy Spirit it is which we have to seek, and not to be either democrats or aristocrats or despots we must however, be divine, and walk according to the principle of the grace of Christ in whom the sovereignty of God and the heart of man unite in one and are at peace. God wills that matters should not prosper without that; for they would, then, prosper without Himself.

## Fragment: Good News

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The Gospel of God's Son is good news: good news of His person: blessed expression! All until the gospel was a claim upon man. A claim can never be good news. The gospel never alters the claim of God upon man, but maintains it; and shews that all is over with man, because he never can meet that claim, But the gospel brings in the power of God: power on behalf of man: not power to help man to meet the claim of God upon him. But it reveals the righteousness of God, consequent upon man being altogether without strength. Thus peace flows into the soul, when it ceases from everything else and submits to the revealed righteousness of God, which is upon every one that believeth. While a person is looking for help, he is under law, and has never been in God's presence. The thought of help may be held while a person is looking forward to some future meeting with God; but if I am in the presence of God Now, help will not do. I am lost. I want now righteousness and pardon: and I want it now. And the soul will not have solid peace until it is in the presence of God, righteous and pardoned. The apostle says, "The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, because therein is the righteousness of God revealed." A righteousness which is declared unto all, to Jew and Gentile, yea, to every creature, and which is upon all them that believe.

## Fragment: Leading Heads of Psalms

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Leading Heads Of Psalms.

Psa. 1, 2 -The righteous man flourisheth; and the Lord of the inheritance set up. The order is blessed: first, righteousness established in Him who was separate from sinners; then the men of the earth set against the Just One; but His triumph in resurrection, and the inheritance given to Him and given by Him to those who overcome in and by him. See Rev. 2:26-27. Compare John 17:22.

Fragment: Leading Heads of Psalms

## Leading Heads of Psa. 3

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The power of faith in suffering in righteousness, communion unhindered by it-trial in the flesh, but joy in the Lord. -This the circumstances of the righteous man who would not walk in the way of the ungodly, therefore they rose up against Him, but His delight was in the law of the Lord and the Lord was with Him, all help in Him and in Him alone, and this prevailing over all the power of the enemy.-This was realized in Christ when in weakness in the flesh-and such the leading of His Spirit in those that are His, in like circumstances.

## And of Psa. 5

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Verse 1 to 3.-Engagement with the Lord above, when in circumstances in the earth below-this realized in Jesus Christ the righteous-and in those in such circumstances under the leading of the Spirit of Christ.

Verse 4 to end.--Expression of righteousness unto the Lord concerning those that are in the earth, in the power of holy separation of heart, in engagement and delight in the ways of the Lord.

Fragment: Leading Heads of Psalms

Leading Heads Of Psalms.

Psalm 7. - In the sufferings of Christ, in the day of His humiliation, He looked up unto Him that was able to save Him from death. No delivering power was sought in the earth; but He cried unto GOD against its oppressive power; and here is the patience and faith of the saints.

Righteousness and grace had no restraining power, when presented in all their blessedness in the person of Christ; nor have they on evil men, when found by His Spirit, in His saints. They rather provoked evil nature, and drew out its enmity; but the righteous makes his complaint unto GOD, in patient endurance.

While in the earth, righteousness was rejected in Christ; He looked up, and now a new thing is seen. The enemies are cast down; the name of the Lord is honored; and the congregation of the peoples compass Him about; and such intelligence of blessed victory given to the saints in Christ, led. by His Spirit, as the truth is in Him. Such the just living by faith.

And now the end of all is seen; the wicked perishing in his own pit, and the righteous praising the Lord Most High.

Fragment: Leading Heads of Psalms

Leading Heads Of Psalms.

Psa. 8-The glory of Christ in the kingdom, unfolded by Him who knows the end from the beginning. In Matt. 21, when a sample of the kingdom was given, in the king riding into Jerusalem, Jesus quoted and applied this Psalm to it. Again, the apostle calls the things of it "the world to come brought out consequent to the sufferings of Christ, and His present place at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honor, when all things shall be put under him, which we do not now see.

Then will the name of the Lord be excellent in all the earth; His glory set above the heavens; the enemy and the avenger stilled; the babes praising His name; everything that hath breath praising the Lord.

## Fragment: Leading Heads of the Psalms

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Leading Heads Of Psalms.

Psa. 6-Righteousness expressed in deep sorrow and bitterness under chastisement from the Lord. This bitter indeed, because joy and communion with the Lord is hindered; but in the spirit of righteousness, the appeal is to the mercy of the Lord. In that day the enemies of the righteous prevailed; but when the chastisement was past, then too did their power cease.

Mark the difference between the bitter experience in this Psalm, because it was the Lord, and the uninterrupted joy of Psa. 3, 4, because it was only man; and therefore joy and communion with the Lord was unhindered. This intelligence is very blessed. It is the very contrast with unrighteous men; communion is unknown to them, the want of it is no sorrow; but they have no escape to the sanctuary in the day of trial at the hand of man, and under this they sink.

## Fragment: the Son's Work in John

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How perfect the Son does His work in John's gospel. He takes up one sinner after another throughout chapters 1-10, and does not leave them for the hand of any other; but one and all He perfects Himself, giving them the sense of this, that on leaving His presence they had already found all they wanted as sinners:-no ordinance, no apostle, no church, was needed to improve their state..

He takes up each of His saints in chap. 13, and washes them "clean every whit," fully ready, like accepted guests, to enter the house in a way worthy of it.

He takes up the house itself in chap. 14, and prepares it for them-does this service all Himself-and then He takes up His saints all together, returning and receiving • them unto Himself, to the house thus prepared for them. Chapter 14 again,

There is a completeness and a singleness in all these operations. He does each service Himself alone, and does it perfectly like the Son of God.

## Fragments

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Grace free, full, generous, large-hearted mercy and forgiveness, "the kindness of God," is the leading idea in Christianity. And there is no spring of virtue or of service like this.

If an aggrieved one were to come to the man that had injured and insulted him, and stretch out his hand, and declare his full and hearty forgiveness, and desire for reconciliation, what would so bind the man to him as this? What would establish pure, happy, abiding friendship between them like this? Yea, and what would honor and gratify the offerer of all this like its ready acceptance by him who had offended?

And this is found in Christianity. Nay, this is its first great element: the salvation of God, published on the atonement, He Himself has perfected.

"To every proselyte, at first admission,

Full innocence it lends; whate'er his crimes

Before have been, he 's white and free and just,

And equall'd with the veterans of virtue;

First wears the laurels, then begins the fight."

Gambold's Martyrdom of Ignatius.

We may oft learn by the failure of others. Among the reformers, Calvin was remarkable. Of sufficient integrity of heart, through grace, to honor profoundly the word of God, and of energy sufficient to give origin to a system,-in theory, he recognized in many respects the truth of the ministry. In practice, he formed for himself a system adapted to circumstances and to his own peculiar character. More light entered-the word was searched. The energy of the Holy Spirit was in action; and that which Calvin had created as a system, no longer answers either to the creative energy of its author, or to the wants produced by the Holy Spirit. Those who, urged on by the Holy Spirit, have searches the Word, have found themselves, while following the Word and the principles and truths which Calvin himself had found therein, outside of His system in many respects. They followed the Word and not the system.

Of course, thenceforth they became objects of attack. They were innovators, etc., etc.

May Grace keep us free from all systems of our own, and diligent in the study of the Word.

### Fragments

In Lev. 6 the trespass committed against the Lord, has its immediate expression in a man's own want of righteousness and grace towards his neighbor. His act was, shewing what he himself was: though against the Lord, still it was unto his neighbor: the immediate question was between him and his neighbor, yet against the Lord, but mercy for him, as in Psa. 51:4: so with Paul, the

blasphemer, persecutor and injurious, it was ignorantly in unbelief: it assumed not in his conscience the direct rejection of the grace of God.

In Num. 15 the presumptuous sin is not in ignorance, nor to a neighbor, but reproaching the Lord, despising the word of the Lord. In the beginning of the chapter, the Lord revealed what was a sweet savor unto Him, in an offering made by fire: this could not be deviated from: there was one ordinance for them of the congregation, and ALSO for the stranger: and this an ordinance forever. One law and one manner shall be for you and for the stranger that sojourneth with you (verses 15, 16).

It is a solemn thing to offer a sweet savor unto God: the savor of Christ is sweet unto him: God can have no delight in anything where the savor of Christ's name is not: be it what it may, it is sin either ignorantly done, and remedy in mercy opened up, or, with high hand, the Lord reproached and His word despised.

#### Fragments

Sacred and common biography are not the same. In the holy volume, the faults even of the best of men are impartially set down, and there we are informed how even such faults were graciously overruled to bring about good. But memoirs written by uninspired men, are apt to dwell chiefly upon the good qualities and actions of their worthies; notwithstanding there are times when the whole character of both the one and the other looks very critical.

Scripture places the origin of evil just where our own sad experience finds it; namely, in the appetency to "know good and evil"; to know what pleasure is to be found by one thing and another, and how it relishes. The secret of our monstrous lust of knowledge is unbelief, or distrust of God; as if he had omitted to give us every good, because he grudged us something; as if he had some design to withhold or forbid what might yield us further enjoyment.

#### Fragments

That which is hidden in darkness is not so effectually hidden as that which is hidden in light: for "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." What BE hides in His own light, no creature can find. The creature can grope in darkness and hope to find, or can accustom the eye to see where darkness is not perfect; but light closes, through its feebleness, the eye. Our guilt-where is it? The Lamb that died in our stead is alive again, in the midst of the throne, and that which proclaims what we were in ourselves, proclaims what God is in Himself, and what we are in Christ.

The principle of democracy is, that man has the right to choose his own rulers, the people being the source of power; though he may choose them according to certain qualities of which he is judge. The principle of ministry is the same amongst Presbyterians and Dissenters. They add, in one way or another, a certain investiture for its performance. The will of man is the principle common to democracy and radicalism, in things civil; and to Presbyterianism and dissent in things religious.

He who insists upon the gifts of God, is evidently upon an altogether different ground. Gifts that come from heaven have nothing to do with human expediency.

The more crooked the mind, the oftener will the straightforwardness of Christ our Savior have to cross it.

Fragments

Leading Heads Of Psalms.

Psa. 9-The outbreathings of the Spirit of Christ in this Psalm are most blessed-for in spirit He is in the things of glory, while in circumstance in the trials of rejected righteousness down here-and yet out of them in communion in the things to follow after: this, the blessed power of faith and patience of the saints, sustained and led by the Spirit of God. The enemies are seen defeated, though still in their own triumph. The faithful in Christ Jesus are triumphant in Him, though still, as sheep for the slaughter here. The principle is large and blessed, whether for those to be gathered in Zion, or for those to meet the Lord in the air: intelligent faith triumphs above present weakness in both-all to the praise of our one supreme Lord.

Psa. 10-The Spirit of Christ, detecting the imaginations and purposes of the evil man, and in abhorrence of them crying out unto the Lord, from the place of humiliation, for righteous judgment.

Ver. 16-18.-Power consequent on humiliation, because of the Lord reigning, and righteousness established. Blessed are they that endure in patience.

## The Gathering Together of the Children of God As Such in Our Days

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That it is God Himself who forms churches by the converting of souls through faith in His Son, is a principle that the Christian can hardly deny. Thus, here at Nice (or elsewhere), supposing we were to find one or two hundred persons converted? Those persons would collectively be the church at Nice, as we read that at Jerusalem, all they who had gladly received the apostles' word formed the church of that city. God Himself, in giving them by faith to be members of Jesus, constituted them also members of His church, of which Christ is the head (Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:19-22). No man on earth can change this, can either cut off or add a single member; herein man has only to recognize what God has wrought.

Now, can it be the will of the Lord that His disciples should put asunder what He hath joined together, so that in the same city, or town, or locality, there should be various assemblies of saints distinct from each other, and bearing different names-some the name of a country, some the name of such-and-such a man, and some a name arising from the profession of such-and-such particular point of truth; as if Christians had not all one Father, one Savior, one faith, one heavenly and eternal country? (Eph. 4:3-6; Gal. 3:26-28; Col. 3:11). No, such was not the Lord's mind when He said, " That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me" (John 17:21). To this many will reply, that this portion of Scripture speaks only of the spiritual and invisible oneness of the children of God, which will ever exist amongst those who are members of Jesus Christ. But the words added by our Lord tell us clearly His mind, That the world may believe that Thou hast sent me." The world believing only that which it sees, cannot believe in the existence of the Head of that of which the body is nowhere to be seen in its true unity, but only fragments scattered here and there. This body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, was the appointed means (through the manifestation of its unity by one assembly of saints in each locality), of leading the world to believe in its (the body's) glorified head.

And this, indeed, was once manifested in Jerusalem, when the disciples gathered together in one place, and moved by the same spirit, " continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers" (Acts 2).

But soon the leaven of strifes leavened the whole lump (Matt. 13:33); and Paul was obliged to say to the Corinthians, " There is among you envying, and strife, and divisions. For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" (1 Cor. 3:3,4). Nevertheless, neither the Corinthians nor any other of the apostolic churches, seem to have entertained for a single moment the thought of forming separate churches in the same place, according to the particular views of some members of the body.

It was at a later period that this work of the enemy was accomplished; and now-a-days the principle of separation is even justified, and said to be a, necessary consequence of the varied moldings of the human mind. As if it was ever the purpose or will of God, that man's spirit should animate and direct the body of Christ, instead of the Spirit of Christ Himself. These divisions, we

are told, are the fitting occasions for the manifestation of grace and patience among Christians. As if, because God in His infinite wisdom brings good out of evil, the evil that we commit could cease to be evil; or that we should do evil that good may result from it; or, lastly, as if there will not ever remain a sufficient measure of infirmity, and diversity of views in the churches to exercise the patience and the graces of Christians (Rom. 14 and 15:3). Indeed, to separate from those whom we ought to love and bear with, is a singular way of spewing grace and patience!

Could we admire the love and patience of a husband and wife, who should choose to separate from each other, because they did not think exactly alike on all points, nor had the same dispositions, preferring each to live according to their own choosing, excepting the mutual agreement to be on friendly terms whenever they should meet?

Such, however, is the unity which the disciples of Jesus Christ are called to manifest, as some would have us think; seeking to persuade us, moreover, that that is all the Lord sought for His disciples, when He said, " That all may be one as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou has sent me!"

What, then, is the duty of those who believe? Let us hearken to the instructions of the apostles to the first disciples at Jerusalem-" Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40). Separated, then, from the world in which we live, according to this word, let us meet together in one place, continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Let us, above all, receive by faith that word of our Lord given, doubtless, with reference to the sad state of His church in such times as ours: " For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20).

Having faith in this word, let us persevere in meeting together as disciples for the breaking of bread; not forgetting the assembling of ourselves together, but exhorting one another unto love and good works (Acts 20:7, and Heb. 10:24,25). We shall then have the best of all systems, a Scriptural one • the gathering together of believers in the name of the Lord Jesus, and under the guidance of His Spirit.

If, in such assemblies, God should manifest the gifts of pastors and teachers, as He has promised to do in His church until the end (Eph. 4:11); it would be the duty of each member to recognize such, and to make use of the gifts granted by God to some for the edification of all (1 Cor. 16:15, 16; 1 Thess. 5:12,13; Heb. 13:17.)

This in no wise diminishes the privilege and obligation of each member to give out a hymn, to pray, to exhort, in the assemblies of the saints, according as the Lord shall Himself lead so to do by His Spirit (1 Cor. 14:26-33); for such was the custom of the churches before there were any elders or rulers appointed, as also afterward (Acts 2:41--43; 1 Corinth. 12 and 14.)

Indeed, we do not worship God as pastors and teachers, or ministers of the word, but as God's priests. Now, though all are not ministers of the word, yet all are worshippers to offer in the church spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ; the fruit of our lips confessing His name (1 Peter 2:5; Heb. 13:15). Where these principles are realized, or at least fully recognized, and then realized according to the measure of grace given; there do I see brethren gathered together, a church according to the word; that is " lively stones built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5).

If any think to condemn such principles, by asserting that God is a God of order and not of confusion, they only show their ignorance; for it is precisely with reference to this truth that the apostle exhorts us to follow out such a walk in the assemblies of the saints.

Such reasoning only proves that Christians who speak in this way, have quite another idea of order in the church of God than the apostle Paul. For him, it is order according to the Spirit and by the Spirit; for them, it is order according to the flesh and by the flesh.

Nor would gifts or ministry in such an assembly at all diminish the liberty to preach Jesus, belonging to every Christian; for he who is called to evangelize by the Lord does it on his own individual responsibility; as the first disciples in Jerusalem who, scattered abroad by the persecution, went from place to place, preaching the word of God (Acts 8:4).

Thus, on the one hand, the body of Christ would be manifested in its unity, in the meeting together of disciples around the table of the Lord for worship and mutual exhortation. And, on the other hand, a wide field for preaching the gospel left to the individual responsibility and activity of each.

And these two things, though so distinct from each other, are, nevertheless, almost universally confounded, in the present state of disorder into which the church is fallen.

For what, indeed, is the general character of meetings for the public worship of God. First of all, if we consider what passes in national churches, we find that faith and conversion (at least when the pastor is a converted man) are pressed on the hearts and consciences of the unconverted, who are, nevertheless, associated with believers in prayer and giving of thanks, and even admitted to the table of the Lord, as if they were brethren, members of Christ. The same principle is true as regards worship, among the various denominations of Dissenters, although separation is maintained at the Lord's table. The consequence of such confusion is, that both worship, and the preaching of the gospel respectively lose their true character. The preaching of the gospel loses its power, from the fact that while the congregation is exhorted to believe and to turn to God, on the one hand, it is nevertheless considered as occupying common ground with believers as regards worship, so that souls are thus kept in false security, and the word is deadened.

Worship, on the other hand, is enfeebled, because those who are considered as members of the church of God, and who receive the Lord's supper as such, are continually kept in a doubting state of soul, and from growing in grace, through the constant exhortation to believe and be converted.

Such, however, was not the custom of the apostles. They preached to the multitudes in the market-places, in the synagogues, and wherever it was possible so to do; but they met together with those who believed, their own disciples, in upper chambers, and there they prayed and gave thanks, broke bread, and exhorted one another (Acts 2:44; 4:23; 20:7, etc.).

To the multitudes they announced " faith and conversion for the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2; 3 etc.). To disciples gathered together as churches, " having believed, you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." " You were converted from idols unto God to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." " Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?" "And you are not your own, you are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (Eph. 1:13; 1 Thess. 1:9,10; 1 Cor. 6:19,20).

But when the first disciples were scattered, and had become mixed up with the world, the present worldly state of things was introduced into the church. One portion of the Christianized world, retaining perhaps truer principles about sacrifice and worship than others, has nevertheless completely profaned this holy truth of sacrifice by its unholy ceremonies and absurd usages. On the other hand, another portion of the Christianized world, while openly protesting against this sacrilegious profanation of the sacrifice of Christ, has, nevertheless, almost entirely laid' aside all true principles of worship, in the place of which preaching has been established, together with a worldly system of forms of prayer read from the pulpit. How could it be otherwise, when Christians had forgotten the assembling of themselves together? for who could pray, sing, or give thanks, in a word, " worship in spirit and in truth," excepting those " who, after they had believed, were sealed by the spirit" (John 4:24; Eph. 1:13).

Doubtless in many small assemblies, such a state of things has been felt to be unscriptural, and in part remedied; but a measure of this confusion will ever remain, so long as the assembling of the children of God is not realized.

The meeting together of several Christians for the purpose of preaching the gospel is also sometimes called, a "brotherly meeting or assembly," and not only so called, but put in the place of the united worship of the children of God. Most assuredly do I believe that the Christian is authorized to preach Jesus individually or collectively with his brethren, as he may feel led so to do. I believe that such assemblies are blessed for the conversion of sinners; but I do not believe that they can ever occupy the same ground as the meeting together of the children of God in the name of Jesus; for no where do I see, either in the teaching, or in the practice of the apostles, that preaching the gospel to the world was ever the rallying point for Christians. No! the table of the Lord, this is our common center, around which we are all one; for we are all partakers of that one bread (1 Cor. 10:17). We find the following expression in the Word of God, designating the meetings of the saints, " the disciples met together to break bread" (Acts 20:7).

A meeting for preaching the gospel is not properly the "gathering together of two or three in the name of the Lord, with whom he has promised to be present in their midst." Of course, I do not mean, that the Lord is not always present with his children, and more especially so when their purpose is to bear testimony to His grace unto the world, in order to bless that testimony; but I maintain that it is not to such a congregation that the promise above quoted applies. Indeed, who would dare apply to such an assembly, composed for the most part of unbelievers, the promise of the Lord's presence joined as it undoubtedly is to this other word, "All that ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." No, because it is evident that those who have not the Spirit of God, cannot discern the things of God, nor decide about them.

For similar reasons, it is evident that meetings for preaching the gospel, can in no wise be assimilated to those assemblies of the first disciples, of whom Paul speaks (1 Cor. 12; 14). Nor can such a congregation be compared to the one spoken of by Paul (Heb.. 10:26), where he says " Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." For, indeed, a congregation assembled

to hear the gospel preached, is not the assembling together of Christians, nor is it ever enjoined on them as a matter of obedience to the Word. For instance, I am perfectly free as a Christian to attend a meeting for preaching the gospel, whether as preacher or hearer; but the Word of God leaves that to my spiritual judgment, and never enjoins it as a positive command. For, indeed, it

might so be that there were twenty meetings for preaching the gospel in the place of my residence, and would to God there were more! But which of the twenty ought I to frequent?

But since Christians are called to meet together around the table of their Lord and Savior for worship and mutual exhortation, there is a positive and express command not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

But to conclude this part of my subject, I would say, that to preach the gospel individually or collectively is an excellent thing, but that it is never presented to us in the Word as the rallying point around which Christians are called to meet, thus manifesting their unity to the world. To present it as such, is to impart false notions concerning the unity of Christians; it tends to divide rather than to unite.

It is painful to be obliged to speak of so much failure and disorder in the church of God. But if we refuse to probe the wound, how can we apply the remedy? Such, however, is the conduct of many who seem resolved to shut their eyes to the evil, employing useless remedies of their own invention. "They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly." In order to bring about the union of Christians, we find some establishing meetings for the preaching of the gospel, others prayer meetings, missionary meetings, in short meetings of every kind and character. Christians go to Paris and to London at a great expense to meet with Christians whom they have never known, before, and whom perhaps they will never meet again on earth; but as for leaving the various sects of Christians, arranged according to man's wisdom or tradition, give up this, I say, in order to meet with Christians of one's own locality, around one table, and under the promised guidance of one Spirit, why, it is not even to be spoken of-anything else but that.

And yet the Lord asks for nothing else but that. He does not impose on our consciences such an endless variety of meetings of different kinds; He does not call us to manifest our oneness in so expensive and difficult a way, impracticable for the large majority of Christians, union for a few days only during the year, and therefore not based on true principles. What the Lord requires, is possible for all to realize, noiseless and without pomp, true in its character, and in all seasons, viz., simple union with those of our brethren in whose midst His providence has placed us. And the world, too, expects such union at the hands of Christians. Whence does it happen, says the world, that after having met with Christians assembled from the four quarters of the globe you come back to your town and your village to resume your former course, living apart from the two or three Christians of your locality worshipping and breaking bread, each one in his own sect.

What, indeed, is such union? Alas! we must confess the truth, the world is in the right. Such is not the union the Lord seeks among His dear disciples; and this brings us back to this principle of scripture: that all who are born of God should meet in the name of the Lord, and under the guidance of His Spirit. This alone will put the preaching of the gospel and worship in their respective places, giving to each its true character.

This is the true basis for the union of the children of God.

For my own part I can own no other; and I believe indeed that schism is just this-the laying of another foundation for the union of the children of God, than the one above mentioned. For example, Christians invite me to meet with them, but in so doing I must also worship and break bread with the world. - I refuse. -Who is schismatical? I who refuse? No! but those who, by uniting

the world to the worship of the children of God, put me on the obligation of refusing, that I may not disobey the word of our Lord, who forbids

His children to have communion with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14-18, Acts 2:40). Now nothing can oblige me to disobey the word of our Lord, although it may have been forgotten, and laid aside for many a century.

Other Christians again invite me •to meet with them, but then I must recognize such or such a particular confession of faith, or approve of such or such a system, or own a ministry not established by God.- I refuse.-Who is schismatical? Not I who refuse, but those who impose such and such conditions on our meeting together as the Lord has not imposed on His children. And to appeal to numbers, or to practices long established, or to any authority whatever, in a case where it is a question of principles, is nothing short of the principle of popery.

It is evident, moreover, that in meeting with Christians who have embraced a particular system or form of church government, I am necessarily more or less separated from those who have embraced another system of church order; and thus, since each is occupied in erecting a different compartment in the Lord's fold, these varied forms and systems become so many hindrances the gathering together of the sheep of Christ's flock in one fold, under the guidance of one Shepherd.

Those, on the contrary, who impose on their brethren no other conditions than those required by God Himself; viz., the being born again and separation from the world, such Christians do what they can towards the manifestation of the true oneness of the children of God, and are in no wise guilty of schism, however frequently such an accusation may be brought against them.

These are my reasons for abstaining to join myself to any of the various denominations of Christians known as Vaudois, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, Independent, or Baptist Churches, etc., etc. Not that I do not heartily desire the union of the children of God, but, on the contrary, just because I do desire it, and can in no wise be a party to the setting up of so many hindrances towards its accomplishment, which is the case as regards all such systems of man's invention. For these reasons, I take my stand simply as a Christian, standing on Christian ground. On such ground, I can give the hand of brotherly communion to all who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Savior and mine, walking together in the same paths, unless man's ordinances and systems interfere. On such ground, too, I can invite all my brethren to meet together as one in Christ, a privilege which I should undoubtedly lose all right to exercise, were I to join myself to any of the numerous sects into which the family of God is divided in our days.

Would that this blessed unity of the children of God were better understood - that it were more realized! 'what blessings might we not expect for the Church and the world If, for instance, all the children of God dwelling here at Nice were to meet together in one place, and in one spirit, what light, what encouragement, what consolation would they not receive from the exercise of the different gifts bestowed by the Lord on His children! What a testimony to the world! Might we not hope that we should then witness, to a certain extent, the accomplishment of that word of scripture-" If all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth" (1 Cor. 14:24,25). But in order to do this, we must give up all those carnal distinctions of Protestants and

Vaudois, of Episcopalians and Presbyterians, etc., etc.-we must lay aside all pretensions to the delegated authority of a minister, a pastor, or an evangelist, from whatever church, academy, or committee such authority may proceed.

We must consent to be nothing but Christians, disciples, brethren, meeting together under the guidance of the Spirit, ready to receive all that He may give us, were it through the channel of the weakest amongst us; and ready, also, to be used by the same Spirit according as He may deign to use us for the edification of our brethren.

The Spirit is one; if we give ourselves up to His direction, He is mighty by His divine power to gather together the scattered members of Christ's body, for the realization and manifestation of our unity in Him. But if, while desiring this unity, we nevertheless continue to seek it in connection with the varied systems of man's ordering-if we seek to uphold such systems, in any measure or degree, or by any skilful compromise whatever, we leave the sure and solid ground of the Word of God, which knows nothing of such systems, nor of such compromise, to place ourselves on the sandy foundation of man's institutions, which have ever varied, and will ever vary according to times, circumstances, and locality; and which, in short, have never remedied the evil. Instead of walking by faith, expediency would be our principle in such a case.

Brethren, the Word reminds us that " the time is short," and that the Lord is coming. Do we wish that He should find us mixed up with the world, and divided amongst ourselves, like unto those who beat their fellow-servants, and eat and drank, and were drunken? O no; but rather like unto Israel, who, waiting for the promised deliverance, separated themselves from the Egyptians, to meet together as one family, in all the places of their habitation, around the paschal lamb, the symbol of their deliverance.

Thus separated from the world, and meeting together as one family, in our varied dwelling-places here below) we, too, are called to await the return of our blessed Savior, sheaving forth His death, and exhorting one another unto love and good works.

For occupying such ground, and leaning no longer on Egypt for help, we shall increasingly and blessedly experience the Lord's own faithfulness, and the sufficiency of His word and Spirit, in all that appertains to the gathering together and direction of His saints here on earth.

Thus our gathering together unto Himself will daily and increasingly become the real object of our hope, being enabled to join in the cry of the Spirit and the Bride-

"COME, LORD JESUS."

## Habakkuk

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How diverse and perfect is the development of the ways of God in His word! Not only does it contain the great events that establish the fact of His government, and the character of that government, not only the proofs of His fidelity to His people, and his estimate of the evil that led to judgment, but also His answer to every feeling caused by the series of events by which He chastised them, His relief for the anguish that must be felt by one who is faithful, on account of the affliction of God's beloved people, together with the profitable exercise of his faith.. The perfect ways of God are unfolded on the one side, and on the other, the heart is formed to the intelligency of those ways, and to the enjoyment of the full effect of the faithfulness of the God of love; while, during the expectation of this effect, confidence in God Himself is established, and the links of the heart with God are abundantly strengthened.

It is of this latter part, the development of faith and of spiritual affections amid the trial, that Habakkuk treats in his prophecy. It speaks of the exercise of the heart of one who, full of the Spirit, is attached to the people of God. Still, it is Israel that is brought before us.

First of all, the prophet complains that the evil which exists among the people is insupportable. This is the natural effect of the working of the Spirit of God, in a heart jealous for His glory and detesting evil. The heart of the prophet, formed in the school of the law, speaks perhaps of the evil in the spirit of the law. The Spirit of God does not bring him out of this position, which was properly that of the prophet before God, and he judges the evil in a holy manner, according to a heart that was faithful to the blessings of the Lord.

Thereupon, the Lord reveals to him the terrible judgment, by which He will chastise the people who thus gave themselves up to evil. He would raise up against them the Chaldeans, those types of pride and energy, who, successful in all their enterprises, sought glory only in the opinion they had of themselves. Their head, forsaking the true God who had given them their strength, would worship a God of his own.

But all this awakens in the prophet a different sentiment from that which he before experienced. Here was his God denied by the instrument of vengeance; and the beloved people trodden down by one more wicked than themselves. But faith knows that the true God is the Lord, and (already a profound consolation) that it is the Lord who has established the wicked in power for the correction of His people. But shall they continue to fill their net with men, as though they were but fish? There the prophet stops, that God, in His time, may explain these dealings which disquiet his heart. He hearkens, he watches, like a sentinel, to receive the answer of God to the anxiety of his soul. God, in order to comfort His prophet and all His faithful people, commands him to write the answer so plainly, that he who runs may read it. He bears in mind the affections of His people. He appreciates them, for, in truth, they are given, according to His own heart, by the Holy Ghost.

He will, even before the deliverance, comfort the heart that is oppressed by the feelings to which faith itself gives birth. If faith produces them, the answer to that faith will not be wanting.

Deliverance would not yet come. The vision was yet for an appointed time, but deliverance on God's part would assuredly come. God, who set value on faith, would himself intervene. If deliverance tarried, the faithful should wait for it. It would surely come and would not tarry. To the heart of man it tarried. Patience was to have its perfect work. The patience of God had been long and perfect: The time of deliverance should not tarry one moment after the hour appointed by God in His wisdom.

God had judged the spirit of pride, whose effects had overwhelmed the heart of the prophet. The oppressor was not upright, but the portion of the just was to live by faith, and by faith he should live. A deliverance for the people which did not, so to say, require this faith, might have been preferred. But God would have the heart thus exercised. The righteous must pass through it and learn to trust in the Lord, to count on Him in all circumstances, to learn what He is in Himself, come what may.

Nevertheless, although God allowed His people, on account of their sins, to be crushed by injustice and oppression; the conduct of the oppressor cried unto heaven, and brought judgment on his own head. Woe unto him! for even apart from God's relations with His people, it is He who judges the earth and delivers it from the oppressor and the wicked. His graven image shall not profit him; what can the dumb stone do for the man that set it up? But the Lord was in His holy place, in His temple. All the earth should keep silence before Him. It should be filled with the knowledge of His glory, as the bed of the sea with the waters that cover it. The people of the world should labor as in the fire for very vanity-and this, from the Lord; for He will fill the world with the knowledge of Himself.

This answer recalls to the prophet all the glory of the Lord, when He appeared for His people at the beginning, when He came out of His place and overturned every obstacle in order to establish His people in blessing.

At this remembrance of His power, the prophet trembles, but in the consciousness that it is the source of a perfect and assured rest in the day of trouble, when the destroyer should come up and invade the people.

He concludes his prophecy with the blessed result of all these precious lessons, namely, the expression of perfect confidence in the Lord. He would rejoice and be glad in Him, if all blessings should fail. The Lord Himself was his strength, his trust and his support, and He would set him on the high places of His blessing, giving him, as it were, hind's feet to ascend there by His favor.

There is nothing finer than this development of the thoughts of the Spirit of God, the sorrows and anxieties produced by Him, the answer of God to give understanding and strengthen faith, in order that the heart may be in full communion with Himself.

It will be remarked here, that it is the idolatrous oppressor who especially appears, although the first invasion is described, for that was the immediate cause of the prophet's anguish. The Chaldeans therefore are distinctly named. It is that people, as we know, who reduced the people of God to captivity.

## Haggai

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THE three last prophets prophesied after the Babylonish captivity. God, as we have seen in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, brought back a small remnant of His people, who were re-established in Jerusalem and in the land; but the throne of God was not again set up there, neither was the royalty of the house of David re-instated in its original authority. The empire of the Gentile head, had been in a certain sense judged as not having fulfilled its duty to God, who had given it its authority.

But another empire, raised up among the Gentiles, had taken the place of Le first; and, while favorable to the Jews by God's disposal, still held the people of God in subjection to its yoke-the yoke of those who were not in covenant with God, but who were still aliens to His promises. God recognized the power of the empire which He had established; Israel was therefore dependent on the favor of those who ruled over them because of their sins, and had to wait upon God to render them favorable, by worshipping Him according to His merciful appointments, until the Messiah should come, who would be their Redeemer and Deliverer.

Deprived of almost everything, Israel was not deprived of the loving-kindness of their God, on which they should have reckoned, and of which they had received a striking testimony, in the return of the remnant from the lands in which they had been captive. If all else were lost, the fear of God and His law in their hearts remained to them; and godliness might now be exercised in the manner which He had prescribed.

The three prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, set before us the encouragements which God gave the people, that they might be faithful in their new position; and the testimony against their unfaithfulness, demanded by the decay of their piety, and the total want of reverence for the Lord into which the people had fallen. The temple was necessarily the center of this imperfect and intermediate state of the people. It was there, if God allowed, the re-establishment of their worship, that the hearts of the people should center. That was the outward form in which their piety as a people should be expressed. It was thus that the return of their heart to God should be manifested. Whatever deficiencies there might be in the restored Levitical service, still it was the house of God, to which was attached all that could be re-established, and was the center of its exercise.

But the faith of the Jews was quickly enfeebled, and they ceased to build. There were difficulties, no doubt. It was not now as in the days of Solomon, when everything was at the disposal of the king, whose power extended over all the neighboring 'countries. But God had shown His favor towards His people, by inclining the heart of the king of Persia to favor them; and Israel should have had confidence in the kindness of God, and have expected its fruits, but, full of unbelief, they were speedily discouraged.

God chastised His people, but He did so at the fitting time. He employs the means which His sovereign grace so often used, in the history we have been considering. He raises up a prophet, and even two, to revive their courage and stimulate them to the work. In the dealings of God, two

things aid in deciding the right time for His intervention, namely, moral considerations and God's arrangement of events. In this case, God had sufficiently chastised His people to make manifest His governmental dealings, in the relations of grace which He now established with them, by means of the prophets; and He had raised up a prince who was disposed-if the people acted in faith-to acknowledge the will of God and the decrees of Cyrus.

Having thus prepared all, both morally and providentially (for He makes everything work together for our good), He sends His prophet to animate their courage and their faith, so as to lead them to accomplish that which had always been their duty.

They should always have leant directly upon God, and have gone on with the work, unless hindered by force. Now also, they are called to proceed with it, resting on God, without knowing the king's mind.

Their confidence must be in God Himself. Moreover, without this, there would have been neither piety nor faith in their labors. The king's support had been prepared by God, for the moment in which their faith should have been manifested. In fact, the difficulty did not fail to arise; but faith being in exercise they continued to build, in spite of their enemies; being directed in their reply to these enemies, by the wisdom of God, and the king. gives it his sanction. The difficulty is a real one, but it is only an obstacle to the unbelief of our hearts, for faith reckons upon God, and performs that which He wills, and difficulties are as nothing before Him. Unbelief can always find excuses, and excuses too that are apparently well-founded; they have only this capital defect, that they leave God out.

The subject of Haggai is the Temple. God having brought back the captives, they immediately seek their own ease, without seeking to rebuild the house of the Lord. Was it then a time to rebuild their own? There was tranquility enough for the latter-it required no faith-the world made no opposition. The prophet exhibits the practical effect of this, the sensible chastisements of God, even as to their temporal interests. And why these chastisements. They neglected God, in neglecting His house. In truth, if they had thought of God, His house would have been their first object.

The people, moved by the fear of the Lord, hearkened to the words of His servant the prophet. But another difficulty stands in the way of faith. The painful inferiority of all that can be accomplished by the remnant of His people, when God brings them back from captivity. They can do nothing in comparison with the former manifestation of His glory in the midst of His people. The effect of the people's fall, and of the captivity they had suffered, is felt in everything. God cannot identify His glory with an authority different from His own, exercised over His people (and must needs be so) as the result of His righteous judgment, of His government on earth. He may lift them up, may restore them, because He loves them; but it is no longer the same thing. He cannot re-establish that direct connection, which brings with it the manifestation of His power and glory. That relationship had ended in the judgment.

The consciousness of this inferiority tends to weaken faith.

The grace of God meets this difficulty, by the testimony of the prophet. It is a very sorrowful thing to see the ruin of that which God established in blessing, and the weakness and imperfection of that which is raised upon those ruins, although even this is the fruit of His precious grace.

The prophet, without troubling himself as to the king's intentions, encourages the people by turning their thoughts to the Lord Himself, and showing them that, after all, the Lord reigned, cared for them, and would have them act in view of what He was for them, and seek His glory. For, weak as they were, He would thus be in relationship with them.

But the testimony of God graciously takes into account also the natural effect of the mean appearance of that which they could do for Him (for God thinks of everything that concerns His people). He was as faithfully their God now as at the best period of their history. The proof of it was indeed stronger. He was with them. The word that went forth from His mouth when He brought them up from Egypt, He would maintain. His Spirit should remain among them. They were not to fear. But while sustaining the faith of this feeble remnant by His tender mercy, He goes much farther. If He could not manifest Himself among them, on account of their fall, and of the establishment of another order of things, the time would come for His own intervention by His own power. He would shake all things, because the creature could not sustain the weight of His glory, and would establish this glory by His power, and would fill His earthly dwelling-place with His glory.

Not only should the earth be shaken-this had often happened; but the enemy who exercised the power of darkness, had always led men to corrupt everything afresh, and to degrade all that God had established in blessing. But now, the heavens and the earth, the sea-authority on high-and all that was organized below-all established order and all that floated, unorganized in the world,-and all the nations should be shaken-and the Object of Desire to all nations should come; and the house which they were now rebuilding with so much trouble, which was so contemptible in comparison with its former glory; should be filled with glory by the Lord.

The expression which I have rendered by " the Object of Desire shall come," is very difficult to translate. It appears to me that, looking at the context, I have given the sense, and that the Spirit of God designedly expressed Himself in vague terms, which-when the mind apprehended the true glory of the house-would embrace the Messiah. The object of the passage is to certify that the house shall be filled with glory. Meanwhile outward glory should be granted it. The silver and the gold were the Lord's. But the nations, overthrown, oppressed, and oppressing one another, not knowing where to look for happiness, strength and peace, shall find in that One who alone should establish the glory of the Lord and bestow true peace, in a word, shall find in Christ alone, blessing and deliverance; and He shall be the glory of the house which the poor remnant were building. The latter glory of the house should be even greater than the former. It is not "the glory of the latter house "-the house is always considered as the same house. God will fill it with more glory at the end than at the beginning, and the peace of the Lord Himself shall have its seat there. This shall be accomplished in the last days. He who shall fill it with glory, has indeed come; but even while making eternal peace for our souls, the world was in such a state that He was obliged to say to the people, " Think not that I am come to bring peace, but a sword." Having shaken all nations, He will, coming in His glory, set peace in the earth.

Two other prophecies close the book of Haggai, relating, like the rest of its contents, to the house. The people who neglected the Lord had become, as it were, profane. That which is holy cannot sanctify profane things; but an unclean thing defiles that which is holy; for holiness is exclusive with respect to evil. The presence of evil destroys holiness, by the very fact of its presence, unless the holiness be that of a nature which, by its own existence, excludes all that is contrary to it- such

as the nature Of God. But when God is admitted and acknowledged, He can bless by the power of His presence. Thus, from the day that the people even sought to recognize and to realize that presence among them, blessing proceeded from it. The second prophecy returns to the shaking of all things. In that day, the governor of Judah, the heir of David, should be as a signet on the hand of Him by whom all things were shaken. While encouraging the people at the time of the prophecy-a time when they so greatly needed it, this prophecy, in naming Zerubbabel, has Him in view who, when God will shake the heavens and the earth, shall be the true seed of David, and the heir of his crown according to God, the Christ of God, the Elect from among the people.

The judgment mentioned in ver. 22, appears to me not the judgment of the head of the beast, but that of the nations who, at that day, will come up against Jerusalem. All that sets itself up against the rights of the Lord, established according to His counsels at Jerusalem, rights that were identified with the house they were building, should be utterly overthrown. No doubt this is true in general of the kingdom of the beast, but the conditions of its existence are quite different. God had put Jerusalem under the power of the head of this empire-the crimes that draw down judgment upon him, are yet more audacious and intolerable than those of which the nations are guilty.

In sum, the object of this prophecy is to connect blessing on the earth with the house; and to show that, mean as it might be, its latter glory should be greater than the former. God, in establishing all in glory, according to the counsels of His grace, would introduce something much more excellent than that which had been committed to man, and established by his means. This is connected with the shaking of all things by His mighty hand, and with the establishment of David's Heir as the object of God's love, and the vessel of His power.

It will be observed that the Spirit of God, although He is present to bless His people, to encourage them, and to connect them with God in the worship that was to be offered Him in His house, yet acknowledges the authority of the Gentile empire. These prophecies are dated according to the years of the reign of the Gentile king. It is His will that the things of God be rendered to God, and the things of Caesar to him who then held the place of Caesar. It was God who had placed him there. We shall thus understand the perfect wisdom of the Lord in His reply (Mark 12:17), and the way in which the word is its expression.

Malachi neither places nor establishes anything as Haggai does, and Zechariah. He only pronounces judgment upon the result in Israel of that which God had done in grace, by re-establishing the remnant; showing how little the worship by which He had connected Israel with Himself, had been maintained in such a manner as to glorify Him.

## Hebrews 13:9-14

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Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For 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. We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the High Priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

## Hosea

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The prophet Hosea prophesied during the same period of time as Isaiah; but he is more occupied with the existing condition of the people-and especially of Israel -although he often speaks of Judah likewise. His prophecy is more simple, in its character, than that of Isaiah. His style, on the contrary, is extremely energetic, and full of abrupt transitions. The reign of that king of Israel which is given as a date to the prophecy, was outwardly a moment of prosperity to that portion of the land. The prophecy itself will inform us of its moral condition. The patience of God bore long with the rebellion of His people, taking pity on their affliction (see 2 Kings 17); even as long as this patience could be a testimony to the real character of the God who exercised it, and did not deny holiness and righteousness, nor give a sanction to sin; so that it was still possible to bless the people, without sacrificing all true testimony (even in the eyes of the heathen) to what God is. In a word, " until there was no remedy."

Jeroboam reigned during a period which commenced some years before the reigns of Uzziah, etc., kings of Judah. Uzziah began his reign fourteen years before the end of Jeroboam's reign. He reigned fifty-two years. Jotham reigned sixteen years. Ahaz sixteen years. Hezekiah twenty-nine years. So that Hosea prophesied seventy years, and perhaps longer; being a witness, during those long years, to Israel's rebellion against the Lord, his heart grieved and broken by the iniquity of a people whom he loved, and whose happiness he had at heart, as being the people of the Lord.

The prophecy of Hosea is divided into two parts; the revelation of God's purposes with respect to Israel, and the remonstrances which the prophet addresses to the people in the name of the Lord. In this latter part he frequently speaks of Israel as a whole; frequently also he distinguishes between Israel or Ephraim, and Judah. But I do not see that he addresses himself directly to Ephraim, i.e. to the ten tribes. He speaks of Ephraim, but not to Ephraim. Moreover, this is the general character of his prophecy - a kind of prolonged lamentation, expressing his anguish at the people's condition, while unfolding all the dealings of God towards them-except chap. 14, in which he calls Israel to such a repentance as shall take place in the last days.

The first three chapters compose the first part, or the revelations of God's purposes with respect to Israel. From the outset, Israel is treated as being in a state of rebellion against God. The prophet was to unite himself to a corrupt woman (a prophetic type, I doubt not), whose conduct was the expression of that of the people. The son to whom she gives birth is a sign, by means of the name which the prophet is to give him, of the judgment of God on the house of Jehu, and on the kingdom of Israel, which should cease to exist. In fact, after the extinction of Jehu's family, although there were several kings. all was confusion in the kingdom of Israel-the kingdom was lost. It is 'evident, that, although the zeal of Jehu was energetic in extirpating idolatry, so that in. His outward government God could sanction and reward it (and, as testimony must needs do so), yet the motives that governed him were far from pure. God, therefore, while in His public government blessing Jehu, shows here where He reveals His thoughts and His real estimate of the work, that

He judges righteously and holily; and that all which man brings in of ambition, of cruelty, and even of that false zeal, which is but hypocrisy, concealing the gratification of its own will, under the name of zeal for the Lord: in a word, that all which is of self, is not hidden from His eyes, and meets with its just reward; and, so much the more, from its being masked under the great name of the Lord.

Jezreel, formerly a witness of the execution of God's judgment on the house of Ahab, should be so now of the ruin of all Israel.

A daughter is afterward born to the woman whom the prophet has taken. God commands the prophet to call her Lo-ruhamah, i.e., "no more mercy." Not only was judgment executed upon Israel, but, apart from sovereign grace-the exercise of which was reserved for the last days-this judgment was final. There was no longer any room, for the long-suffering of God towards the kingdom of Israel. Judah should yet be preserved by the power of God.

A second son is named Lo-ammi, i.e., "not my people;" for now the Lord no more acknowledged the people to be His. Judah, who for a time maintained this position, although the ten tribes were lost, has at length, by her unfaithfulness, plunged the whole nation under the terrible judgment of being no longer the people of God, and the Lord being no longer their God.

God, having thus briefly, but clearly, pronounced the judgment of the people, immediately announces with equal clearness, His sovereign place towards them. "Nevertheless," saith He, by the mouth of the prophet; "the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered." But this grace opens the door to others besides the Jews. "In the place where it was said, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called the sons of the living God." The application of this passage to the Gentiles is stated by the apostle (Rom. 9:24-26); where he quotes the end of the second chapter in our prophet, as expressing grace towards the Jews, and the verse we are now considering as grace towards the Gentiles. While Peter (1 Peter 2:10), who speaks only to converted Jews, quotes the end of the second chapter only. There is no doubt that the Jews will come in, according to this principle, in the last days; but the Holy Ghost expresses Himself here-as He has done in a multitude of passages quoted by the apostle-so as to adapt Himself to the admission of the Gentiles, when the time, foreseen of God, should come. But here He goes farther, and announces the return of the children of Judah and of the ten tribes, re-united, and subject to one head, in the great day of the seed of God.\* It is said, "they shall come up out of the land;" and this has been supposed to mean their return from a foreign land; but I have an idea that it is much more; that they all come up, as one people, in their solemn feasts.

(\* This is the meaning of "Jezreel;" or, more exactly, "God will sow.")

Thus the judgment of a corrupt and faithless people, and grace towards the Gentiles, and afterward towards Israel, as a nation, are very plainly announced in words which, although but few, embrace the whole series of God's dealings.

The second chapter introduces some new elements of exceeding interest; and, at the same time, a magnificent revelation of the dealings of God, in grace, towards Israel. The opening words of the chapter appear to me to recognize the principle of a remnant, acknowledged by the heart of God as a people, and an object of mercy; while the nation, as a body, is rejected by the Lord. But the thought of Israel's restoration, announced in the last verse of chap. 1, gives the remnant its value

and its place, according to the counsels of God. "God has not cast off His people whom He fore-knew." Nevertheless, the Lord says, by the Holy Ghost, to the prophet, not "I have married thy mother, and I will not put her away;" but "say unto your brethren, Ammi (my people), and to your sisters, Ruhamah (received in grace);" that is to say, to those who, acted upon by the Spirit of God, really enter, in heart, into the mind of the prophet. Those who possess the character which made Jesus say, " These are my brethren and my sisters." Such a position, in the eyes of the prophet, have the people and the beloved of God. It is thus that Peter applies 2:23 to this remnant-that Paul reasons in Rom. 9-and that the Lord Himself can take the name of the True Vine.

The prophet, then (he alone could do it), was to acknowledge his brothers and sisters as in relation with God, according to the whole effect of the promise, although that effect was not yet accomplished. But, in fact, with respect to God's dealings, God had to plead with the mother-with Israel, looked at as a whole. God could not own her as married to Him: He would not be her husband. She must repent, if she would not be punished and made bare before the world. Neither would the Lord have pity on her children, for they were born while she was going after false gods. Israel ascribed all the blessings that the Lord had poured upon her to the favor of false gods, therefore the Lord had forcibly turned her back in her path; and since she knew not that it was the Lord who filled her with this abundance, He would take it from her, and leave her naked and destitute, and visit upon her all the days of Baalim, during which Israel had served them and had forgotten the Lord. But having brought this unfaithful woman into the wilderness, where she must learn that these false gods could not enrich her, the Lord Himself, having allured her into it, would speak to her heart in grace. There it should be, when she had understood where her sin had brought her, and should be alone with the Lord in the wilderness to which He had allured her, that He would comfort her, and give her entrance, through grace, into the power of those blessings which He alone could bestow.

The circumstance by which God expresses this return to grace is of touching interest. The valley of Achor should be her door of hope. There, where the judgment of God began to fall on the unfaithful people, after their entrance into the land, when God acted according to the responsibility of the people-there would He now show that grace abounded over all their sin. The joy of their first deliverance and redemption should be restored to them. It should be a re-commencement of their history in grace, only it should be an assured blessing. The principle of the relationship of Israel with the Lord should be changed. He would not be as a Master (Baali), to whom she was responsible, but as a Husband, who had espoused her. The Baalim should be entirely forgotten. He would take every kind of enemy out of their land, whether wild beast or wicked man, and He would betroth her unto Him in righteousness and in judgment, in loving-kindness, in mercies, and in faithfulness. She should know that it was the Lord. Israel being thus betrothed in faithfulness to the Lord, and such being the assured principles of His relations with her, the chain of blessing between the Lord and His people on earth should be secure and uninterrupted. The Lord should be in connection with the heavens, the heavens with the earth, the earth should yield her blessings, and these should meet all the wants of Israel, the seed of God. And He would sow Israel unto Him self in the earth, and her name should be Ruhamah-received in grace - Ammi, i.e., my people; and Israel should say, "Thou art my God." In a word, there should be an entire restoration of blessing, but on the ground of grace and of the faithfulness of God.

Chapter 3 reveals another detail of the people's history during the time of their rejection, a rejection followed by their return to God. Israel should remain for a long time apart, to wait for their God. They should have neither true God nor false god, neither king, nor priest, nor sacrifice; but afterward they should return, and should seek the Lord their God and David their king. That is to say, all Israel should seek the true royalty originally bestowed by God, of which Christ is the fulfillment. They should bow their heart before the Lord and His goodness in the latter days.

In chap. 4 we see that the prophet addresses the whole people together. In verse 15 he distinguishes Judah from Israel, warning the former not to follow the apostasy of the latter. He dwells upon the sins (ver. 2) of which the people were guilty. Israel is rejected from being a nation of priests unto the Lord, a glory which had been promised them (Ex. 19). This introduces the judgment of the priests, properly so called, who took pleasure in the sins of the people, that they might enrich themselves with the sacrifices. The proverb, " Like people, like priest," was exemplified in them. Whoredom and wine took all sound judgment from the heart; and the people of God asked counsel of their stocks and of their staff, sacrificed in the high places, and committed whoredom there. God would give them up to the fruits of their iniquity.

It is then that God exhorts Judah not to follow this course. Nevertheless, the Spirit of the Lord, in unfolding all the iniquity of Ephraim, committed in His sight, shows that Judah, also, was guilty before Him (ver. 10, 13).

Priests, people, king, all are addressed as objects of the judgment-all had given themselves up to violence, although God had rebuked them. They would not return to Him. Afterward, they should seek Him and not find Him. He would have withdrawn Himself from them. Another sin is imputed to them both. Ephraim had perceived his weakness, the consequence of his sin, and Judah his wound; but they had gone too far from the Lord to have recourse unto Him: they had sought help from the Assyrian. Could he deliver the sinful people from the judgment of the Lord? Surely not. God would be to them as a lion that rends its prey; and then He would go and return to His place, until they should acknowledge their offense. In their affliction they would diligently seek Him.

Chapter 6 This calls forth a touching address from the prophet, in which he entreats the people to return to the Lord. Faith has always this resource, because it sees the hand of God-its God-in the chastisement, and can appeal to the mercy of a well-known God. In ver. 4 the Spirit expresses the loving-kindness of God towards His rebellious children, and His readiness to meet the smallest movement in their heart towards good. Therefore had God sent unto them the testimony of the prophets-an extraordinary means, as we have seen, for maintaining in grace the relationship of the people with God; and that, morally and in reality, in the heart. It was not a question of outward forms: the moral relationship with God would be broken. He had raised up prophets, as a means of relationship with Himself, to bring back the hearts of the people. But, as Adam did in the garden of Eden, they had broken the covenant, on which, to them, depended the power of the blessings God had heaped upon them. They had acted treacherously towards Him. The Lord their God was ready to raise them up from their ruin; but if He came in, His presence brought to light that iniquity, which formed a moral barrier to this restoration. Thereupon the heart of the prophet overflows anew, in lamentation over their iniquity. The prophecy of Hosea is important in this respect, that it furnishes us with the moral picture of the people whom God has judged, the condition of this people, which made the judgment inevitable. There is nothing more affecting than this mixture, on God's part, of

reproaches, of loving-kindness, of appeal, of reference to happier moments. But all was in vain. He must needs judge, and have recourse to His sovereign grace, which would bring Israel back to repentance and to Him.

They encouraged the king and the princes in their wickedness. Already the fruit of Israel's iniquity was seen in the weakness of the people; strangers, also, devoured them; yet, for all this, they did not return to the Lord. If at times, under the sense of their misery, they howled upon their beds, they did not cry unto God. What a picture of man under the effect of sin, who will not turn to the Lord!

In chap. 8, it is especially the daring and continual violation of the law of their God, with which Israel is openly reproached, and which would bring judgment, with eagle swiftness, upon them. Observe here, that the devastation with which Israel is threatened, reaches even to the temple of the Lord. Israel had forsaken the Lord, to make altars of their own, and Judah had leant upon an arm of flesh. We may remark here that the prophecy presents Ephraim, as having entirely forsaken God, and as being plunged in iniquity, and under impending judgment; Judah, as being yet faithful outwardly, although at heart unfaithful too (see 6:11; 8:14; 9:12). Judgment should fall upon them both.

Chapter 9. We have here that touching mixture of affection and judgment, which we find again and again in this prophet. Ephraim should not remain in the land which was the Lord's, for God would not abandon His rights, whatever might be the iniquity of the people. They should go into captivity, and come no more into the house of the Lord. The prophet and the spiritual man should no longer be a link between them and the Lord. God would confound them, by means of that which should have enlightened and guided them. The prophet should even be a snare to their soul, although formerly a watchman from God. The corruption of Ephraim was as deep as in the days of Gibeah, the history of which is related at the end of the Book of Judges; and they should be visited. God had chosen Israel from among the nations, to be His delight, and they had gone after Baalpeor, even before they came into the land. If God is long-suffering, he yet takes knowledge of everything. Ephraim should now be a wanderer among the nations.

At the end of chap. 9, and in chap. 10, the Spirit reproaches Israel with their altars and their golden calves. They should be carried into captivity. Judah should also bear the yoke. The Assyrians should carry away these calves in which Israel had trusted. After all (chap. 11), God still remembers His early love for Jacob; He puts them in mind of all His loving-kindness, His goodness, His care for them. They should not return to their former condition in Egypt; Assyria should be the place of their captivity. But, however great the sin of Israel, the heart of their God cannot forsake His people. He will not destroy them; He is God, and not man: and finally, He will place the people, trembling now and submissive, once more in their dwelling's.

Chap. 12. The Spirit presents another aspect of the relations of Israel. He would punish Ephraim, and the sins of Judah should be remembered. But He reminds them, that there was a time when Jacob could wrestle with His God, and make supplication to Him, and prevail. That afterward He found him in Bethel, and there the Lord spake to him, and revealed to him His name, which, in fact, He had not done in Penuel. Take notice here, of the way in which God enters into all the details of His moral relationship with Israel, in order that the force, the meaning, and the righteousness of the "Lo ruhamah," which He pronounces on His people, may be understood. His love for them at

first, His tender care, the manner in which He had already been requited at Baalpeor, the horrible iniquity of Gibeah now renewed, their corruption, their idolatry, their refusal to hearken, all is recounted; and finally, the way in which Jacob had formerly succeeded in turning away wrath, and how God had then revealed Himself to him. Now, the name which he had proclaimed on that occasion, was His memorial forever. Let them then return unto God, and wait on Him continually. But no-all is corruption, and Ephraim will not even confess his sin. He who had brought them up out of Egypt, would make them dwell again in tents, without a country. God had constantly spoken to them by His prophets, but the iniquity was there. Israel had already been poor, a fugitive, and a wanderer. And God had interposed in sovereignty by a messenger of deliverance, when there was no covenant in force, on which the people could reckon to deliver them.

Chapter 13, is the perpetual conflict of the affections and the judgment of God. The thought of their sin calls forth the announcement of the necessary and inevitable judgment. As soon as the judgment is pronounced, the heart of God returns to His own thoughts of grace (see verses 1-3, 4, 7, 9, 12, 14, and the two last of the chapter). Nothing can be finer than 'this intermingling of the moral necessity for judgment, the just indignation of God at such sin, pleadings to induce Israel to forsake their evil ways and seek the Lord, who would assuredly have compassion; then God's recurrence to the eternal counsels of his own grace, to secure unto the people whom He loved that of which their iniquity deprived them; and at the same time, the touching remembrance of former relationship with His beloved people. What condescension, and what grace, on the part of their God! Well had Israel deserved the sentence, " I will no more have mercy"; painful and terrible as it was, in exact proportion to all that God had shown Himself to be for Israel. Well can the Lord Jesus say, "How often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not."

The, manner also in which God deduces the history of Israel's iniquity, ever since they came into the wilderness, and presents the means they had enjoyed for returning to Him; the way in which He sets forth His dealings when He had to resist the unfaithful Jacob, yet had blessed him when he wrestled in faith; He, who

never changes, and who was still the same for Israel; the whole behavior of Israel being marked by God, borne in mind, and brought forward for the instruction of the people, if by any means it might be possible to spare them. The whole of this picture, formed by God Himself, ministers profound instruction to us, teaching us to cleave closely to Him who, however great His patience may be, takes knowledge of all our ways, and has ordained that we shall reap that which we have 'sown.

Nothing also exhibits more fully the prolonged and marvelous patience of the love of God. It is the special object of this prophecy, to set forth the moral condition of the people which led to the sentence of Lo-ruhamah, and then to that of Lo-ammi,-the relationship that exists between the moral dealings of God and His unchangeable counsels-the connection between these counsels, and the affections, according to which God accomplishes them,-the ingratitude of man in his behavior with respect to these affections,-the long-suffering which the love of God causes Him to exercise towards his ungrateful people,-at last, that withdrawal on God's part, which left his people a prey to their own corruption, and to the snares of the enemy. The result is, that the condition of His people obliges God to bring the judgment upon them which their sin called for, when all the

warnings of God by His messengers had been unavailing. But this gives place to the accomplishment of the counsels of God, who brings His people to repentance, after having long given them up to the fruits of their own doings, and thus enables them to enjoy the effect of his counsels.

Chapter 14. It is this last work that we find in chap. 14 of the prophet. Israel, returning to the Lord, acknowledges his iniquity, and addresses himself to the grace of his God. Thus only could he render Him acceptable worship. His heart, instructed now and cleansed, refuses the help of Asshur, whom he had sought in his unbelief, when he rejected his God who searched his ways; he will no longer lean upon an arm of flesh, nor on carnal strength, and he casts off the false gods to whom he had bowed the knee. His refuge should be with Him in whom the fatherless find mercy. God, therefore, who only waited for the return of His people,-a return which He had wrought in their hearts by His grace, when the chastisement, necessary to His moral glory, and to the good of the people, was ended,-God Himself would heal their backsliding; He would love them freely. His anger was turned away from His people. His blessing and grace should be as the dew unto them. Divine fertility and beauty should again be seen in Israel, His people.

The 8th verse I would read thus:-" Ephraim [shall say] What have I to do with idols?" The Lord says, "I have heard him and observed him." Then Ephraim, "I am like a green fir-tree." And the Lord answers, "From me is thy fruit found." There is repentance, which the Lord acknowledges, and the joyful consciousness of blessing, which God causes to be felt, proceeds from Himself, who both secures and augments it. The last verse teaches us that which we have already endeavored to point out, namely, that this history makes known the ways of God, which the wise-divinely taught in heart-will readily understand. "For the ways of the Lord are right." His path of action is straight onwards, however great His mercy may be. The just, sustained and helped by the strength of God, can walk there; but the transgressors, through the very power that is present, shall fall therein.

There is indeed no prophet who gives the dealings of God as a whole, so completely as Hosea.

## Joel

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The import of the book of Joel is sufficiently plain, although a few passages may be obscure.

The Spirit of God takes the opportunity afforded by an unparalleled scarcity, caused by the invasion of innumerable armies of insects, to arouse the attention of the people with respect to the day of the Lord. That great and terrible day which was to come, and in which His power should be manifested in judgment; in which He, who had shown long patience, would at length interpose, to vindicate the glory of His name, and deliver it from the reproach cast thereon by the sin of His people, and to take vengeance on all that magnified itself against Him. That which is here presented to us as the rod of the Lord, is the northern army, the same that we so often find in the prophets, the Assyrian. But, in the end, it is God Himself who, after having chastised His people by means of this enemy, intervenes for his destruction, and for the judgment of all the nations gathered round Jerusalem.

In examining the prophecy, the reader may observe that it distinguishes between the famine that ushered in the day of the Lord, and that day itself. We have only to compare chaps. 1:15, and 2:1, 11. The state of famine and desolation, interpreted by the spirit of prophecy, calls on the people to present themselves before the Lord, because the day of the Lord was at hand. Chapter 2:1, sounds the alarm, because the day is near. The day is then described as the invasion of a people, the like of whom had never been seen by Israel or the land. It was, in fact, the army of the Lord. His power was with it, as His rod. The voice of the Lord was heard before it; the day of the Lord announced itself as there (chap. 2:11). We find an instance here of that which is usual in prophetic teaching; some event which should act on the conscience of the people, taken up by the spirit of prophecy, no doubt to awaken their conscience at the very time of the event, but far more with the purpose of using it as a picture of some event in the last days, of much greater moment. The judgment of God, already deserved by the people, and suspended, by His long suffering, over their heads, awaits the hour in which this long suffering will have no more effect, will become thenceforward useless; and in which the counsels of His wisdom shall have arrived at their development. The Spirit of God warns the people of this judgment, they should have given heed to it at that very time; but He describes for future days the instruments of God's vengeance, when He shall actually execute the judgment. Thus the first chapter of Joel takes up the ravages of these insects, which, it seems, had caused a frightful scarcity to act upon the conscience of the people at the time of the prophecy; but from the beginning of chap. ii., the prophecy throws itself into the future, and introduces a people, who, in their turn, will ravage the land of Israel in the last days. Yet, at the commencement of the chapter, it is only the alarm that is sounded; but with the announcement that the day is nigh at hand.

We are reminded here of the ordinance in Num. 10, in the 9th verse of which, it is commanded to sound an alarm, or blow loudly with the trumpets, when the enemy should be in the land, and the Lord would remember the people. In verse 7, if the congregation was to be gathered together, they were to blow the trumpet, but not to sound an alarm; Thus, in Joel 2:1, an alarm is sounded in

Zion. A great and strong people, who devour the earth, are in the land. There is but one thing that gives hope-and that one is in itself the most terrible thing of all-the Lord conducts this devouring people. It is His army... Faith takes hope from this. He who has recognized the trumpet of God, he, who, awakened by the spirit of prophecy when it sounded an alarm and described this terrible evil beforehand (and it is the Spirit alone who did so), in its true colors, as the Lord's doing-lie, who has understood that it is God's judgment, that the Lord is in it, can come before the Lord according to His own ways, and plead with the Lord according to His love for His people. This is the true character of faith in all times. It is the especial position of the remnant in the last days.

The day of the Lord actually impending, and its true meaning understood, through the intelligence given by the Spirit of prophecy, is a call to repentance at the moment when repentance is necessary, at the moment ordained of God for His immediate intervention on behalf of His people. These are the ways of God. He, to whom the moment is known, acts outwardly, to force His people to take heed; and He acts in testimony, to direct their hearts. It was the same thing in the days of Jesus. He who had ears to hear, profited by it, and enjoyed the effect of God's intervention. The 12th, 13th, and 14th verses give us the prophet's testimony, calling them to repentance, in view of the chastisements that were hanging over the people. In verse 15, the trumpet is sounded on God's part, to gather the people together, according to Num. 10:7, to plead with Him that He would turn away His wrath, to address themselves to Him, as One whose judgments were necessarily directed by Himself. Oh how good it is to have to do with God, and to see Him in the judgment, although He is a consuming fire. It was thus David judged when he had numbered the people.

The humiliation, we perceive, was universal and complete, for the priests themselves are called to stand outside the sanctuary, to cry with the people unto the Lord; appealing to his faithfulness, that the heathen might not say, "Where is their God?" as the Jews said to Jesus. The Lord would hear His people, thus humbled. He would fill their land with plenty, and they should no longer be a reproach among the heathen; the northern army, which had devoured the land like locusts, should be driven out by the way of the east, judged on account of their pride, because they magnified themselves to do great things. But it should be the Lord who would do great things, delivering them thus from all their fears. A full and abundant blessing should be poured upon the land of Israel, the children of Zion should rejoice in the Lord their God, the people of the Lord should never again be ashamed. They should receive the abundance of all the years which had failed. They should know assuredly that the Lord was among them. He, the Lord their God, and not another; and they should never be ashamed. The blessing, and He who bestowed the blessing, should thus secure them from being a reproach among the nations. But this was not all. This was temporal blessing, the re-establishment of Israel in the blessing of former days, on the ground of grace, which would prevent their losing it. But there was a new thing to be bestowed upon them. God would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh. The young men and the old men of the people should have visions and dreams; even on the servants and the hand-maidens should this rain from heaven descend. Verse 30 resumes the subject in another aspect. Before the great and terrible day of the Lord, there should be signs and wonders in the heavens, and on earth the terror of the Lord should be felt, and whosoever should call on the name of the Lord should be saved, for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem should be deliverance, as the Lord had said, and in the remnant whom the Lord should call.

These then are the principal events of the last days, briefly but clearly set forth. A powerful enemy coming from the north, as the instrument of the Lord's judgment, ravaging the whole land. Judgment upon the people as an earthly people, according to their former position of temporal blessing in relationship with God; the people being called to repentance, by the Spirit of prophecy, in order that God might turn away this scourge. On their repentance God would restore temporal blessing, and drive away the northern army and destroy it. The reproach that rested on the people because of their sins, should cease forever. A double order of events is then announced, giving a precise statement, with regard to the immediate relationship between God and the people; and that in two respects. First, the temporal blessing, granted to the people now restored to the favor of God, should be accompanied by a gift yet more excellent, and more expressive of His love. The Holy Spirit should be abundantly poured out, The most simple and the most humble should partake of it. But, in the second place, before the coming of the great day of the Lord, He would send marvelous signs, and whosoever should call on His name should be saved. It would be the returning in heart to the Lord which he would own, for in that [dreadful day of the wrath of God, there should be deliverance in Zion, and in Jerusalem His chosen city. It is He who intervenes in judgment, He would remember mercy, there should be a remnant called by His grace. The accomplishment of all this is evidently in the last days, when the mystery of God shall be finished, and He will manifest His Government in righteousness and in goodness on the earth.

But there is still something to be pointed out here.

The Spirit of God has taken care entirely to finish His subject. In verse 27, the deliverance from the northern army is complete, and temporal blessing is so bestowed that Israel may enjoy it permanently, under grace. The Lord is there, and his people shall never be ashamed. From verse 28 to 32 is quite apart, and this, for very important reasons. On the repentance of the people, the Holy Spirit should be bestowed; and before the execution of the judgment, whosoever called on the name of the Lord should be saved. Now the rejection of the Messiah necessarily brought in judgment (although other counsels of God were to be accomplished with respect to the church, outside the Jewish system); their temple has been given up to the power of the enemy, who, as the army of the Lord, was to destroy these murderers, and to burn up their city. The last days therefore are come, the end of the age, with respect to the Jews, although it is all to resume its course for the definitive judgment, when the counsels of God with regard to the church are fulfilled. But if judgment thus pasted, mercy could not delay in coming, and anticipating it. The Holy Ghost was given, according to this promise, to the remnant who in those days hearkened to the call of the Lord; and was poured out upon all flesh. Deliverance was found in Zion, although the redeemed, those who were to be saved, were translated into the church, the time for resuming the government of God not being yet come; the time when He to whom it was given, should associate those with Himself, who should have learned to suffer with Him, that they might also be glorified together. Then the final accomplishment of all this mystery should take place-the great and terrible day of the Lord: Christ should take His great power and should reign.

What we have been saying, will explain the true importance of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the place which that destruction holds in the development of God's dealings; and the connection, with respect to His dealings on earth, between this destruction and that which took place on the day of Pentecost.

There is yet one thing to be remarked here, namely, that in view of the counsels of grace towards the Gentiles, the Spirit of God makes use of language that leaves the door open to them. The Spirit is poured out "on all flesh," and " whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." The apostle Paul frequently employs this last expression in this sense.

It is interesting to recall here the different occasions on which the expression, "all flesh," is used. It implies, as to its full accomplishment, the important fact that will take place at the end of this age, namely, that God will come out of the narrow circle of Jewish ordinances, to act, with regard to all mankind, upon the earth. This is already true, morally, by means of the Gospel. But it will be true, as to the government of God, at the end. Christ, in coming down to the earth, came into the narrow fold (although His work, as well as His personal presence, had a much wider extent), and He led His sheep out of it; and called other sheep also to form them into one flock, saved, set free, and finding pasture. The Gospel afterward went out into the whole world, in connection with Jerusalem. I refer to its administration by means of the twelve apostles, and in connection with heaven, by means of Paul. God will in fact deal at length with all flesh in His governmental power.

Isa. 40:5. " The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." Here the mind of the Spirit goes forward to the last days. But the Lord, from whom the blessing was to come, returns, and the divine testimony in the wilderness 'has been rendered even as the blood of the new covenant has been shed, although Israel, as yet, has not acknowledged it.

Verse 6. "All flesh"- even the people-" is as grass." Israel has not yet learned this, but the remnant have been blessed.

In Isa. 66:16 "God pleads by fire and by His sword with all flesh." It is the judgment that extends to all.

Here, in Joel, it is the Spirit poured out upon all flesh, to manifest the presence of God, and the blessing that rests upon all men, and is no longer confined to the Jews. We may compare the warning in Zech. 2:13.

The millennial song of Christ, Psa. 145 "Let all flesh bless His holy name forever and ever."

The judgment of the apostates, Isa. 66:24. "They shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." See also Gen. 6:12.

In chapter 3, the Spirit develops, with more detail, the circumstances of the last days. Those days, in which God would bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem. This epoch precedes the time of peace and blessing, in which the curse shall be entirely taken away. It is the judgment of the nations, a judgment necessary for the vindication of the rights of God, with respect to His oppressed people, and for the manifestation, in the sight of the nations, of that which He is, in His government of the earth. The ten tribes are not here in question, nor the general restoration of Israel. Before the full blessing of His people, God, must resume His immediate government of them, in the same place where He had given it up, again taking possession of the seat of that government, a seat which He had chosen Himself. There will He plead in His power with all the nations that dispute His rights, manifesting Himself in the midst of His people, and acting as dwelling with them, maintaining their rights as belonging to Himself. Israel is His inheritance. The word " Jehoshaphat" means, "the judgment, or the scepter, of the Lord." There, in judgment, He

pleads with the nations for His people, whom they had scattered, and for His land, which they had parted.

He recounts all the grievances of His people, as done, to Himself. By their means the same evils should be recompensed in judgment upon the nations that inflicted them.

The nations are called upon to prepare for war, they are all to assemble, they are to wake up, quitting their peaceful occupations, and come to the valley of Jehoshaphat. There the Lord will sit, to judge all the heathen round about.

And if the Gentiles are to awaken 'all their mighty men for the day of God, God, on his part, will cause His mighty ones to come down (ver. 11).

But, however great the pride of the men of war, it was, after all, the judgment of God; the sickle of God reaping the earth. His press should be full, His vats should overflow, for the iniquity was great. In the Revelation, the harvest is distinguished from the vintage, the first being the judgment that separates the good from the wicked; the second, the execution of vengeance. Here it appears to me that the two together present the general idea of the execution of the judgment, although the symbol of the wine-press is the most forcible. What multitudes in that day should learn the consequences of their contempt of the word of grace, and of the pride that raised them up in rebellion against the Lord of hosts. All governmental order, its grandeur, and its power, should disappear before the judgment of God.

But the Lord Himself should resume the reins of government on earth, and cause his voice to be heard from Jerusalem. The heavens and earth should tremble at His intervention. But if this intervention was the judgment of the rebellious, He who intervened-the Lord-would be the hope of His people,-Himself, the strength of the children of Israel. And thus should they know Him to be the Lord their God, dwelling in Zion, His holy mountain. Jerusalem should be holy, strangers should no more pass through it, profaning it as their prey. Nor this alone, but there should be abundant blessing on the land of His people, wine should flow down from their mountains, and milk from their hills. The rivers of Judah should flow with waters, and a fountain should come forth of the house of the Lord, and Water the valley of Shittim. Compare Ezek. 47 and Zech. 14:8. Egypt and Edom should be made desolate; but Judah and Jerusalem should dwell in everlasting blessing, for the Lord should have cleansed them. We perceive that it is effectual and sovereign grace.

It will be remarked also, that this prophecy does not go beyond the blessing of Judah and Jerusalem; that the scene of the judgment of the nations refers to the judgment accomplished in the land of Judaea, where their armies will be assembled-accomplished to put the Lord. in possession of His throne upon earth; or rather, He takes possession of His throne by the execution of this judgment, and afterward, He bestows blessing on the people whom, in grace, He has cleansed. One devastating army is especially pointed out, that which comes from the north. It appears also that the desolation of the land, before the intervention of the Lord, will be very great, so that the people will be a reproach among the nations; but woe unto those who should despise the people of God.

If this army announces the day of the Lord, the Lord Himself will interpose, that it may be in truth His own; and, in interposing, He delivers the people whom He loves.

## Thoughts on John 20

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"For as yet they knew not the scripture that He must rise again from the dead?"

Resurrection from the dead is victory over death and the grave. It is a mystery which again and again was found to be beyond the thoughts of the disciples. As they came down from the hill after the Transfiguration, and afterward, as they are together on the road to Jerusalem, they betray their unskillfulness in that mystery, and show that their minds had never dwelt in the light of it-and yet it was to have been found in scripture. The sign of Jonas the Prophet, among other witnesses, had told it,--for according to it the Son of Man was to be but three days in the heart of the earth. Resurrection, generally was understood; but this special form of it was not.

Resurrection, however, in its common character, or resurrection at the last day, is but a 'coming up to judgment. It is not victory, as the Lord's resurrection was, and as the resurrection of the just is destined to be. It is rather defeat, or the sealing of the doom of the ungodly. And these truths or mysteries (when thus rightly divided), make us see, that the action of even such a loving soul as Mary Magdalene in this chapter, is, in one sense, but a poor thing, while the anointing of Mary of Bethany in chap. 12 becomes, by contrast, in our sight, a very blessed thing. There was divine intelligence in it. That anointing tells us, that she knew the secret of her Lord's victory over death. The breaking of the box of spikenard was her way of celebrating that victory before it was accomplished-just as the inscription on the Cross was God's way of anticipating and celebrating the same.

The saints will share this triumph with their Lord-but still the conquest and the day is all. His own. He is the first-fruits of the harvest, the first-born from the dead. He is to have the pre-eminence in this, as in everything. And this pre-eminence is strikingly and finely seen, as in a figure, when we look into the empty sepulcher of this chapter.

The clothes which had been wrapped about the body of the Lord were there, and there also was the napkin which had been about His head. Nothing that had bound Him, that was not loosened. His rising had done this. It was not so, when Lazarus rose; for there was no victory over death in the body of Lazarus. But here, in the garden of the sepulcher, there was the resurrection of One who could not be holden of it (Acts 2:24). From Lazarus the grave-clothes are loosened; but here, the resurrection had loosened them.

And more than this, There is no symptom of struggle here. The clothes are laid aside in order. There is no disturbance. The victory had evidently, been gained without a struggle. Indeed, it had been already achieved at Calvary, when the Surety gave up the Ghost. The victory has now rather to be declared than to be gained. Still, however, in all this wondrous mystic scene, we may find the Lord in the place of pre-eminence. For, as we read, the napkin which was about the head is seen lying in a place by itself. All the grave-clothes are there. The body had been freed from head to foot. But still, the napkin which was about the head lies in a place by itself. It is thus pre-eminent and distinguished, even in the midst of other mystic glories, other spoils of glorious war, and

witnesses of complete and easy victory. And just so, after this pattern, is it in the mystery. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church, the body of Christ. It shares the life of the Son of God, and the gates of Hades cannot prevail. But all this virtue which belongs to her, comes from her having that life. It is all found there and there only. But as for Him it was not possible that He should be holden of it. The body may share the triumph, and so it shall; but the life and power which secures and wins the day over death is all His.

But further, as to this chapter.

Angels, let me observe, learn their lessons by sight. As we read, "seen of angels"-and again, "which things the angels desire to look into." And together with this, I may say, as they look and learn the lesson, there is no moral hindrance in them.

This is their place, so to speak, in the school of God. They are not personally interested in the lesson, as we are-they are spectators merely; but then, their power of vision is perfect-not dimmed by any moral pravity.

According to this, are they seen in this chapter. They learn the mystery of the resurrection, resurrection from the dead or life in victory, by sight-but they learn it at once.

This is beautiful in its place. But still, there is something more precious, I doubt not, by far.

They do not learn their lesson, as we do. They learn it as admiring spectators; we learn it through our necessities and mercies. They may learn it more quickly than we do, but they cannot learn it after a method so dear and grateful to Him who is the common Teacher.

These distinctions we further get in this beautiful chapter. The angels learn the resurrection of the Lord from the sight of the empty tomb. They sit there, and they gaze, and they wonder and worship, knowing the mystery at once, and without effort, at the sight of the place where the Lord had lain; but poor Mary Magdalene is dull, and others of us still more dull. For Satan and nature have a blinding power in us, but Satan and nature do not stand in the way of angels. Our Mary has to learn the lesson with a rebuke; but still she learns it as one who was personally concerned in it-and that gives her, dull though she was, an interest with Him who was teaching the lesson, beyond all that angels could awaken. She was as one in a wreck whom a gracious Deliverer was rescuing-they were but as the admiring crowd on the beach. The divine Deliverer may get His praise from them, but she is His prize.

This is the difference-a difference of no small value in the reckoning of grace, in the calculations of a heart "that delighteth in mercy," and finds more joy in the recovered sheep than in the ninety and nine which went not astray.

And the Lord, pleased with such disciples of His grace, is seen in this chapter to be patient and gracious in teaching this lesson of the empty tomb, or the mystery of resurrection from the dead, to the slow-hearted disciples, whether to Mary in the garden, to the company gathered within the closed doors at Jerusalem, or to the distant Thomas eight days afterward. And He teaches it so as to fill their spirits with the lesson-and this is learning mysteries indeed, or with a divine witness. Magdalene follows Him in spirit to heaven-the disciples, receiving His risen life, go forth to publish it-and Thomas worships Him in His glories, in the conviction and satisfaction of His illuminated heart.

Thus, after these ways, we see the differences. There are before us Mary of Bethany, the disciples of this chapter, and the angels.

Mary of Bethany had already known this mystery of life in victory, or resurrection from the dead, and had in spirit practiced or lived that lesson. She anointed the Lord at the Passover, even then, while on His way to His burial, anticipating His resurrection, or waving Him before God as the sheaf of first-fruits. She looked on Him as already at the other side of death and the grave, and anoints Him for His living and eternal glories. She talked of life in the midst of death, of the victory of the Son of God, ere He had met the enemy to fight the battle; and with her box of spikenard or her ivory palace, had greeted or gladdened the consecrated king and priest of God.

The angels now, at the sepulcher, learn this lesson, and learn it, as we said, at once and without difficulty, when they see the place where the Lord had lain.

The disciples learn it with slowness of heart, some more, some less, under the patient teaching of their divine Master. But they learn it as needing it for themselves.

Thus is it with these different classes in the school of God. But as the moral of all this, I may add, that better is it, to live our lessons than merely to learn them; better like her of Bethany, to practice them in the power and experience of our souls, than to be gathering them up again and again from the words of our divine Teacher. But still, beloved, such is His grace, and the joy He finds in His own mercy, that I will be bold to say, it is, in His account, better that we learn His lessons as sinners than as angels-better to learn the wonder of the empty sepulcher, the mystery of life in victory or resurrection from the dead, through our own necessities and mercies, than as mere spectators.

Angels may safely learn the great things of Christ by sight, as they learn one of them, as we have seen in this chapter., They have no school of conscience to go to, no personal necessities, in the midst of which to discover and gather up the mercies of God. But we cannot learn the same lessons at all (at least, in God's account), if we learn them not in the conscience, through our necessities and our mercies, as interested sinners and not as angel-spectators-as those who know they cannot face eternity but from the lessons which they learn at the empty tomb of Jesus.

The truth that has been from the beginning is learned there-and that is, the victory of the Son of God for us sinners. Because of this, the blood of old on Noah's altar, and the still earlier lamb of Abel, wrought with God as they did. Because of this, the sprinkled lintel sheltered Israel in the place of death and in the day of judgment. And because of this, through all generations, the faith of sinners has found peace with God. The resurrection from the dead tells us that the seed of the woman, though bruised in the heel, had bruised the enemy's head. It bespeaks the mystery of life in victory, life regained for sinners, the presence of God restored to us in peace and liberty.

Nothing but resurrection from the dead could have done this. Had not Christ risen, we should be yet in our sins. A resurrection at the last day, again I say, is defeat. Look at it in Rev. 20 It is not worthy to be called a resurrection. It is the guilty one brought up to judgment. But a resurrection like Christ's is victory- and the resurrection of 1 Cor. 15 is such. It is before the last day, at "Christ's coming;" and it is a resurrection from the dead, as His was, for it is only "of those that are His."

May we wait for this, dear brethren

## Jonah

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The prophet Jonah gives us the opportunity of applying his history to many sentiments that arise in the human heart in all ages. His personal history-the history of a man who was upright in the main, but who had not courage to follow out the will of God boldly-is so intermingled with his prophecy, as to make this individual application easy and natural. Nevertheless, the history of Jonah is that of one who bears testimony on the part of God, rather than that of a believer in his ordinary life. It is the history of the human heart, when the testimony of God towards the world has been committed to it, and that of the sovereign and governmental dealings of God, in connection with the workings of that heart. It is on this account that we find in the history of Jonah, a picture of the history of the Jews in this respect, and even in some respects of that of the Messiah, only that the latter entered into it in grace, and was always perfect in it. We shall point out the leading features which the spirit of God has been pleased to develop in this narrative; deeply interesting as it is in this aspect.

It is evident that the prophetic events are but the occasion, and, as it were, the frame of the great principles that flow from them; or rather the prophetic event, for the prophecy is confined to the threat of the destruction of Nineveh in forty days: a threat whose accomplishment was averted by the repentance of that city. Jonah's history forms the chief portion of the book.

Nineveh, which represents the world in its natural greatness, full of pride and iniquity, regardless of God and of His authority, had deserved the righteous judgment of God. This is the occasion of all the development of God's dealings that we find in this book. Jonah is called to announce this judgment. The wretched tendency of the nature of man, to whom the testimony of God is committed, is to invest himself with the importance of the message with which he is charged. That God may do so in His grace, we see in the history of that grace,-that the man who bears the message should do so, is but pride and vanity. The result is, that he cannot bear with the grace that God exhibits towards others, nor with any communication of His mind or nature, through any other means than his own, even although it should be in grace. It is he who must do the thing himself; it is he who must have the glory of it; and thus all his thoughts of God are limited to his own point of view, to the portion committed to him of L God's message. Compare that which we have seen in the case of Moses, and of Elijah, those eminent servants of God. The sense of that supremacy in God which can pardon, is too much for the heart. It cannot be borne. The self-renunciation that seeks only to do the will of God, be it what it may, leaves God all His glory; and if He glorifies Himself by showing grace, can bless Him for it most heartily. Without this, we shall like to wield the sword of His vengeance-a thing more in harmony, alas! with our natural hearts, and more adapted to increase our own importance.

" Wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, as Elias did?" is the natural expression of the heart. For vengeance is the manifestation of power. Grace leaves sinful man to enjoy mercy; will not bring in power, but spares those against whom power might have been exercised. On the other hand, it is God alone who can show grace.

The threat of vengeance is connected in the mind with the man who has received authority to announce it. The message and the messenger are both feared. A pardoned man is at the time more occupied with his own joy, and with Him that pardoned, than with the messenger of pardon. Moreover, when grace is shown, it connects itself with the alarm inspired by the threatened judgment. And if the messenger be not himself imbued with the spirit of love, he feels himself in the presence of a God who, is above his thoughts; and he is afraid of Him, because he does not know Him. He fears also for his own importance, if this God should be more gracious than the narrowness of his heart would desire.

Such was the case with Jonah, although he feared God.

He flees from the presence of the Lord, feeling that he cannot reckon upon Him to satisfy the little exigences of his contracted heart. Compare 1:3 and 4:2.

God is felt to be above the desires of man's heart.

The truth of God pleases us when we can invest ourselves with it for our own importance.

Israel was the depository of God's testimony in the world, and Israel could not bear with grace to the gentiles. It was by their opposition to this, that the Jews filled up the measure of their iniquity, to bring the wrath of God upon them. Compare is. xliii. 10 and 1 Thess. 2:16.

Two principles then on which, in fact, the testimony of God may be rendered, are unfolded in this prophecy. First of all, man is called to render this testimony as a mark of faithfulness to God, for which he is responsible. This is the position in which we have already seen that Israel was placed. Their whole history is before us in confirmation of this thought. Blessed by God with nearness to Himself, Israel should have been a witness to the whole world, of what the only true God was. But being incapable of apprehending His grace towards the Gentiles (although the house of the Lord was at all times the house of prayer for all nations), Israel failed even in maintaining their own faithfulness, and consequently, therefore, in that which was the only means of making the world (as such) understand the true character of God. Instead, therefore, of being made' a, blessing, to others, they only involved them in the divine judgments that were to fall upon themselves. This is the picture which Jonah sets before us in his own history, at his first receiving the message of God, The same thing will take place at the end of the ages. Israel, unfaithful to God amid the billows of this world, insensible through their blind unbelief, to the judgment which is ready to swallow them up, will drag into the results of their own' sin all the other nations; and then the intervention of God will bring the latter also to acknowledge His power and His glory.

Let us here remark, that the principle we are speaking of is always true. If those to whom God in His grace has committed a testimony, do not employ this testimony in behalf of others, according to the grace that bestowed it, they will soon become unfaithful in their own walk before God. If they truly acknowledged God, they would feel bound to make known His name, to impart this blessing to others. If they do not own His glory and His grace, they will assuredly be unable to maintain their own walk before Him. God, who is full of grace, being our only strength, it cannot be otherwise.

The first picture then that is set before us, is that of a man called to be God's witness in the midst of a proud and corrupt world, which follows its own will, without regarding the authority or the holiness of God. But this man is not sufficiently near to God, to enter into the spirit of His holy and

loving ways, and therefore, knowing that He is gracious, shrinks from the task of representing such a God before the world. To invest himself with God's name for his own honor, Jonah, the Jew, would not refuse. But to bear the burden necessary to the maintenance of the testimony of such a God, so gracious, so long-suffering, as well as holy, this was too hard a thing for the proud and impatient heart of a man who desired to have his own will carried out in judgment, if the others would not obey it in holiness.

We observe, that although Jonah ought to have lifted up his voice against Nineveh, it is the presence of the Lord from which he fled. Christ, our blessed Lord, is the only One who accomplished the task of which we speak. He is the faithful witness. We may compare Psa. 40, in which He speaks of the manner in which He undertook and accomplished it; He who dwelt in a glory that placed Him so entirely above such a position, that sovereign grace alone could bring him down into it. A glory also which alone made Him capable of undertaking and accomplishing it, in spite of all the difficulties which the enmity of man put in His way. And great as His glory was, He accomplished it as a duty, in the humility of obedience; and that, even unto death. See in Ps. 40:1, 2, how far He went, and how-sheltering Himself from nothing-He puts His trust in God. He becomes man to accomplish this task, 6, 7, 8. He performs it faithfully, 9, 10, not concealing the truth and righteousness of the Lord from the congregation of Israel. In the 11th, and following verses, under the burden of sin, He commits Himself to the tender mercies of the Lord, praying (after having rendered testimony with a perfect patience) for judgment on His enemies, the enemies of God's testimony. For this is under the Jewish economy, that of judgment.

We have seen that the judgments which fall upon the unfaithful witness, being at length acknowledged by Himself, are the means through which the name of the Lord becomes known and worshipped among the Gentiles. Here begins the second picture of the testimony. The complete and entire rejection of the witness, considered as the depository of the first message. He undergoes the judgment of God, and is cast out of His presence into the depths of Hades.

This is the just lot of Israel, unfaithful to the testimony of God, and incapable of rendering it. Christ, in His infinite grace, came down into this place, being rejected because He was faithful. We most distinctly see the spirit of the remnant of Israel, in Jonah's prayer. The 7th, 8th, and 9th verses of Chapter 2, prove it most clearly.

In fact, the remnant of Israel, although upright by grace, are but flesh; the testimony is committed to them, and they fail, the flesh being without strength. Sentence of death must pass on all that is of man. He is but vanity; and if he goes down into death, who can raise him up? Who can make a dead man the witness of God?

But-blessed be God!-Christ went down into death, and as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, so also the Son of man went down into the lower parts of the earth, for the same period of time. But who could prevent His rising again? It was death here that was without strength, and not man. Death combated with One who had the power of life; and whether we consider the power of God, from whom Christ had merited resurrection, or the person of the faithful witness Himself, it was not possible that He could be holden in the bands of Sheol. He is not only the faithful witness, but the first-born from the dead.

And now the second testimony begins. All that Israel could have been, all that belonged to man as responsible in himself, as far as testimony was concerned, has failed forever. Christ Himself, the faithful One, has been rejected. Israel, consequently, as the vessel of God's testimony in the flesh, is set aside. It is the risen One only, who can now bear testimony; and we may add, bear it even to Israel, who is now become the object of mercy, instead of being the vessel of promise and of testimony. But this makes God return, so to speak, into His own character of loving-kindness. If Israel cannot, as a righteous one, be the vessel of the testimony of righteousness (and even, as a sinner, has rejected it), God returns to His own gracious character, as a faithful Creator; from which, moreover, in the depth of His own Being, He never departed, although He put man to the proof, by bringing Him into relation with Himself under every possible advantage, to see whether he could be a witness of righteousness-of God on the earth. Jonah knew at heart that there was grace in God. Assuredly he and his nation had experienced it. But in this case, unless righteousness were apart from mercy, so that he who stood as witness of this righteousness might be honored; unless it were vindictive, so that he as its witness might be exalted; he would have nothing to do with it. Thenceforward he became incapable of it. For, in truth, God was gracious.

It is on this account that grace, i.e. the revelation of grace, is identified with mercy towards the Gentiles. Is He the God of the Jews only? Nay, verily, but of the Gentiles also. And the casting-off of the Jews, as Jews, becomes the reconciling of the world. The same Lord is rich unto all that call upon Him, that the Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy.

This is God's controversy with Jonah at the end. He would refuse God the right of showing mercy to His helpless creatures, and insist upon His rigorous execution of the sentence upon the Gentile world, without even leaving space for repentance. God answers him, not at first by unfolding the counsels of His grace, but by appealing to the rights of His sovereign goodness, to His nature, to His own character. Nineveh has hearkened to God. Now, if God threatens, it is in order that man may turn from his iniquity and be spared. Why else should He warn the sinner? Why not leave him to ripen unwarned for judgment? But these are not the ways of God. And we may remark here, that in the case of Nineveh, it is not faith in the Lord, as in the case of the terrified mariners. The effect of the dreadful troubles that will fall upon Israel in the last days, as judgment upon the unfaithful witness of the Lord, will be to make this God of judgment known, and to cause the great name of the Lord to be glorified in all the earth (see ch. 1:14, 16). With respect to the last days, we have seen that this is the testimony of all the prophets, as well as that of the Psalms.

Here it is simply God. The inhabitants of Nineveh believed God. It is the effect of the word of God on their conscience. They confess, and turn away from their sin. They acknowledge the judgment of God to be just, and His word true; and God pardons them, and does not execute His judgment. Moreover, this is in accordance with His ways, as revealed by Jeremiah.

The God of grace has compassion on the works of His hands, when they humble themselves before Him, and tremble at the hearing of His righteous judgments. But Jonah, instead of caring for them, thinks only of his own reputation as a prophet. Wretched heart of man, so unable to rise up to the goodness of God! If Jonah had been nearer to God, he would have known that this was truly the God whom he proclaimed, whom he had learned to love by knowing Him. He would have been able to say, " Now, indeed, the Ninevites know the God whose testimony I gloried in bearing, and they will be happy." But Jonah thought only of himself; and the horrid selfishness of his heart hides

from him the God of grace, faithful to His love for his helpless creatures. Chapter 4:2, exhibits the spirit of Jonah in all its deformity. The grace of God is insupportable to the pride of man. His justice is all very well-man can invest himself with that, for his own glory. For man loves vengeance when allied with the power that executes it.. God must proclaim His justice. He does not save in sin. He makes man know his sin, in order to reconcile him to Himself, in order that his restoration may be real, may be that of his heart and of his conscience with God. But it is to make Himself known in pardoning him.

Now, God is above all the wretched evil of man, and he treats even Jonah with kindness; yet making him feel at the same time, that He will not renounce His grace, His nature, to satisfy the frowardness of man's heart. He relieves the suffering of Jonah, disappointed at the non-fulfillment of his words; and the selfishness of Jonah's heart delights in this relief. He almost forgets the vengeance he had desired, in his satisfaction at being sheltered from the burning heat of the sun. Having gone out of Nineveh, and seated himself apart, that he might see what would become of this city, whose repentance vexed his evil heart, he rejoiced, in the midst of his anger, at the gourd which God prepared for him. But what a testimony to the utter iniquity of the flesh! The repentance of the sinner, his return to God, irritates the heart. It is indeed thus; for the city is spared on account of its repentance. Will God smite one who returns to Him in humiliation for his sin? He who does not know the heart of man, could not understand the application of such a word as, "Charity rejoices not in iniquity." We see it here in the case of a prophet. There is the same thing, having also the same application, and the same patient grace on God's part, in the case of the elder brother, in the parable of the prodigal son. But if man is content with that which relieves his own distress, and is even angry, in his selfishness, when that which relieved him is destroyed, shall not God spare the works of His hand, and have compassion on that which in His goodness he has created. Assuredly, He will not listen to the man who would silence his kindness towards those who need it. Most touching and beautiful is the last verse of this book, in which God displays this force, this supreme necessity of His love; which-although the threatenings of His justice are heard, and must needs be heard, and even executed, if man continues in rebellion-abides in the repose of that perfect goodness which nothing can alter, and which seizes the opportunity of displaying itself, whenever man allows Him, so to speak, to bless him. The repose of a perfection that nothing can escape, that observes everything, in order to act according to its own ever imperturbable nature. The repose of God Himself, essential to His perfection, on which depends all our blessing and all our peace.

It is well to remark here, that the subject of this book is not the judgment of the secrets of all hearts, in the great day; but the government of God with respect to men on the earth. This is the case, moreover, with all the prophets. We may observe also, that God reveals Himself in this book as God the Creator, Elohim. We know that even the creatures still groan under the effects of our sin, and they share also the kindness and the compassions of God. His tender mercies are over them. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without Him. The day will come when the curse shall be removed, and they shall enjoy the liberty of the glory of the children of God, set free from bondage and corruption. If God becomes our Father, He takes the character of the Lord who will judge Israel, and who will accomplish His promises and His purposes with respect to them, in spite of the whole world. He never ceases to be the Creator God. He does not lay aside one of his characters in order to assume another, any more than He confounds them together; for they reveal His

nature, and what He is.

It is sweet, after all, to see Jonah's docility in the end to the voice of God; manifested by the existence of this book, in which the Spirit uses him to exhibit what is in the heart of man, as the vessel of God's testimony, and In contrast with the prophet, who honestly confesses all his faults), the kindness and grace of God, to whom Jonah could neither elevate himself; nor submit.

We may remark, that the case of Jonah is used in the New Testament in two ways, which must not be confounded together. As a testimony in the world, by the word of God; a service with which the Lord compares His own: and afterward, as in the belly of the fish; a circumstance used by the Lord, as a figure of the time during which He lay in the grave. Jonah, by his preaching, was a sign to the Ninevites, even as the Lord was to the Jews, harder of hearing and of heart than these pagans who were afar from God. Jonah was also, in that which happened to him in consequence of his refusal to bear testimony, a type of that which befell Jesus when He bore the penalty of the people's sin, and when, being raised from the dead, He became the testimony of grace, and at the same time the occasion of judgment to those who had rejected Him. We have seen in his history, that he is a remarkable moral figure of Israel; at least of Israel's conduct.

## The Lamb's Wife

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In the Revelation, the Lord is much spoken of as "the Lamb"--a title which suggests the thought of suffering and atonement. But in this Book of the Revelation, He is neither suffering nor doing the work of atonement. All that is over and perfected, as we know; He is rather exercising Himself in His strength, judging and conquering. This may, therefore, at first surprise us, that He should so generally, in the progress of the action in this Book, be called " the Lamb." But, like all else in the oracles of God, this is only beautiful and perfect in its way and season, when considered a little.

Redemption is conducted by either blood or power. The blood of our Redeemer, or our kinsman, acts towards God, as I may express it, His power acts against Satan. The blood of Christ ransoms us from the righteous judgment or demand of God; the power of Christ rescues us from the captivity of Satan.

This is sure and simple; but, then, there could be no rescue or deliverance from Satan, if there had not been a ransom given or paid to God. And hence it is, that our Redeemer gets His title to go forth and deliver, from, the blood which He had shed to atone; and thus, in the Revelation, where He is acting as our Redeemer by power, He is ever kept in sight as "the Lamb."

We are all, I may say, familiar in our thoughts with such truth as this. The Cross of Christ sustains the inheritance. The inheritance is a purchased thing as well as a rescued or delivered thing. There is no recovery or regeneration of this ruined scene, except on the ground and title of the expiation accomplished at Calvary. In a purer sense than perhaps it was once said, we may say, " No Cross no Crown"-in symbol of which, the royal rights of Christ were written in every language of the nations on the cursed tree.

This is so, as we surely know. In 'the action, therefore, of rescuing the inheritance from Satan, the usurper, and then reigning over it as regained or delivered, the Lord Jesus is spoken of as " the Lamb," the One who had already made atonement; or, as redeeming by power on the ground of having redeemed by blood, He is introduced at the opening of the action of this Book, in the combined characters of " the Lion of the tribe of Judah," and "the Lamb as it had been slain" (chap. 5)

But, further, the Lord Jesus, in this Book, is judging the nations, as well as rescuing the inheritance from Satan; He is visiting the world for its iniquity and unbelief.

Such an action as this, He is to conduct as the One who had been once despised and rejected. Scripture abundantly tells us this. It is the refused King that is to call forth the rebel citizens to have them slain before Him-It is the disallowed stone that is to fall and grind to powder (Luke 19; Matt. 21) Jesus is to be honored where once He was put to shame-He is to be rich, where once He was poor-He is to be enthroned in strength, where once He was crucified in weakness. The despised Son of Man is to judge, to avenge, and to conquer.

All this is clear, and sure, and simple, in the light of the oracles of God; and therefore we may say, as far as the action of this Book is upon man, judging him (be he Jew or Greek), or visiting him with wrath or plague, the action is conducted by the rejected Christ; as far as the action is upon Satan, redeeming the inheritance out of his hand, and quelling his power in this scene of his usurpation, it is conducted by the Christ who made atonement. The Lord does not judge man, because He had been the Lamb slain for sinners, but because, as the righteous witness for God in the world, the world had rejected and crucified Him; but He does overthrow the might of the great enemy, and rescues the inheritance out of His hand, because He had paid the ransom-price of that inheritance by His precious blood.

All this the wayfaring man may read in God's own perfect and sufficient Book; and all this gives the Lord Jesus, in the Revelation, where He is judging man, and answering the way of the usurper, that title which at once expresses Him to us as the rejected One, and as the atoning One-for we find that His title, "the Lamb," in this Book at times connects itself with the first of these ideas, and at other times with the second of them (see chaps. 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 12:11; 13:8; 14:1, 4, 10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7, 9). And this may easily and naturally remind us of that well-known chapter, Isa. 53, where the Lord Jesus is looked at as "the Lamb," but at times treated there as the victim, whose blood cleanses; and at other times, as the One whom man was hating and despising.

But again-as we find the Lord as "the Lamb" in this Book, so do we find the church as "the Lamb's wife." If I recollect aright, it is the only title in the course of this Book, which is given to the church. And no doubt, there is correspondency in these titles; He is "the Lamb," and she is "the Lamb's wife;" and this latter title is to be interpreted according to the same rules which have already led us to interpret the former.

The Lord, we have seen, is "the Lamb," as having made atonement to God, and as having been rejected by men. Accordingly "the Lamb's wife" is the church, as connected with the virtue of the blood of Christ, and also with His rejection in the world. It tells us that we are purchased, and saved, and reconciled; but it tells us also, that we are strangers in the world, a rejected heavenly people, companions of a despised Jesus. Had we but affections, I might surely say, this is both comforting and serious truth.

Our character as saints, according to this truth, is lest, when we practically deny either the one or the other of these things. That is, we do not, in living power, present the due image of "the Lamb's wife," when we either live in the bondage of the rudiments and ordinances of a fleshly, worldly, sanctuary; or when we affect citizenship in the earth, forming alliance with the kingdoms of the world, or acting according to the course of it. By the first of these things, we practically deny that we are purchased and saved by Christ; by the second, we refuse the thought that we are rejected with Him. We do not skew forth our union with "the Lamb."

Had we but affections, again I say, how should we value such a calling! Great dignity, moral dignity, is conferred on the church, by giving her, after this manner, association with Christ in the day of His rejection. She will be the companion and associate of His glory and power by-and-bye; but she is now joined with Him in this age of His rejection and weakness in the world; and this is something of a deeper character, as our hearts one with another so well understand.

Supposing one were to come to us in the day of the gladness of His heart, and ask us to rejoice with Him, we should feel at once that He was treating us with a measure of confidence that was very grateful to us. But supposing that another were to come in the day of his 'sorrow, and seek from us that we would feel for him, and enter into the secret of his trouble with him, we should be very sensible of this, that he was treating us with a still larger measure of confidence, and we should be still more gratified. The heart knows all this very well. And thus is it with Christ and the church. The church is called to be the companion of the Lord in that age of the world which is marked by His scorn, and rejection, and weakness in it. This is her characteristic. She knows the reconciliation perfectly, and 'has peace with God; but she knows Christ's place in the world that has refused Him, in the midst of a generation that has mistaken Him and His glory altogether. She is called to know Him in His sorrow and rejection; and when we consider who He is, this is the highest moral dignity that any creature could sustain; just as her place and condition in the system of coming glories will be the loftiest and richest that any creature could fill.

And such is the Bride, "the Lamb's wife." I mean, characteristically, not assuming to speak her worth and honors in detail. But such she is in the character of her calling.

One may catch the bright idea of such a calling, and marvel and adore the grace and wisdom that have designed it. But, while doing this, one may feel that we have to look out beyond the measure of our own poor heart, for capacity to prize and enjoy such a mystery; and far beyond our own poor ways, for anything like a worthy image or reflection of it, in the joy and power and service which ought to accompany the faith of it.

## The Little Child

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We must receive the kingdom of God as a little child. Yes, indeed; and the moral of that thought is very beautiful.

The Lord Jesus, the Son in flesh, has by His death atoned for the sin which brought in- death. But He also, in His life and passage through the world, acted on principles which were the very opposite and contradiction of that sin. Surely He did. He did not remove the penalty, and leave the transgression uncondemned. This He could not have done. By His death, He suffered the judgment; but in His life, He practically and thoroughly gainsayed the sin which had incurred the judgment.

This must have been so. He could not accredit the sin while suffering its judgment. The sin was pride or creature-exaltation-man seeking to be as God, affecting the place, and rights, and majesty of God. The life of Jesus, in full contradiction of such sin, was that of the self-emptied Son - the subject, obedient Jesus. The station in the world which He assumed, the trade He followed, the family He was born into, the company He kept, the circumstances He lived in, all tell us this.

Again, we may say, it could not have been otherwise.. But, let me add, from the beginning God has been exercising His elect in this same lesson, humbling them while blessing them, leading them out of the original penalty or judgment into light and blessing again; but leading them by such a way as taught them, that man should not again exalt himself. And this He 'has done by taking up the weak, and the, foolish, and the poor, in whom to illustrate His holy principles, and by whom to carry on His gracious operations.

Noah and the ark of gopher-wood; Abram, and the call from home and kindred to be a stranger here, without friend or inheritance; the barren wife and the younger brother of the Book of Genesis; the captives in the Egyptian brick-kilns, and the infant cast out among the flags of the Egyptian river; the rod and the uplifted hand of Moses; the feet of the priests; the lamps and pitchers of Gideon; Samson with the ass's jaw-bone; David with his stone and sling; all witness this lesson, that while bringing to us and securing to us all blessing, the Lord would humble the pride of man, and throughout the wondrous story of His doings, expose the folly and the wickedness of the first departure from Him in self-exaltation.

And the elect, thus exercised and thus used of God, have rehearsed the beautiful moral of all this, and said-" Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, give glory." Daniel did so when he declared to the king, that it was not in him, but in God, to interpret dreams; as did Joseph, also, long before. But again, I say, the life of Jesus, from first to last, was speaking this language in forms of beauty and perfection, such as have glorified God beyond all that His rights and majesty were of old gainsayed in the garden of Eden. And this is very principal in the reckoning of our souls, when we are spiritually awake to the mysteries of God.

But, I ask, Has God ceased to teach this lesson? Now that we are in the Church, and on the road to the heavenly country, has God ceased to teach this lesson? We might rather judge that He is

teaching it with increased emphasis. And is it not so? " Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," answers this. A little child is nothing in this world-a cipher in its great account-a weak thing-a foolish thing-a thing to be passed by, not worthy of being either courted or dreaded in the important game of the world's rivalries. It may have its own things, but they are toys. And so the Church. She has her own things, and peculiar things they are, but just such as must be esteemed toys, or children's' playthings, by those who are concerned in the contentions of pride and selfishness on the earth.

Our scripture, Matt. 18:1-22, gives us some of them-" If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him-if he repent, forgive him-if he will not repent, sue him, and win him, if you can-try every way, be servant to him that has injured or insulted you-get others to seek him-if all fail, simply set him aside. If you want anything, ask God about it; if you do anything, take God's principles in the doing of it." This, we may say, is the voice that is heard here. These are among the things of the Church-" a lamp despised in the hand of him that is at ease." For how can the world value the light of such principles as these?

And yet all this is according to the stone and sling of David in 'other days. It is the weak thing. " Two or three met together in my name," says the Lord. Can anything be weaker in the judgment of man? And yet, in the judgment of the Spirit, such an assembly was doing the business of the sling and the stone, or the lamps and the pitchers. It confounds the strong, the noble, and the wise of this world. It brings to naught the things that are, though in itself nothing. " Ye see your calling," says the Apostle, looking at such an object, " how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

Surely the Lord in the Church is teaching the old lesson still. And we are to be always practicing it, exercising ourselves in those principles which are the Church's peculiarities, though they are but weakness and foolishness in the thoughts of men. These are to be always our lesson, as the Lord says to Peter in this scripture -" I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven."

But how entirely has Christendom refused' to learn this lesson of " the little child"! She has consented to forget that it was a poor despised Galilean, a carpenter's Son, that suffered the death of the cross. Christendom-the professing world around us-treats the mystery of redemption as if it had been some great personage that made atonement. It was God Himself, the Son in flesh, Jehovah's Fellow, that did so. That is indeed true. But as touching His place in the world, or among men, it was the despised Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth in Galilee. He did not go to Calvary from king's courts, or amid the acclamations of the world; but He was the rejected One. The station He took in the world, as I noticed before, the trade He followed, the family He was born into, the company He kept, the circumstances He lived in, all tell us who He was, " a worm, and no man-a reproach of men, and despised of the people" ere He went to Calvary as the Lamb of God.

But Christendom has forgotten this. It may boast of Calvary, and of the Lamb of God in a certain way; but it has entirely lost sight of Nazareth and of the carpenter's Son. It links the palace with the

cross, greatness in the world, wealth and ease, with the confession of Jesus and of the Gospel.

And it was in the face of such a perverted mind as this that the Apostle, through the Spirit, lifts himself up before the saints at Corinth (1 Cor. 1), for he purposes to introduce Christ crucified to them again. They were receiving again the spirit of the world-they were walking as men-and they needed that Christ crucified, in full character, should be introduced to their souls afresh. For in that expression, " Christ crucified," the Apostle did not mean Christ in His sacrifice only, but Christ in His humiliation also; Christ regarded not merely as the Lamb for the altar of God, but as humbled all through, from His birth in the manger to His death on the tree. It is this full mystery which the Apostle desires to have brought in with power on the conscience, that the spirit of the world, which was defiling the saints at Corinth, might be controlled. And it is only in that mystery, " Christ crucified," opened and applied in its full form, that " the wisdom of God and the power of God" are to be found. But in that mystery, faith is very conscious that it does come into communion with the wisdom and the power of God-a wisdom which interprets all around, and a power which separates from it all.

O how poorly has the soul learned this mystery of "the little child," the living practical lesson of a scorned and rejected Jesus - the world-conquering truth, that the Son from the bosom was but a despised Galilean here, though the mind and the pen can trace the form of it without doubt or difficulty! Lord, give us to know the honor of witnessing Thy rejection in this proud world!

## Some Observations on a Peculiar Exhibition of Truth in Luke

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God is always true to Himself; and therefore (and that in the perfectness of divine wisdom) if any line of His dealings be given in the word, misdirection is guarded against, and His dealing put in such contrast to the peculiar range of truth exhibited, as that there shall be no mistake. If God, in the wisdom of His teaching, gave the Messianic character to the gospel of St. Matthew, do I not find rejection of the Lord in that character peculiarly exhibited, and His future dealing with Israel in the same gospel, so that we are left to seek the truth fitted to us in contradistinction to it, and which is made prominent, but not at all, or but little, developed there? So peculiarly is this also true of the gospel of St. Luke, where the general interest of the world in Christ, as Son of Adam, and not Son of Abraham, and David, as in Matthew, is set forth, for we get there every thought that would seem of the world specially contradicted, and that which is not of it adopted.

The very introduction of our Lord's birth has its peculiarities in each. The visit of the wise men of the East is at the house of His parents, such as it was, some time after His birth, though mentioned immediately after; but Luke gives the lying in the manger, the expression of His having no place at all in the habitations of this world. Again, the revelation of His birth is to shepherds; not to kings or wise men. His introduction into the world is most lowly, though to be set over that world which the type had forfeited. He came as the least on earth. Mary sung how God had regarded the low estate of His handmaiden, and had exalted the humble and meek. But she understood not where this was to conduct Him, born of her, and had to feel the keen sword of disappointment. How far too soon do we think to reap the fruits of God's dealings with us. Eve did, when she said, "I have got the man from the Lord" who had been promised to bruise the serpent's head. Mary miscalculated the present harvest of honor from her being the mother of Him who was, in truth, the expected man, the deliverer of His people, and the Savior of the world.

The commencement of His ministry bears the same mark of 'lowly view. After having returned from the place of temptation, His first sermon declares that He comes to preach the gospel to the poor. The sermon, which answers in so many particulars to the sermon on the mount, is marked by contradiction, plainer in form, to what the world seeks after. In Matthew we find the law spiritualized; in Luke the objects themselves are aimed at. Blessed are ye poor; not ye poor in spirit: but this shows that it is the spirit of poverty that is meant, having its hope future in the real absence of the goods, the things which the world values. This form in Luke is distinctly evident in the counterpart to it:—"Woe unto you rich, for ye have received your consolation." What must the world and its wars be before God, that to take its consolation in the spirit of enjoyment entails loss hereafter? Let us look then at all that with which the world would deck itself. How vain are the arts of Cain's children. The schools of art the refinements of ease—the pleasant pictures—the increase of the world's wealth. When the soul, at a distance from Jesus, is not armed with the same mind as He in the same world—not planted in the likeness of His death—how little will be found in resurrection. The world's general advancement is its actual distance from God; and what a rule of life do we gain if with Jesus we do not what the world doeth. It is a rule of itself; we pass through, and we do not participate. That which is of the world is not of the Father. The children of the Father

being forgiven their sins, are redeemed at the same time out of it to God, and out of all its values.

Whenever in Luke this point is touched upon, it is more extended than in the other gospels. We have an instance of this in chap. 12. The young man desires the Lord to interfere in the dividing of the inheritance with his brother. We may say that the Lord takes this application to Him as the theme of His discourse for the lowering of the value of all earthly things, and continues the subject from the 15th to the 34th verse. It begins with the rich man building new barns for his increased goods, and ends with the words, "Where your treasure is there will your hearts be also." It is also an occasion of instruction to those out on service that they need no care. Surely it will be a little flock that will possess the kingdom, and it is the meek who shall inherit the earth, who are now daily thrust from their place in it. But, surely, the knowledge of times even far beyond those when He "returns from the wedding," may be in our thoughts. Enoch had, by revelation, the knowledge of a dispensation far beyond that in which he stood, and of its righteousness. He walked with God in it, and was removed from present things, and from the judgment of the world, which Noah was saved through. Surely it may be given to look beyond the confidence of our hope, to the time when Christ shall have given up all things to God even the Father, and that God shall be all in all, preceded by the reward and reign of the saints.

We all feel distinctly, however, that those who hold the truth of the heavenly portion of the Church, are helped with a Spirit which is beyond that which was given to maintain that which Christ came to establish, or shall establish when He returns from the wedding with those who have had part in it; and who will receive their vindication in the glory with their Head, before the world in which they did not take part, and which was against them, and despised their hope. How fitting then is the denial of present things by such. Yet God loved the world, and we do testify that He sent His Son to be the Savior of the world, but there is but one character of faith now, and that is a redemption that brings us out of its order and its desires.

The 16th chapter is almost wholly given to the end of sheaving the better worth of heavenly over earthly things; and, in so doing, puts the abundance of the earthly in the position of actual evil. Riches are the mammon of unrighteousness. It may be, that the commencement of the chapter is typical of a state of things in which the return that would have been duly made to the fullness of grace is hindered by the advice of the "steward of unrighteousness," (perhaps he is the elder son in a new character), the steward of the things of this world, and the beggarly elements of it, seeking a place in the houses of the debtors to grace. It passes on, however, to direct instruction, with these words, "And I say unto you." There is a promise to those that are faithful in their disposal of that which the Lord considers as the "least," viz., that He would commit to them the true riches, spiritual things, of which the stewardship has a much better reward. The former are considered as another man's, the last as our own. There would be no faith if we saw the link between our actings and what God gives in return. Faith rests on God, and God is faithful; but the step that faith trusts to is a void to sight. If we in faith have valued the true riches above what the world calls riches, he gives us the full exchange, and a fund therein to trade with, whereby to increase our store.

The Pharisees were covetous; and they were told that they could not serve God and mammon: and this word follows, at which the world, if it listened, would stare:- "Whatsoever is highly esteemed [high ὑψηλον] among men is an abomination to God." Surely every thought that lags in

us that would commend itself to the world is here upset. It is well that we can be completed in the school of Christ. To be condemned in that in which our way was to receive its finishing strokes of beauty, would not be consistent with the beauty that God produces to flourish forever in His presence. The judgment of all that is highly esteemed among men is pronounced by these words of our Lord. It is declared that that which is esteemed among men is before God. That its heights are an abomination to Him. What must the world be?

There is an order in the three parables of Luke 15 and 16. The prodigal son is to show the grace that is in God (to the Gentile). The second, the mischief the unfaithful and discarded steward does among the Lord's debtors, and the superiority of heavenly over earthly things. The third applies not only the comparison of wealth and poverty in extremes to persons, but must have some spiritual intention in it, though it be in perfect keeping with "Woe be to you rich"; but we see the Church abiding in the truth in its deepest condition of distress; its members full of mortal suffering-the dogs licking their sores-disregarded by the world and Christianity in their splendor-yet carried to Abraham's bosom and receiving consolation there. So then we have grace-debtors to grace-return hindered, and then, at the close-faithfulness in distress, and its home of coin-fort set before it-and the torment, too, of selfish ease.

Surely this chapter is a prominent instance of this character in St. Luke's gospel. God's interest in the world by Jesus is to bring men out of it. Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, look to the Apostle and High Priest of your profession-Christ Jesus-and be as men that wait for your Lord.

There is a passage in the 17th chapter which bears on this aspect of things, which is not generally apprehended in its true bearings. When the disciples say, "Lord increase our faith" (v. 5). He answers in a form that shows that that faith was intended that had the performance of miracles in view. The answer is to receive its elucidation from this result of faith. They wanted in their then state the honor of the powers he was exercising. His parable begins,-Wait till your Master is served before you think of sitting down yourselves. Look to nothing but duty. "This is my reward," says Paul, "that I preach the gospel without charge to any." Seek no honor even from Christ while in the execution of your duty; no wonders worked; no powers that will honor you. Laban could admire such. If the spirits are subject to you, rejoice rather that your names are written in heaven. As My servants, seek no honor. Your duty is enough. Be thankful that you are allowed to do it. It is not that we are unprofitable to the Lord or ourselves in the sense in which it is commonly used.

It is not necessary to mention many instances that are common to the other evangelists; the object is to show that the instances, with the view I have pointed out, abound in, and are put at more length by, St. Luke. But let us note the Lord's exhortation in 22:23, 24. Suppose it is more than being called benefactors. Suppose they are benefactors. We see how happy in a common view are the effects wrought by authority exercised in kindness. Interests looked to-mischiefs warded off-consciences hindered from sinking-social dishonor saved-wants relieved-intelligence needful to the increasing calls of the world imparted-all these things that are the fair side of the world's good-social blessing -moral sense-religious guidance. Well, all disappears at this word of the Lord's.

It is too late for the world to be saved as the world by Christ. Born of the Virgin Mary into the world, He was so offered to and through Israel to the world, and so preached by John the Baptist: but having died and risen, is known no longer after the flesh, holy as He was in it, but in resurrection to

them that believe; and known, too, to the believer by the power to him-ward wrought of God in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory. Can we wonder, then, that all that is here is always to be the "least "? Men have been doubly guilty. On this account we see the world judged finally on the cross. We see its mind; but we see Christ's mind too; and it is for this with thanksgiving for the wonders of its grace, the foot of the cross is our place; while by the Spirit-by communion with Him risen, aye, and glorified too-the victory is ours in joy over the flesh and the world, and all that it can find its ease and delight in How sad and how evil a sign, when any stop to debate about the person of the Son of God! Surely, if it is the Father that has taught us that Christ is the Son of the living God, we shall do no such thing.

## Malachi

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The great moral principle unfolded in the book of Malachi, is the insensibility of the people to that which the Lord was for them, and to their own iniquity with respect to the Lord; their want of reverence for God, their despisal of the Lord. Alas! this insensibility had reached such a point, that when the very actions that proved their contempt were laid before their consciences, they saw no harm in them. Nevertheless, this did not alter the purposes and counsels of God, although it brought judgment on those who were guilty of it (see 1:2, 6; 2:14; 3:7, 13). Malachi also distinguishes the remnant and that which characterized them, while proclaiming the punishment of the wicked, and the call of God to those who had ears to hear, to bring them back to repentance a ministry which would restore moral order in the hearts of parents and children--a relationship from the maintenance and exercise of which all earthly peaceful order according to God flows.

At the commencement of the prophecy, the Lord sets forth His love to Israel, slighted, alas, by an ungrateful people, yet proved by their election from the beginning. Even while exhibiting the sad ingratitude of the people, the Lord adheres to His own thoughts towards them. He will bless Israel, and He will judge Edom, in spite of the pride of the latter.

The sin of Israel, and their offensive indifference in the service of their God, is shown (6-10). This gives occasion to another expression of grace--the revelation of the name of the Lord among all nations. Thus, the election of Israel, and mercy towards the Gentiles, are established amidst, and even on occasion of, the sin of the restored people. Ver. 12-14 also display their offenses against the Lord, and their contempt of His majesty. Chapter 2:1-9, proclaims the fallen condition of the priests, who ought to have been the faithful depositaries of the mind and ways of God; 10-12, their misconduct towards their brethren, and their intimate relationship with idolaters, are pointed out; 13-16, the lightness with which they were in the habit of divorcing at their pleasure. But the Lord was coming.

Here again we find the Lord's first coming connected with the full result of the second. John the Baptist is announced as His messenger to prepare the way before Him; and then, the angel of the covenant, whom they so earnestly desired, should come; but it would be in judgment, to purge the people and take away all their dross. Then should their offerings in Jerusalem be acceptable to the Lord, offerings in righteousness. But all the evil-doers should be judged; for God was unchangeable, both in righteousness and grace. It was this which, after all, secured the existence of Israel, happen what might. Let Israel then return unto the Lord, and the Lord would return unto them. But the pride of Israel is excited by this, and they say, "Wherein shall we return?" Their sins, with respect to the offerings and the ordinances, are then shown. But grace again displays itself, in prospect of the people's return from their practical alienation from God. They had but to return and prove the goodness of God.

In the midst of the pride of the wicked in their apparent success, the remnant are distinguished as being drawn together by their common spiritual wants and feelings, founded on the fear of the Lord which governed them all. They spake often one to another in their affliction, of these things. And

the Lord hearkened and heard, and wrote it down in His book. And they shall be His, in the day when He maketh up His jewels. After this, they should discern between the righteous and the wicked, between those that served God and those that served Him not. For the day was coming which should burn as an oven, and the proud and the wicked should be as stubble. But to those that feared the name of the Lord, the Sun of Righteousness should rise. It should be no longer the sorrowful night of darkness and affliction, and of the enemy's dominion; but a day which God would cause to shine, by the presence of His Son, by the reign of His Beloved One on the earth.

It will be remarked here, that all is in connection with the authority of Jehovah and His dispensations towards Israel, and with the conduct of Israel, as a nation, towards their God. That which belongs to the first coming of Christ, and its consequences to Israel, is not brought in here. John the Baptist is presented as the fore-runner of Jehovah, who, without doubt, is Christ Himself, but who here comes as the Angel of the Covenant, coming suddenly to His temple, and trying everything in Israel by fire and by His judgment, in order that the offering of Judah may be pleasant to the Lord, as in the days of old. The transgressions here spoken of are those of the people brought back against the Lord. The Gentiles and their empire are not seen here. All takes place between Israel only and the Lord, the God of their fathers; as in former days, between the people beloved of God and the Lord who loved them. A strange God is that which the Lord will not endure. It is Levi, with whom His covenant had been: it was the priests, whose lips should have kept the true knowledge of the Lord.

There is even no king here spoken of, except that the Lord, whose name is terrible among the heathen, is their King. Finally, the people (Israel) are commanded to return to the law of Moses, given at Horeb for all Israel.

Thus we have here the Lord's unchangeable love for the people whom He gathered to Himself at Horeb,- His controversy with them on account of their sins,-the marking out of a faithful remnant,-and the sending of a messenger before the execution of the judgment. Israel is looked at nationally, in their own relationship with the Lord, as returned from captivity, and awaiting the judgment of their God, who sends His messenger to forewarn them.

All was prepared to put the people morally to the proof, with respect to the accomplishment of this, at the time when John the Baptist was sent; but Israel had not ears to hear-and all was lost.

The perfect and entire fulfillment will take place at the end, after that other glorious work of God, with regard to the Church, shall have been accomplished.

The long-suffering of God towards Israel has been great, for when they had rejected His Son, He sent them -through the intercession of that same well-beloved Savior, on the Cross-the message by the mouth of Peter, that if they repented, the Christ whom they had slain would return. But their leaders were more than deaf to this grace on the part of God, and their house still remains empty and desolate.

At the time of the end, Elias, whose mission was to call back an apostate Israel who had forsaken the Lord, to own Him in truth; and that, by the sovereign grace of God, although in connection with the law, and that Mount Horeb whither he went to lay down the burden of his prophetic office, when rendered useless by the unbelief of the people,-Elias, shall effectually accomplish his mission, before the great and terrible day of the Lord; in order that the curse of God may not fall

upon the land of His delight, in that day when He will definitively execute His judgments. It is on this account that John the Baptist is spoken of as being Elias, if Israel could receive it; for he answered to the 1st ver. of chap. 3, and, at the same time, that he said he was not Elias; for, in fact, he did not at all fulfill the 5th and 6th ver. of chap. 4 (compare Luke 1:17).

The prophecy speaks to the conscience of those who lived at the time it was delivered, chap. 3:10; and passes on-showing that at the end of those times, Israel would be put on trial by the mission of grace-to the last days, in which God would display His unchangeable love for His people, and His righteous judgment against evil, by separating a remnant unto Himself for blessing, and by executing judgment on the rebellious.

The Gentiles are not mentioned, nor even the connection of His people with Christ, coming down as Man to the earth.

## **Amos 3:7, 8**

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Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?

## **2 Peter 1:19, 21**

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We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

## Matthew 16

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"Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13).

A better understanding of this profound principle would keep many souls within the bounds of humble caution in all the differences and debates that occur concerning the Church and her truth, and all that relates to the name of Christ.

Christ watches the Father's action, to guide Himself by it, and sees all salvation rest on it. "None can come to me unless the Father draw him."- "I came not to do ray own will, but my Father's."- "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;" "I will raise him up at the last day."- "Of those, that THOU halt given me I have lost none."

This plain truth of the FATHER'S planting unto salvation, will be found to be the secret of the largely-debated place in this chapter. Nor have I seen the explanation of its difficulties cast upon this truth. I pray God that the suggestion of it may prove a safeguard and enlivener to some. I am sure that some most fully taught of God must have seen it. I have never seen it in common use.

It will be serviceable to trace the place from its plain points. " The gates of hell shall not prevail." Hell is here HADES, the same word as Grave in the sentence, "O Grave, where is thy victory?"-a parallel passage! Now, therefore, figuratively, the judgment of death, or, in a natural sense, the gates of the grave, shall not prevail against the Church, i.e., it shall rise! Glorious and blessed truth-truth of comfort and glory! We may now trace from this expression an elucidation of the rest of the place. Shortly, then, Simon, thou son of Jonah -thou natural man, and son of a natural man-blessed art thou, for my Father has revealed to you that I am the Christ, the ever-living Son of the Father, for it is tantamount to this. Flesh and blood have not, and could not have, communicated this in the knowledge you have of it. I recognize my Father's act, and I say unto thee, THOU ART PETER, and on this rock I will build MY Church. It is not, observe, God founding His Church on Christ, making Christ the ROCK, but the Son founding His Church on the Father's action. The Son discovers the Father's hand in revealing Him as Christ to Simon; and in obedience, He takes the Father's act as the foundation (as was needful) of a Church which He was to lead to the Father.

" As my Father knows me, so know I the Father." The confession of the Son revealed of the Father founding a Church, against which the gates of he grave, or the judgment of death, shall not prevail. IT SHALL RISE. It is a plant planted in life eternal by the Father, through faith of the Son of God. The expression here changes. " I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," was on a new ground. It was not the keys of heaven that he had, but of the kingdom of heaven. This is entering entirely on a new line of declaration. Simon was now Peter, by the direction of the Father's act, and by the Son's appointment; the first to receive the truth as it is in resurrection and eternal life-the first in ready devotion to the person of the Son. For in the confession of His person he filed not, but through the disappointment of secondary hopes. To him, therefore, was given to open the door to Jew and Gentile, to confession of Christ's name. The keys were not given to the twelve,

except as the general term of sending may imply it in John 20, but the power of binding and loosing was, and in a yet more extended point of view in John 20. The order of this gift to Peter is, in kind, still manifest. To whom would you say is entrusted the breaking of new ground, and introducing confession, but to those to whom the Lord is specially dear, and have received remarkable apprehension of the truth of Christ from God.

All, however, is presently reversed. Peter was yet resting, not on resurrection, but on present hopes. The hopes of man, as he might have had them, had he received Christ instead of slaying Him. Peter would dissuade the Lord from the higher and suffering sphere, and savored of man's thoughts and not God's. He loses the name of Peter, and is now called Satan. Succession is broken before it is founded. I have heard it said, that Peter at this time had not received the Holy Ghost. It would have been enough had he seen Him risen to prevent this speech. But I would ask, Does he that savors of the things of men partake of the Holy Ghost at least in doing so? He that savors of the things of men has no just commission in the things of God. We observe, also, the Lord calls Peter Simon after he had denied Him - "Simon, lovest thou me?" Faith of the Lord's person, and love, and savoring of the things of God, are necessary to the character of Peter. The revelation of the SON OF GOD by the Father to the foundation of LIFE.

## Micah

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The prophecy of Micah is of the same date, and, up to a certain point, has the same character as that of Isaiah: that is to say, it treats especially of the introduction of the Messiah into the scene of the development of God's dealings towards Israel; and even speaks particularly of His presence in connection with the attack of the Assyrian. This prophecy has nevertheless its own peculiar character; it enters, like those of Hosea and Amos, into the moral condition of the people, and connects the judgment of the world at large with the condition of the Jews, as we have had it typically brought before us in Jonah. Samaria also is in part the subject of this prophecy.

The Lord speaks in this book of His temple, and addresses all the peoples--the whole earth. That is to say, He takes His place upon His earthly throne to judge the whole earth, in testimony against all the nations. But He comes from on high, coming forth out of His place to tread upon the high places of the earth. And all that is lifted up shall be molten under Him, and all that is abased shall be as wax before the fire. And wherefore this intervention in judgment? Why does He not leave the nations still to walk in their own ways, afar from Him, in long-sufferance to their folly? It is because His own people, the witnesses for His name upon the earth, are in transgression against Him, have given themselves up to the service of other gods, or to iniquity. There is no longer any testimony of God in the earth, except indeed it be a false testimony; and God must therefore render it to Himself. All the sins of the nations then come into remembrance before Him, and spread themselves out before eyes that cannot endure them. He leaves His people to the consequences of their sin, so that they fall under the power of their enemies, whose pride, on this account, rises to such a height that it brings down the judgment of God, who intervenes to deliver the remnant whom He loves, and to take His place of righteous ruler over all the nations.

We have already seen, more than once, that the Assyrian plays the principal part in these closing scenes of the ways of God upon the earth. We again find him here as the rod of God--a prominent subject in the prophecy of Micah.

Chapter 1:6,7,8. The iniquity of Samaria, and her graven images are the cause of this terrible scourge, according to the just judgment of God; and the waves of this flood reach even to Judah.

It will be remarked here, that the 'events which took place in the days of the prophet who speaks, having the same moral character as the definitive judgment of the last days are used to introduce the grand action of that judgment, while also, as a warning to the people for the time then present. We have already seen this more than once in the prophets.

Shalmaneser and Sennacherib are doubtless in view here; but they are only the occasion of the prophecy, looked at in its full extent. The Assyrian comes up to the gates of Jerusalem. His progress is described in ver. 11-16, as in Isaiah, only that the description is more intermingled with the causes of the judgment upon the different cities that he attacks than it is in Isaiah, who enumerates them rather as the stages of his march.

In chap. 2 the prophet points out the moral causes of the judgment of God--violence and shameless oppression. They formed plans of violence to gratify their covetousness, and the Lord formed also plans of judgment upon them (ver. 1-5). They refused the word of testimony. It shall be taken from them. They rose up as an enemy; their wickedness spared neither women nor children (ver. 8, 9). The Lord calls on all who have ears to hear, to arise and separate themselves from all this iniquity. A state of things like this could not be the rest of God's people; how could the saints of the Lord rest amid pollution (ver. 10, 11)? Nevertheless, the Lord in no wise renounced His settled purpose of blessing with respect to Israel. He would gather them all together, the numerous flock of His protection. The breaker, he who should clear the way and overthrow every obstacle, should go before them. They should go forth from the place of their captivity. Their King should pass on before them, and the Lord at their head (ver. 12, 13).

Chapter 3 The prophet again denounces the heads and princes of Jacob. They should cry unto the Lord, but He would not hear them. No prophet should enlighten them with the light of His word. The seers should be confounded; there should be no answer from God (ver. 1-7). It was not thus with the prophet, full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and unto Israel his sin: (ver. 8). This he does by again denouncing the chief among the people, who judged for reward, and the prophets, who divined for money. Therefore should Zion be plowed as a field, and the mountains now ornamented with palaces, should be made like the heights of a forest (ver. 9-12).

Chapter 4 But again the prophet, in the spirit of Isaiah, concludes his denunciations of sin, and his prophecies of judgment and desolation, by announcing the full reestablishment of blessing and glory in Zion. The Spirit repeats (there was no room for change) the declaration of the glory of Zion in the last days, given in Isa. 2 But, the prophecy being much less developed, it connects this declaration immediately with the events of the last days (ver. 4). Israel should dwell in perfect peace. Each nation, say they, will boast of its God; but the Lord is our God forever and ever. The Lord is the glory of His people. In that day the Lord will accept the remnant of His people; He will assemble the poor, feeble, halting Jacob, and re-unite that which He had scattered and afflicted. It should be the remnant of His desire; that which He had cast off should be a strong nation. The Lord Himself would reign over them in Zion forever.

Nevertheless, the order of the events through which the people had to pass is brought out only so much the clearer by the shortness of the prophecy, which is thus a key to the more lengthened developments of Isaiah. The prophet announces that "the first dominion," the kingdom of David and Solomon, shall return to Jerusalem. But meanwhile, the royalty with which the glory of Jerusalem was connected, had to be set aside (ver. 9). The daughter of Jerusalem must go to Babylon, and there be delivered and redeemed from the hand of her enemies, by the power of God. She was to be their captive, far away from Zion. But another event was to characterize these last days of her history. Many nations should be assembled against her, seeking to profane her and to gaze insultingly upon her; but they knew not the thoughts of the Lord. He had gathered them together as sheaves into the threshing floor. The daughter of Zion should trample on them and beat them in pieces, and consecrate their spoils unto the Lord, who in that day will magnify His name of the God of the whole earth. Compare Isa. 17:12-14; and Zech. 14:2; 12:2, 3; Psa. 83.

Chapter 5 But there was something, more definite still to be declared: the principal enemy of the last days was to be pointed out. The daughter of troops gathers herself in troops to besiege Jerusalem-the Assyrian army (see ver. 5). But here it is quite a different thing from the attack of Sennacherib. Judah had plunged much deeper into sin and rebellion. The true Judge of Israel should be smitten with a rod upon the cheek. The Christ should be mocked and beaten. Ver. 2 describes Him in a striking manner. It was on this verse that the scribes and chief priests rested, when they certified Herod that Christ should be born at Bethlehem. It represents Him as being born at Bethlehem, and at the same time as eternal, and as the true Ruler in Israel.

The second verse is in parenthesis. It declares the birthplace, whence He that should rule over Israel for the Lord, should go forth; and at the same time it reveals the eternal glory of His presence. Ver. 3 is connected with ver. 1, and exhibits the consequences of the sin there pointed out. Israel, and more especially Judah, is given up, yet only for a season, the period of which is designated in a remarkable and instructive manner. Israel, exercised, travailing, long preferring to stand on the footing of Hagar rather than on that of Sarah, must pass through all the afflictions, the anguish, the judgments, the chastisements of God, necessary to lead her to the acceptance of the punishment of her iniquity; being at length by His grace, thoroughly convinced of the need of that grace, and of the mercy of God, and thus brought into a condition fitted to her being the vessel of the manifestation of that Son who should be born unto her-the Naomi brought back by grace, to whom (with respect to his manifestation in this word) the King is reputed to be born. Compare Isa. 9, where the idea is developed in connection with Israel, and Rev. 12, where the historical fact, and its connection with Israel in the last days, are brought together.

Another very important element of this last scene of the present age, is pointed out in this verse. Israel is given up to judgment, forsaken of God, in a certain sense, for having rejected the Christ, the Lord. But now, she who travailed has brought forth. Afterward, the remnant of the brethren of this first-born Son, instead of being added to the church (Acts 2), turn unto the children of Israel. The Christ is not ashamed to call them His brethren; but at this period they no longer become members of His body. Their relation is with Israel. That is the position in which they are placed before God.

He then, who had been rejected, becomes the Shepherd of Israel, and that according to the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God. Israel dwells in safety, for his King becomes great unto the ends of the earth. By Him the Assyrian shall be overthrown, and his land shall be laid waste by that Israel whom he had sought to overthrow.

Israel in that day possesses a double character. The remnant of Jacob is the instrument of refreshing in the precious grace that comes from God, and waits not for the labored and varied efforts of man. They shall be as the showers upon the grass, that tarry not for any man. But nevertheless, Israel is also that which rises up among the nations, as a lion among the beasts of the field, from whom none can deliver. They are the instrument and testimony of the power of God. The blessing and the strength of the Lord is with them. The prophet declares that all the enemies of Israel shall be cut off and perish. But the Lord will at the same time destroy out of the midst of Israel, all their false human strength, their chariots, their strong cities, all that ministers to the pride of man and leads him to trust in himself. He will destroy all their idols; Israel shall no longer worship the works of their own hands; every trace of idolatry shall be taken away. At the same

time, vengeance and wrath, such as had not been heard of, shall be executed upon the nations. This division of the prophecy ends here. The first, at the close of the second chapter.

Chapter 6 After having thus declared the counsels of God in grace, the Spirit returns to His pleadings with Israel in respect of their moral condition. The Lord had a controversy with His people. In a touching appeal to their heart and conscience, He asks what they could have against Him. He had redeemed them from Egypt, had led them by the hand of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; He had refused to hearken to Balak and Balaam, who had done their utmost to curse Israel. If they would but consider, they would know His faithfulness. After this, He lays before them in detail, the universal wickedness that reigned among them (ver. 13-16); therefore also the judgment must surely fall upon them.

In chap. 7 the prophet takes the place of intercessor before God, in the name of the people; presenting to Him at once their deep misery and their iniquities. He seeks anxiously among the people for something suitable to their title of the people of God; he finds nothing but fraud and deceit, and lying in wait for blood, that they might do evil with both hands earnestly.

We find here a striking circumstance. The Lord Jesus declares in the gospel that that which the prophet describes as the height of iniquity, should be produced by the preaching of the gospel; such is the iniquity of the heart, which the light brings into activity, stirring up a hatred which is only the more exasperated by the nearness of its object.

The effect on the prophet, of that which he sees around him (that which the Spirit of Christ produces, where he acts in view of the all-pervading evil), was that he looked to the Lord and waited for the God of his salvation. He takes the position pointed out as that which the Lord could recognize. He accepts the indignation of the Lord, until He Himself should plead the cause of His servant.

In fact, the Lord would bring him forth to the light, would show him His righteousness. The deliverance should then be complete; and she who said to Jerusalem, "Where is thy God?" (the constant cry of the unbeliever, who rejoices in the chastisement of the people of Christ, as in the sufferings of Christ Himself, mistaking these righteous dealings of a God whom he knows not). She who rejoiced in the abasement of those whom the Lord loved, should be trodden down as the mire of the streets (ver. 7-10).

From that time they should come from Egypt, from Assyria, from the seas and the mountains, to the rebuilt city; but before this the land should be desolate. Nevertheless, the Lord would lead His people as a shepherd, and plant them again in their land as at first; and God would show forth His marvelous works, as when He brought them up from Egypt; and the nations should be confounded at all the might of Israel, and should be afraid before the Lord their God.

The last three verses of the prophecy express the faith and the sentiments of adoration that fill the prophet's heart, at the thought of the goodness of God, who pardoned the iniquities of the people and cast their sins into the depths of the sea; who delighted in mercy, and who would perform His promises to Abraham, and that which He had sworn' unto the fathers in days of old.

Who was a God like unto Him-who manifested Himself in His ways of grace towards His beloved people, towards the feeble remnant, despised of all, but whom the Lord in His love never forgot, in

His faithfulness never forsook, in spite of all their rebellion?

## Introduction to the Minor Prophets

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Before entering on the study of the minor prophets, I will avail myself of the opportunity they afford to make a few remarks on the prophetic writings in general, pointing out the subjects of which they treat. We may divide these books into four principal classes, according to the subjects on which they speak—subjects often connected with their dates.

1st. Those which speak of the great crisis of the capture of Jerusalem, and its consequences. These are Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel—all the chief prophets excepting Isa. I place the book of Daniel in this class because, in fact, that event changed the government of the world, setting aside (in judgment) the elect people; and, while speaking of the Gentiles, he does so in connection with the substitution of the Gentile monarchy for that of God in Israel, and in view of that people's destiny.

2nd. Those which speak of the judgment of the Gentiles as such. These are Jonah, Nahum, Obadiah.

3rd. Those which speak of the entire fall of Israel, and of the destiny that already threatened Judah; such as Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Micah. They pronounce a penal judgment on the people, while unfolding with more or less extent the dealings of God in grace at the end. With the exception of Amos, who prophesied in the reign of Uzziah, earlier than the other three, they belong to the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; this last king forming an epoch in these prophecies, the Assyrian, having overthrown the kingdom of Israel during the reign of Hezekiah and threatened Jerusalem.

Lastly, we have Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, who prophesied after the captivity; the two first for the encouragement of the people; the last, to bear witness to the failure of the Jews who had returned from captivity, and to announce the testimony and the judgment of the last days, which should separate the remnant from the wicked around them.

I have not spoken of Joel and Habakkuk, because these two prophets have each a peculiar character, not "applying to the judgment of the Gentiles, like Nahum and Obadiah, and having no date to indicate a moral import founded on the condition of Israel. They both point out in an especial manner the judgments of the last days. Joel speaks of a particular invasion of the land, and of the judgment of the nations, which is fulfilled at the same period, in connection with the blessing of Israel. The Spirit in Habakkuk, whilst availing himself of the occasion of a particular judgment, brings out the spiritual affections and the exercises of heart, produced by the sight of the evil, and of the consequent judgment, and shows the condition of a soul taught of God in view of these things.

We find thus in the prophets (taking a moral view of their subjects): 1st. The judgment of the people in general, the house of David being spared for a time, God raising up Hezekiah; and on this occasion the true Son of David is announced. This is contained in Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, and Micah. 2nd. The judgment of Jerusalem, and the substitution of the Gentile monarchy, the people

of God being entirely set aside. Jeremiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel, the last discussing all the great principles of relationship with God, and the destiny of all Israel as a land and nation. 3rd. The judgment of the world. Jonah, Nahum, and Obadiah. 4th. The desolation of the last days, and the judgment of the nations; followed by the temporal blessing of Israel, and, in spirit, of all flesh. This is Joel. 5th. The chastisement of God's people by the successful violence of the man to whom God allows power for this purpose. The spirit of the prophet, overwhelmed by the evil which he beholds in the people, and still more so when they are oppressed by their haughty enemies, understands that the just shall live by faith, and that this oppression was needed to chastise the evil, and to allow the pride of man to reach that height of iniquity which leads to the judgment that annihilates this pride forever. This is Habakkuk. The last chapter is the expression of the sentiments produced by this instruction—the desires, the recollections, and the confidence of faith, a faith that rests on God Himself in the midst of all those exercises of heart, to which the history of His people gives birth in the faithful. Precious consolation, when we think of all that invests itself with the name of God.

We next find that which appertains to the special circumstances of the Jews, who have been brought back to Jerusalem in view of the coming of Christ; and the consequences of that coming, as well as of the people's own responsibility, with respect to the circumstances in which they already stood.

There remain still some details to be pointed out. Jonah sets before us, in a very striking manner, the patient goodness of God towards a world of proud and careless sinners; and that, in contrast with the impatience of the man, to whom the oracles of God are committed, to see them accomplished for his self-satisfaction, even though it were by the execution of the judgment which grace would set aside on the humiliation of those who were its objects.

Nahum, however, shows us, that this judgment must in the end be executed, and that a long-suffering, the only result of which is to glorify God, would at length give place to a judgment that should definitively and forever put an end to all that exalted itself against God.

Obadiah reveals to us not this general and public pride of the world, but the hatred to God's people, which is especially seen in those who were outwardly connected with them, and who, according to the flesh, claimed a right to the inheritance of the first-born.

The notice which God gives us in these prophets of His relationship with the world, and of the manner in which He looks upon it, is full of interest. Jonah presents the force of that expression in Peter, "a faithful Creator." In Isaiah we may have remarked the rich development of the ways of God in reference to Christ, and with Israel; and the connection of these things, both with each other, and with the judgment of the world. The purposes of God in government are largely opened in that book.

The three other great prophets instruct us in the vast importance of that crisis in the history of the whole world, that critical moment when the Lord ceased to govern it in the midst of His people, and removed the seat of His power into the midst of the Gentiles, and placed the power in the hands of men.

Amos and Hosea give us some precious light on the moral government of God; they furnish the reader of the Bible with striking pictures of the state of things, the facts, which were the procuring

cause of the judgment that God inflicted. Not only the facts which resulted from God's dealings, but the conduct that gave rise to those dealings with His people. This exposure of their conduct is full of interest.

Micah (as well as Isaiah), while occupied with these same subjects, enlarges more on the promises in connection with Christ, the effect of which would raise up the people from the condition into which sin, and the judgment of God upon the sin, had cast them. It may have been already remarked, that the commencement of Isaiah, while speaking of the Lord Jesus, is essentially occupied with Judah, Israel, and the nations; the close of the book especially with Christ, and the consequences of His rejection by the people.

It will have been understood, from what I have already said on the three prophets who prophesied after the return from captivity, that they also are occupied with the same two subjects.

The Messiah appears also in Haggai, and again, with more detail, in Zechariah. The condition and the destiny of the people are more seen in Malachi; the whole in connection with the last days.

The dealings of God in government, upon the earth, in the midst of Israel.-The moral details of the conduct of the people, which led to their ruin.-God's intervention, at the end, in grace, by the Messiah, to establish His people in assured blessing, by God's own power.

Two things are connected with these leading subjects: the judgment of the nations, which was necessary for the establishment of Israel in their own land; and the rejection of Christ, by the Jews, at His first coming into this world.

Finally. Israel, having been the center and key-stone of the system, that was established after the judgment upon Noah's descendants, for their pride at Babel; a system in which the temple and throne of God, at Jerusalem, was the seat of divine authority over all nations, and the place where they should go up to worship Him who dwelt between the cherubims. Israel having failed in that obedience which was the condition of their blessing and the bond of the whole order recognized by God in the earth, another system of human supremacy is set up in the person of Nebuchadnezzar. Prophecy treats, therefore, of this unitary system, and of its relationship with the people of God on the earth.

Guilty of rebellion against God, and associated with Israel in the rejection of Christ, and rising in revolt against Him, as well as united with the Jews in evil, this power is associated with them in the judgment.)

## Nahum

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If we were to examine closely the different characters of the nations who have been connected with the people of God, we should, perhaps, find in each a specific form of evil pretty clearly delineated. At all events it is so in the principal enemies of that people. Egypt, Babylon, Nineveh, are prominently marked by that which they morally represent. Egypt is the world in its natural condition, whence the people have come forth. Babylon is corruption in the activity of power, by which the people are enslaved. Nineveh is the haughty glory of the world, which recognizes nothing but its own importance-- the world, simply by its pride, the open enemy of God's people. She shall be judged like all the rest, and disappear forever under the judgment of the Almighty. The Lord has given a commandment against her, that no more of her name be sown. This judgment is so simple, that the prophecy which declares it requires very little explanation.

It commences with an exhibition of the character of God, in view of that which He has to bear from the pride of man. God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth. It is a solemn thought that, however great His patience, a day is coming which will prove that He does not bear with evil. Yet it is a comforting thought; for the vengeance of God is the deliverance of the world from the oppression and misery of the yoke of the enemy and of lust, that it may flourish under the peaceful eye of its Deliverer.

No doubt, He has long allowed evil to go on. He is not impatient as our poor hearts are. He is slow to wrath- a wrath so much the more terrible that it is the justice of one who is never impatient. He is great in power, and will not at all acquit the guilty. Who can stand before His indignation, or abide the fierceness of His anger?

But this is not all; His indignation is not vague devastating without distinction when he gives it free course. He is good, He is a stronghold in the day of trouble. When the evil and the judgment overflow-the evil which is a judgment, and the judgment before which nothing that it reaches can stand-He is Himself the sure refuge of all that trust in Him. He Himself knows all that do so. As for the glory of the enemy, it shall be destroyed, blotted out, brought to nothing. Reckless in the midst of their pleasures, drunken and suspecting nothing, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.

In verse 11, we find the one so often mentioned by the prophets, the Assyrian, who imagines evil against the Lord. Verse 12, although obscure, applies, I think, to Israel. Israel too, alas, boasting of their security and strength, according to the spirit of the world, will undergo the invasion, the overflowing of the great waters, the scourge of God. But when this passes through the land, i.e. of Israel, they shall be cut down (comp. Isa. 28:18,19 and 14:25). But this scourge completes the judgment of God; and the deliverance of Israel, the prophet says, should now be complete and final (comp. Isa. 10:5,24,25). The yoke of the Assyrians should be broken forever, and the proud and hostile power of the world destroyed, as the anti-Christian corruption and rebellion had already been judged. The good tidings of full deliverance should be spread abroad, and Judah should keep her solemn feasts in peace.

I doubt not that the invasion of Sennacherib was the occasion of this prophecy; but most evidently it goes much beyond that event, and the judgment is final. This is another instance of that which we have so frequently observed in the prophets; a partial judgment, serving as a warning or an encouragement to the people of God, while it was only a forerunner of a future judgment, in which all the dealings of God would be summed up and manifested.

The wicked should no more pass through Judah; he should be utterly cut off.

If God permitted the total devastation and ruin of Jacob, it was because the time of judgment was come—a judgment that should not stop there. He began, no doubt, at His own house, but would He stop there? No. What then should be the end of the enemies of God's people, if He no longer endured evil in His own people? Let Nineveh then now defend herself if she could. But no—that den of lions should be invaded, and the young lions destroyed and unable to defend themselves. See the same argument, at the end of Isa. 2 and the commencement of chap. 3. Jacob was judged the whole family, as well as Israel, emptied and ruined, and now it was the turn of the world. However great the pride of Nineveh, she was no better than others of whose ruin she was probably herself the instrument.. (Assyria and Egypt had long been rivals). The strongholds of the Assyrians should be like figs that fall with the first shaking, and their people, without strength, should be but as women. The ruin should be entire. Fire should devour them. No doubt this had an historical fulfillment in the fall of Nineveh; but its complete accomplishment will take place when the Assyrian shall return. I do not say with respect to this city itself; which has been destroyed, but the power that will possess the territory and inherit the pride of the land of Nimrod.

## Obadiah

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Edom is frequently spoken of in the prophets. This people who, as well as Jacob, were descended from Isaac, had an inveterate hatred to the posterity of the younger son, who were favored as the people of the Lord. Psa. 137 tells of this hatred, in the seventh verse. In Psa. 83 Edom forms a part of the last confederacy against Jerusalem, the object of which was to cut off the name of Israel from the earth. Ezek. 35 dwells upon this perpetual hatred, and the desire of Edom to possess the land of Israel. Our prophet enlarges upon the details of the manifestation of this hatred, which burst forth when Jerusalem was taken. It is possible that there was something of this sort when Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar. Edom is united with Babylon, in Psa. 137, as the inveterate enemy of Jerusalem. But it is evident that the prophecy extends to other events. Jerusalem shall again be attacked by these Gentiles, who seek to satiate their hatred to the city of the Lord, and to gratify their ambitious purposes. Edom plays a sorrowful part on this occasion, and its judgment is proportioned to its sin. The nation is entirely cut off. When the rest of the world rejoice, the desolation of Edom shall be complete. Edom had purposed to take advantage of the attack of the nations upon Jerusalem, to possess itself of the land, and had united with them to take part in the attack, by lying in wait-as was natural to a people whose habits were those of the Arab tribes-to cut off the retreat of the fugitives, laying hands, when possible, on their substance, and giving them up also to their enemies. The men of Edom knew not that the day of the Lord was upon all the nations, and that this conduct would but bring down an especial curse on their own heads. Their judgment is thus described: God takes away their wisdom, their pride deceives them, their strength fails them, in order that they may be entirely cut off. We have seen them joining the last confederacy against Jerusalem, and taking part in the destruction of that city; but it appears that their confederates deceive them (verse 7); and Edom, thus ill-treated by former allies, becomes small among the heathen" (verses 1, 2). The nations are the first instruments of the Lord's vengeance. But another, and yet more terrible event, is linked with the name of Edom, or Idumea, and is the occasion of the Lord's judgment falling upon that people. It is in Edom that the armies of the nations will be assembled in the last day. We have the account of this in Isa. 34 and 63 (See Isa. 34:5,6), the rest of the chapters displaying the judgment of desolation in the strongest possible language. Isa. 63 shows us the Lord Himself, returning from the judgment, having trodden the wine-press alone, of the people there were none with Him.

Finally, Israel itself shall be an instrument in the hand of the Lord, for the judgment of Esau (Obad. 1:1, 18). The destruction in Isaiah relates especially to the armies of the nations, who, in their movements, find themselves assembled in Edom. The part which Israel takes in the judgment, is on the people in general; and, I suppose, afterward, when Christ is at their head as the Messiah (comp. verses 17, 18, and Isa. 11:14), appears to confirm this view of the passage. At all events, it takes place after Israel's blessing.

That none shall be left of Edom, is also declared in Obad. 1:1,5,6,9,18 Jer. 49:9,10-22; and it will be observed, that there is no restoration of a remnant, as in the case of Elam and others. A part of the latter prophecy, establishes the same facts as that of Obadiah, in nearly the same words. The

same judgment is pronounced in Ezek. 35, and in Isa. 34, already quoted. We see in these chapters, as well as in Isa. 63, that it is the controversy of Jerusalem, that the Lord pleads with Edom (Ezek. 30:5, 11; Isa. 34:8; 63:4). In these passages, the Lord does not forget His thoughts of love towards Zion, and His people.

He closes the prophecy of Obadiah with the testimony of the effect of His call to repentance, of His unchangeable faithfulness to his promises and unwearied love.

Power and might against those formidable enemies, should be given to Israel, who should in peace possess the territory which their enemies had invaded. Deliverance should be on Mount Zion, from thence Mount Esau. should be judged, and the kingdom should be the Lord's.

As corrupt power had been judged in Babylon, so in Edom hatred to the people of God.

## Patriarchal Faith

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The Patriarchs had come forth from the place of nature or of the flesh, in the faith of a promised inheritance in the land of Canaan. And what is to be noticed in the strength and victory of their faith is this—they cling to that promise, in spite of two very severe trials of it; that is, in the face of the poverty and sorrow and disappointment which they constantly experienced in the place of the promise; and also in spite of the desirableness and attractions and advantages which they enjoyed outside of it.

This is much to be observed; and it may be encouragement to us in such a time as the present.

There was famine in Canaan in the days of Abraham, and again in the days of Isaac, and again in the days of Jacob. Abraham, moreover, witnessed in that land the abominations of Sodom, and the common strife and contention of the potsherd of the earth. Isaac is forced from one spot of it to another by the injurious treatment of the natives of that land. Jacob is forced out of it by the threats of his brother Esau. And further, it was the scene of humbling and of discipline to each of them in their day, by reason of their own evil ways in the sight of the Lord.

Such was Canaan to the Patriarchs. They were, I may say, dishonored and disappointed, and well nigh heart-broken in that land of promise. But that which lay outside it was altogether different. It was just as attractive to them as Canaan had been trying and humbling.

Egypt, for instance, enriches Abraham when Canaan had left him at death's door—and to Jacob the same Egypt had become the scene and the occasion of all that heart or flesh could have desired; for he came to the end of a weary pilgrimage in that land. He had known plenty of sorrow in Canaan, both before he left it for Padanaram, and after he returned; but Egypt at last made up to him, and much more, for all his losses and sorrows. By royal grant he received the fairest and richest portion of it. He was honored and cherished there, and saw his family in increasing prosperity around him. The desires of his heart seemed all to get their answer there. And to crown all, Egypt restored to him what the wild beasts of Canaan had robbed him of. Joseph, whom he thought some beast in the former land had torn to pieces, was alive in Egypt, and the second man in the kingdom.

Here was Egyptian flattery and fascination indeed—and that too, in full contrast with all that Canaan had been to him. At evening-time there was light; but it was an evening in Egypt. His eye might well have desired the lengthening and lingering of such a sun-set, and his heart might have been tempted to contrast with it the clouds of his morning and his noon-day in Canaan. But faith is called a conqueror. It tries many a question with nature; and in some of the saints gets many a fair and brilliant victory. And so was it here with Jacob, though it may be humbling to one's own heart to trace it. For we have here before us a beautiful witness that in spite of all this, Canaan and not Egypt was the Patriarch's object.

This is the victory that overcame Egypt then, and overcomes the world to this hour. No recollections of sorrows or disappointments in Canaan, no present possession of honors and

wealth in Egypt, moved him. The promise of God ruled in his heart. Of Canaan as promised of God he spoke; in Canaan he hoped; in the place of his present prosperity he was a stranger, and thought of home only in the degraded and impoverished land he had left behind him. It was in Canaan he would be buried. It was there he was in spirit when he blessed his children; and it was there he gave the double portion to his adopted firstborn.

There is something very fine in this; and for us something significant and seasonable. For I may surely say of the present time through which we are passing, there is the poor Canaan and the wealthy and important Egypt. That which, like Canaan to the Patriarchs, connects itself with God in the thoughts of faith is in a small and enfeebled state, while the world around is growing in its proper greatness and strength and dignity every hour.

It may be hard to learn this lesson which Jacob practiced. We may see it on the page of his history, without finding it on any corresponding one of our own.

Joseph, however, after Jacob, illustrates this same power of faith. Egypt had received him, when Canaan had cast him out. Out of the one land he had been sold as a bond-slave; in the other he had been seated on the second seat in the kingdom. But withal (for faith is "the victory that overcometh the world"), Egypt never became Canaan to Joseph. The promise of God lived in Joseph's heart, as it had lived in Jacob's. Disappointments and sorrows in Canaan, flatteries and successes and honors in Egypt wrought not their natural results in that heart, because it was thus the seat of the promise of God. This was in the vigorous words of the Apostle, (in the patriarchal form which such energy would take), "a laying hold upon eternal life"-which some of us know so little of.

But, I must observe something further. It is felt by us to be a serious and hazardous thing at times, to let the world know that we have learned this lesson-that poor Canaan is better than wealthy Egypt. We fully understand that men cannot lightly have the good thing they are nourishing and improving thus slighted. It is a reproach on themselves, when the world is undervalued.

There was a moment in Joseph's history, as I judge, when he felt this, when he had this experience of which I speak.

Jacob, his father, when dying, had made him swear, that he would bury him in the land of Canaan. When Joseph comes to act upon his oath, he seems to me to feel this, that he was now about to venture on a serious and hazardous matter. He evidently sets himself as before a business which had its special difficulties. He was high at court, as we may say; for, as we read, the physicians, the state physicians, were his servants. (Chapter 50 ver. 2.) And we know the resources of the kingdom, the strength and wealth of the realm of Egypt, were at that moment under his hand. But still, he hesitates about the matter of burying his father in Canaan, and gets the help and intercession of Pharaoh's near kindred.

Why all this? Was it not a small thing for so, great a man to do? Yes; but a request to be buried in Canaan was, in some sense putting a reproach upon Egypt. It seemed to say, after all, the Canaan of degradation and poverty was better than the Egypt of honor and wealth; that the gleanings of such an Ephraim were better than the vintage of such an Abi-ezer.

This was the language of Jacob's request; and Joseph felt it to be a serious thing to convey such language to the ear of Pharaoh. But he did. Faith again triumphed -and after this manner, is he a witness to us, that we should let the world distinctly learn from us, that with all its advance and promise, it is nothing to us, while Christ's thing though in weakness, is our object.

The history of Christ's humiliation was looked at by Paul through the Holy Ghost--not in the touching detail of Christ's individual life, but as one immense fact, and a cardinal one, in the vast scheme of God. This was exactly in its place, and in keeping with the service for which he was employed.. John gives us the Divine nature-Paul the Divine counsels-Peter the walk of him who has a lively hope through the resurrection of One whose walk he had known and followed in its bright display on earth, towards the heaven into which resurrection is meant to introduce us; all founding the accomplishment of blessing on the redemption which He has wrought out for us.

THE SABBATICAL YEAR, AND THE JUBILEE.

Translated from, "Etude sur Levitique xxv.," par C. F. Recordon.

"The time of rest, the promised Sabbath comes."-Cowper.

## I.-the Sabbatical Year

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Who is there that could continue to doubt the divine origin of the Scriptures, if he read without prejudice and with simplicity of heart, a chapter such as this? Who else than God, the Creator, could speak in such sort, could give to a people similar ordinances? Imagine the most mighty of the kings of the earth, Nebuchadnezzar or Alexander, Caesar Augustus or Charlemagne, prescribing to their subjects that the land should be left fallow every seventh year, that all agricultural toil should be suspended; and yet promising them abundance Would not every one be justified in crying out against the barbarous absurdity of such a law? Would it not be a decree of perpetual famine, and exposing, four times in every human generation, of a whole people to die by famine?

Ah! no: God alone, the Creator of all things, He who opens his hand and satisfies all created things, could say: " Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land."

In truth, God alone can resolve the doubts, calm the fears, dissipate the anxieties of those who flinch before such an edict, and who say: " What shall we eat the seventh year? Behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase:" God alone could say to them: " Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year."

God alone can prepare a table for his people in the wilderness; He did so during forty years in the, great desert, sending down every morning from heaven the manna for the nourishment of Israel; He did it again in satisfying, twice, in the desert place, thousands: of persons with a few barley loaves and a few small fishes; He will do it, once more again, nourishing, in the wilderness, the woman through twelve hundred and sixty days (Rev. 12:6).

Without a doubt, He ordained and appointed toil to man, as one of the consequences of sin; He said to the man.... "in the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat 'bread.'" But God who can, when it seems good to him, suspend the laws of nature, can also, when he wills it, suspend a law such as that of which we speak.

Although the wisdom and the goodness of God have united, as to man, the right to eat with toil (2 Thess. 3:10), it is not therefore the less true that it is not the toil of man that secures him his bread. Man might in vain cultivate the earth, sow, plant, water, if the Creator did not send him the rain, the dew, and the fruitful season. If He gave not the increase, all the labor of man would be utterly useless. It is quite as certain, on the other hand, that here also, as in every other respect, God, if He will, can do without the labor of man. He has no need of the co-operation of His creature, in order to nourish it; and this is, I suppose, one of the first lessons which the Lord desired to give to

His people when He imposed on them the year of rest for the land.

By this alone, the children of Israel ought to have learned to confide in God, to live in dependence upon Him, to count upon his faithfulness, and to repose for everything upon His promises, on His power, and not upon their own resources. What an admirable sight must this people have presented, if there had been faith enough to obey this law of their God (and often more faith is required for patient expectation of deliverance, without doing anything, than for action). How was their faith rewarded. How blessed was it to see the promise of God made good every sixth year, in such sort that the earth then brought forth for three years: for that sixth year itself, for the seventh, in which there was neither sowing nor harvesting, for the eighth, in which there was no ingathering, but in which preparation was made of sowing, in order to harvest only, however, in the ninth year. How blessed to see a whole nation, having sufficient confidence in its God to leave its soil thus without culture, and yet finding itself abundantly nourished. Oh faith is admirable; blessed is it to see it in action; how it glorifies the Lord!

Canaan was in an especial sense the land of Jehovah, the country which pertained to Immanuel. The Israelites were as His husbandmen. He desired to show them that the right to the land was His, by recalling to them that He alone was its Owner and Lord. "The land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."

If Canaan was the land of God, Israel were the people of God: produce of one and the same stock, of one father, who had been the friend of God, and for whose sake the Hebrews were and still are beloved. The children of Abraham were then, in the purpose of God, a great family, and apart from all others; they had to consider one another, and to act one toward another as brethren. Many of their institutions tended to recall to them this fact, and to clothe them with fraternal affections one toward the other. Such evidently was, if not the essential and primary object, at least, one of the objects proposed by their solemn feasts, as that of the Passover, for instance. Such also was one of the ends of the ordinance of the sabbatical year. Then the land of God, and its produce, belonged equally to all the inhabitants of the country. No one could harvest his field, or gather in his vineyard; but their produce served for nourishment for all;—to the Israelites, the strangers dwelling with them, to their cattle, and to the animals of the land; all the produce of the sabbath of the land was for immediate consumption. Thus, each seventh year was to be seen realized without difficulty, by a vast people, that which has for so long a while constituted, and which preeminently, in our days, constitutes the subject of the chimerical dreams of so many a poor worldling. Community of goods cannot exist, save in the family of God. In order to it, there needs, as here, that God should enjoin it and manage it; or indeed, as in Acts 4:32-37, that great grace should be upon all those who carry it into practice. Furthermore, it does exist, as a fact (and that in a manner even yet more blessed, inasmuch as it does not exclude the exercise of faith on the part of the poor), with every child of God for whom the heavenly calling of the church is an experimental truth, and the waiting for the Lord Jesus, a subject of daily hope. When we know that we have in heaven better and more abiding possessions, and that, in yet a very little time, He that shall come will have come, we can accept with joy the loss, by violence, of our possessions upon earth, and yet more willingly be ready to communicate of those goods of which we are but stewards.

Lastly, and above all, this appointment connected itself with all the sabbatical ordinances of which it was the filling up. It formed part of the sabbaths, concerning which God said, in the reproaches

which he addressed to the children of Israel: Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them" (Ezek. 20:12). There were indeed several sabbaths. Every seventh day brought with it the rest of the fathers and children, the masters and servants, the strangers and the cattle. From the morrow of the sabbath after the Passover, seven weeks or seven sabbaths were counted, at the end of which was celebrated the feast of weeks or of Pentecost. The seventh month was quite distinctively the month of sabbaths and of feasts. On the first day there was rest and the memorial of blowing of trumpets, which was the feast of trumpets; the tenth day was the great day of atonement, a sabbath peculiarly solemn. On the fifteenth day commenced the feast of Tabernacles, which lasted eight days, the first and eighth of which were days of rest. More than any other did this last feast prefigure the final rest of the people of God. After these sabbaths of days and months, came the sabbath of years, in which God enjoined the rest of the land. This is not the place in which to develop the subject of the sabbath. I confine myself to the remark that it contained the idea, so precious for us also, of the participation of the rest of God. For Israel, it was a sign of the Divine covenant; in truth, it was an earnest of that promise, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." We may remark also, that every time that God communicates any new principle, or any modification of the relationship between Him and His earthly people, the sabbath is introduced.

Let us now see, in the word, what are the details of the appointment of the sabbatical year, called also the year of release. Its first mention occurs in Ex. 23:10,11, where we see, clearly enough, one of the objects we have pointed out-that the poor of the people might eat of it.

In Deut. 15:1-15, the year of release is again spoken of. " And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbor shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbor, or of his brother..... Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him naught; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto."

The sabbatical year brought with it then this additional blessing to the poor of Israel. It was for them, as the clearing off of all their debts, and put an end to all claims, to which any of them could be subject on the part of their brethren.

Next, we have in the same chapter, the liberation of the slaves, which also was one of the benefits of the ordinance of the jubilee. "And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee." (Compare Ex. 21:2). "And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him." The slaves were then sent away free, and with a present.

Finally we see in Deut. 31:10, etc., an important act which was to be renewed every seventh year. " And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy

God in the place that He shall choose, thou shall read this law before all Israel in His hearing." It was probably in order to conform to this ordinance, that Joshua, Josiah, and Ezra read or caused, to be read, the book of the law to all the people assembled.

Such in brief was the institution of the sabbatical year, to the observance of which, as we have just seen, precious blessings were attached. The people of a stiff-neck did not attach much value, at least not for any length of time, to these blessings. They were not slow to transgress this as well as the other ordinances of their God; they soon despised and profaned the sabbaths of Jehovah, the sabbaths of years as much as those of days, and thus drew upon themselves the judgments of God. There is no question but that the contempt of the sabbath of the seventh year was one of the iniquities of the Jews, which brought upon them the seventy years of captivity in Babylon. It was a fulfillment of this threat of the Lord to His people under the law: " But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise my statutes... I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lies desolate, and ye shall be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths when ye dwelt upon it" (Lev. 26:14,15,33-35). In the second Book of Chronicles we see this threat fulfilled. It is said in chap. 36:20, 21. " And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and his sons, until the reign of the kingdom of Persia. To fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath to fulfill threescore and ten years."

See again what God said to the people, by the mouth of Jeremiah (chap. xxxiv. 8-17) concerning the nonobservance of one of the ordinances which, as we have seen, formed part of the sabbatical institution: " Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying, At the end of every seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee, and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee; but your fathers hearkened not unto me neither inclined their ear, and ye were now turned and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbor.... But ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure to return, and brought them into sub- jection' to be unto you for servants and for handmaids. Therefore thus saith the Lord; ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother and every man to his neighbor: behold, I proclaim liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth."

Some outward results were caused by the Babylonish captivity which must not be misconstrued. It inspired the Jews with a horror of strange gods, to whom their fathers had so often sacrificed. This was the drift of what the Lord Jesus said in the parable of the unclean spirit gone out of a man. The man evidently signified " the evil generation" in whose midst Jesus was living. And when the evil spirit returns to the house from whence he went out, he finds it empty and swept out as to the defilements of idolatry (Matt. 12:43-45).

To judge by a fact which the Jewish Historian Josephus relates, it would appear that the Jewish people, at their return from the captivity, had likewise returned to the faithful observance of this ordinance relative to the sabbatic year. The fact is the following:-Alexander the Great, the conqueror having made his entrance into Jerusalem as a friend, asked the High Priest Jaddua (to whom he showed the greatest respect) what favors the Jews would wish to receive at his hand. Jaddua answered him that they besought him to grant them the liberty of living according to the laws of their fathers, and in the seventh year to exempt them from the tribute which they paid to him in the others. Alexander granted it to him (Flavius Josephus, Jewish Antiquities, lib. 11 chap. 8). And nothing could be more just, for as the Jews did not gather in the harvest that year, it would have been unreasonable to exact from them the ordinary contributions.

## ii.-the Year of Jubilee

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"AND thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field." Such is the other institution mentioned in this precious chapter, and to which I desire specially now to direct your attention, whilst asking our God to aid us with His Spirit of light and truth, in the study of this too much neglected portion of His holy word. And first a few words on the name of jubilee, given by the Lord to this fiftieth year:, it is derived from the Hebrew word *Jobel*, employed thirteen times in this chapter to denote this period. We again find it used six times, with the same meaning, in chap. xxvii. and once in. Num. 36:4. The only places besides in which it occurs, are Ex. 19:13, where some translate it by the horn, and in Josh. 6:4,5,6,8,13, where it is rendered by some rams' horns. But in this last passage of Joshua, the greater part of the German translations, together with' the LXX. and the Vulgate, read, the seven trumpets of jubilee. De Wette and Van Ess, translate thus also the expression in Ex. 19:13.

Opinions are divided as to the etymology of the word. Some give it the meaning of a sound greatly lengthened in opposition to a sound by starts and interrupted. Others derive it from an Arabic word which means a ram, thence the horn of a ram or made with the horn of a ram. Others again from Jubal, the inventor of instruments, of music. It would seem to me more probable (while at the same time retaining the idea of the sound of a trumpet), that it is derived from a verb, which signifies to restore, or bring back, because that, on the day when the jubilee began, the silver trumpet proclaimed the release, the setting free or at liberty, in one word, restoration everywhere in Israel.

Our word jubilee or jubilation, which signifies rejoicing, and the Latin *jubilatio*, acclamations, cries of joy, come from the Hebrew word *jobel*, and are quite in accordance with the feelings awakened by the trumpet of jubilee in the troubled souls and the broken hearts of the multitudinous troop of desolate ones in Israel.

The jubilee did not begin with the sacred year, that is to say, with the month in which the ears of corn became ripe, of which God had said to Moses, " This month shall be to you the beginning of months; it shall be the first of the months of the year," that is to say, of the sacred year in its connection with the different feasts of the Lord.

The jubilee began in the seventh month, that is to say, the first of the civil year; it thus brought round again this civil year, for which the sacred year had been substituted since the Exodus. Thus, including the last half of the forty-ninth year and the first half of the fiftieth, it did not make necessary two successive years of rest for the land.

Of course, during its continuance (ver. 11, 12), the people did not sow the ground, because the seed-time would necessarily have fallen on the ninth month of the sabbatic year; they neither reaped nor gathered the grapes, because they had neither sown the fields nor pruned the vines the preceding year; but as the jubilee finished in the seventh month of the sabbatic year, they might, in this same year, return to the labors of agriculture; and thus this command of God could take its course, without interruption (ver. 17), " Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy, vineyard and gather in the fruit thereof."

But, moreover, the day for the opening of the jubilee is clearly defined in the ninth verse; it is the tenth day of the seventh month, the great day of atonement, one of the most solemn of the year. This day, when every Israelite, under pain of being cut off; was to afflict his soul before God-this day of mourning, of humiliation, of tears, had been chosen by God for all the people, as the first day of this year of liberty, of grace, and of joy.

Ah! the reason is that the acts of the high priests, in the day of atonement, bring before us in the most striking manner, the perfect work of Jesus for His people-sole source of all pardon, of all grace, of all liberty, and consequently, of all joy really worthy of the name.

The sixteenth chapter of Leviticus is entirely appropriated to describing what was done by Aaron, in this solemn day. He acted by turns for himself and for his house (the type of the church), and for all the congregation of the people of Israel (a type of the earthly people). He was clothed in the holy linen garments (a type of the human nature perfectly holy of Christ); he offered a calf for a sin offering, making an atonement for himself and for his house; he then cast the lot upon the two he-goats, and offered that which was for the Lord; he went into the most-holy place within the veil, with the incense which he caused to burn before the Lord. Then he sprinkled the blood of the bullock seven times upon and before the mercy-seat. After which, he killed the he-goat of the people for a sin-offering; he carried its blood within the veil, and sprinkled it as he had done with the blood of the bullock. He made an atonement for the holy place, for the tabernacle, and for the golden altar, and cleansed them from the defilements of the children of Israel. The sins of all the congregation of Israel were confessed upon the head of the living goat, which was sent away into the wilderness, bearing away with him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited. Then Aaron changed his clothes, and having put on his own garments (Ex. 28:2) in the holy place, he came forth and offered his burnt-offering and the burnt-offering of the people, and burnt upon the altar the fat of the sin-offering. He that had let go the goat for a scapegoat, washed his clothes and bathed his flesh in water, and afterward came into the camp. The bodies of the beasts for a sin-offering, whose blood had been brought into the sanctuary, were burned without the camp. It was a sabbath of rest, and for afflicting their souls, which was to be observed every year-a perpetual statute.

Each time that this great day came round, nothing could exceed the distress, humiliation, mourning, and sorrow, with which Israel saw it begin, unless it were the joy and transports of delight with which the same people, Israel, saw it close. Every man returned in peace to his

dwelling, carrying with him the precious assurance that the atonement for all his sins was completed according to the law. So long as the high priest was in the sanctuary, so long as there was still anything for him to do, all the congregation stood without, in tears and in fear, from the feeling of transgression which still weighed heavily on the consciences of the worshippers. But when, clothed with the garments of glory and of beauty, the anointed high priest came out of the tabernacle-when, lifting up his hands, he put the name of Jehovah on the children of Israel, blessing them according to the order of God; when he had pronounced these words, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord cause His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon thee and give thee peace" (Num. 6:22-27),---then from the midst of this great multitude, nothing more was heard but shouts of joy, one song of royal triumph.

But if such was the joy on each ordinary return of this feast of the Lord, how much greater and more unbounded must it have been when the day of atonement brought round the year of jubilee. After forty-nine of these solemn feasts had gone round, after seven years of freedom and rest to the land, at the very moment of the close of the tenth day of the seventh month, when the congregation had just been dismissed with the blessing of the high priest, then the priests blew with the silver trumpets (Num. 10:8), whose joyful sound proclaimed the beginning of this year of the loving-kindness of the Lord, and published liberty throughout the country to all its inhabitants.

Before going further, I would stop a little at the precious instruction which God has given us by thus wonderfully placing together the great day of atonement with the year of the greatest joy, by which it is immediately followed.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, in different places, sets before us Jesus Himself, as the one grand reality of the Levitical institutions, as the body which casts its shadow over these rudiments of the world. And in a special manner does it point out to us all the acts of the Jewish high priest on the day of atonement, realized perfectly. in Him; for these acts, as well as the whole word of prophecy, testified beforehand, the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow. If He was "called by God an High Priest after the order of Melchizedek" (ver. 10), He nevertheless has not yet entered upon the exercise of this glorious priesthood; hitherto it is a type of that of Aaron which Jesus has fulfilled, and which He is still fulfilling. "Wherefore, it behooved Jesus in all things to be made like to His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (ii. 17). " Such a high priest became us, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, then for the people's; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself (vii. 26, 27). " Now, when these things were thus ordained [in the holy place and in the most holy place], the priests who accomplished the service, entered always into the first tabernacle [the holy place]; but, into the second [the most holy place], went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people.... But Christ being come, a High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of bulls and of goats, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us (9:6, 7, 11, 12). " For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (9:24).

The sacrifices offered by Aaron, in the day of atonement, his entrance into the holy of holies with the incense and the blood, his presenting himself before the mercy-seat in favor of the people: this is 'what Jesus has fully made good; to which we may add, that as Aaron, after having done thus, was to exchange his linen garments for the magnificent garments which were prepared for him, for glory and for beauty, in like manner, our heavenly Aaron has assumed a glorified body; and now we see him crowned with glory and honor.

And nothing now remains to be accomplished but the last act of Aaron in the day of atonement, and that is, our Great High Priest must yet come out glorious from the sanctuary to bless the people. Christ, who was once offered to bear the sins of many, must appear a second time without sin to those who look for Him unto salvation (Heb. 9:28). Till then, the antitype of the jubilee cannot really be brought in.

In the mean time, the church being quickened together with Christ, being raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, already participates, by anticipation, in a spiritual manner, all the blessings brought in by the year of jubilee. What were these blessings? They might be summed up thus: 1. Remission or forgiveness of debts. 2. Setting at liberty of slaves. 3. Recovery of alienated property and restoration of all things. 4. Abundant provisions for the poor, and rest for the ground and for man throughout the whole year.

We read in Luke, chap. 4, that Jesus having gone on the sabbath day into the synagogue of Nazareth stood up for to read. " And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias; and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it is written,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord (Isa. 61:1,2). And He closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down; and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And He began to say unto them: This day is this scripture "fulfilled in your ears." It is generally thought that this "acceptable year of the Lord" was an allusion to the year of jubilee; in speaking of which, God also said, "Ye shall proclaim liberty" in the country, to all its inhabitants. But how, if the jubilee, as a type, has not yet had a fulfillment, could Jesus say, " To day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears?" The thing does not appear to me difficult to explain. The very fact that Jesus Himself, the Anointed One of God, was reading these words which the Holy Spirit of prophecy had beforehand put in His mouth, this fact, if only we observe it, was a fulfillment of these words. Jesus had, in effect, the Spirit of the Lord; He had, in effect, been anointed to preach the gospel to the' poor; He had, in effect, been sent to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, etc. On His part, and on the part of His Father, all was ready for its fulfillment. How then did it come about that the realization of the jubilee, of this acceptable year of the Lord which Jesus proclaimed, was delayed and put off till the latter times? Alas! it was the hardness of heart of the Jews which was the cause of it. It was in vain that the King had invited them to His feast; it was in vain that He had said to them, " All things are ready, come to the marriage." They made light of it and went their way: the one to his farm, the other to his merchandise. As to Israel, the Lord had been forced to say, "All the day long have I stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." Jesus was obliged to say (as it is told us by the same prophet Isaiah, 49), " I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for

naught and in vain.... The Lord said to me that I should bring back Jacob again to Him; but Israel is not gathered... Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?"

John the Baptist, the forerunner, who was to prepare the way of the Lord, came preaching in the wilderness of Judah, saying, " Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." His mission was to urge upon the people the necessity of feelings becoming true children of Israel in the day of atonement-of afflicting their souls before God, so as to have hearts prepared to welcome the Messiah, who would in that case, establish the kingdom of heaven, or the true jubilee. Great multitudes went out after him, and were baptized by him in Jordan, confessing their sins, in the very same way as these sins were confessed over the head of the goat Azazel by the high priest. Jesus Himself began by preaching, like John, repentance and conversion, because the kingdom of God was at hand (Matt. 4.17).

Nevertheless, the jubilee could not begin till after the feast of the day of atonement. Notwithstanding such promising appearances at first-notwithstanding the eagerness with which they followed John, Jesus was obliged to say, "Who hath believed our report?" This appearance of piety among the Jews, was only like the dew of the morning which soon passes away. It again appeared for a moment, when the multitude welcomed with their homages the lowly King, seated on the foal of an ass, and cried, " Hosanna! blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" But only a few days after, these very Jews, following only the voice of their rulers, cried out still louder, " Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him, crucify Him!" and instead of identifying themselves by faith with the perfect sacrifice of the Lamb without blemish, and without spot, which was about to be offered-instead of taking their place under the sprinkling of the precious blood which was about to be shed, they were not afraid to call down His blood in condemnation on themselves and on their children.

Nevertheless, Jesus having prayed for His murderers-Jesus having said upon the cross, " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" in answer to this prayer, God once more calls in grace to this unhappy people; and this, when the Great High Priest had finished His work of atonement: He has offered Himself in sacrifice; He is risen; He is gone up into heaven; has gone into the true tabernacle; and has sent down the Holy Spirit on His disciples.

And in the words which He addresses to the apostles, before going up into heaven, there is again an allusion to the type of the day of atonement, and of the jubilee: " Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46,47).

Thus the twelve spake with boldness the great things of God to the multitudes which surrounded them; and Peter said to them, " Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). A little later, the same apostle, on the strength of the prayer of Jesus upon the cross, says to them again, " I wot that through ignorance ye did it"; and he offers them, in the name of Jesus who had died and was risen, the pardon for which Christ Himself had prayed in their behalf: " Repent ye, therefore," he adds, " and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out; that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto

you, whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:17,19,21). And what was this preaching, but a last call addressed to Israel to realize, by repentance and conversion, their part in the day of atonement, and the assurance that in that case, the Great High Priest, who on His side had perfectly fulfilled His work, would return as King of Glory, bringing to His people remission or pardon, refreshing or rest, and the restoration of all things of which God had spoken-in other words, the precious realities which were found veiled under the type of the blessings of jubilee?

In hearing these things, a great number of the Jews, it is true, had their hearts pricked with compunction, received the word with gladness, and were baptized. Peter, whom Jesus had made a fisher of men, had the joy of seeing, the first time he cast the net, three thousand souls snatched from the snare of the Devil and converted to Jesus Christ. Other thousands were afterward separated from the perverse generation, and formed the first little nucleus so blessed of the church of God on earth. But notwithstanding all this, the nation continued under the judgment pronounced against it (Isa. 6). Stephen was obliged to say to the Jews, " Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did so do ye." He paid with his life for his faithful testimony against their hardness; and he may be likened to the ambassador whom the fellow-citizens of the king sent a message after into a far country, to tell him, " We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14); and Paul, whose affection was so great for his brethren-his kindred according to the flesh-was likewise obliged to testify against them, " that they filled up always the measure of their iniquities." "Therefore" he said again, "the wrath of God is come upon them to the uttermost" (1 Thess. 2:16). The wrath and not the favor of God is, to this hour, the harvest which the unhappy Jews have reaped. The true jubilee was to have brought to them the remission, of their debts-the pardon of their sins-and behold them still as a nation, under the weight of these sins and of the curse which they have pronounced against themselves. It is still the time of Jehovah's indignation against His people. Instead of freedom and liberty, they only know slavery and bondage; they are under the humiliating yoke of their prejudices, their ignorance, their blindness, their hardness of heart. " Their understandings were hardened.... When Moses is read to them, the veil remains on their heart." Satan holds them in his chains. Instead of seeing themselves re-established in their land, their house is left to them desolate, their country is deserted; they are now for eighteen hundred years still wandering in the desert of the nations; and Jerusalem is still trodden down of the Gentiles. Nor have they any more found the rest-the sabbath-that sign between the Lord and them has been taken from them. " Judah is gone into captivity, because of affliction, and because of great servitude; she dwelleth among the heathen, she taketh no rest" (Lam. 1:3). The Lord has said, and has done it; the Lord "will cause all her mirth to cease -her feast days, her new moons, her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees... and I will make them a forest" (Hos. 2:11,12).

Thus the Jews have lost, for a time, all the privileges which were promised them by the jubilee. They have been set aside, rejected, until the indignation be past. But, thereupon, the church has come in. God has visited the nations, and will visit them still, in order to take out of them a people for His name. The church-the body of Christ, of His flesh and of His bones-is blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Cut out of the olive tree, wild by nature, and planted, contrary to nature, into a good olive tree, in the place of the branches which have been cut off, with

them she became partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree; and consequently she has a right, but in an infinitely higher sense, even a spiritual and heavenly one, to all the expressions of free grace which the types of the law or the promises of God secured to the children of Israel, who will one day fully enjoy them, when the fullness of the Gentiles being come in, the church will be no longer on earth.

It is in this way that we all, who are believers-members of the body of Christ-partake in the blessings pointed out in the institution of the year of jubilee, as I am now about to show.

Who were those in Israel who most rejoiced to hear the sound of the trumpet proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord? Without a doubt it was the poor, the wretched, insolvent debtors; those who, from distress, had been obliged to sell themselves to their brethren, whose slaves they were, or who had been obliged to part with their houses and their possessions; those who groaned, overwhelmed with toils and labor: in the day the drought consuming them, and the frost by night, and their sleep departed from their eyes. What happiness, what transports of delight, did these joyful sounds cause in their hearts, which told them their deliverance was come and the end of their toils! Well, it is the very same thing with the gospel; it is to the poor it is preached; it is wretched sinners, lost, and by nature children of wrath, that Jesus is come to seek and to save. The church of Jesus Christ is a company formed gradually, like that of David: "And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto Him; and He became a captain over them" (1 Sam. 22:2).

Ah! it was a happy day for these unhappy creatures, laden with debts, when the trumpet of jubilee sounded throughout the land; it was for them like a general acquittance given them by God Himself; it was the declaration that every plea of accusation against them was torn in pieces, annulled, annihilated. In the morning they were insolvent debtors; in the evening they owed nothing; their debt was considered canceled, paid-it was remitted. It is true, that it is only when speaking of the year of release that the abolition of debts is mentioned as one of the privileges which characterized it; but if it is remembered, that the jubilee was but the continuation the fullness, the perfecting of the year of release, it will easily be understood that all that which in grace took place in this latter year, must necessarily, also in that of the jubilee. Besides, it is of both these blessed years. that I am here speaking. Well, I would repeat it. O what joy, what happiness, for these poor debtors, was the sound of this trumpet of joy! But what were this joy and happiness in comparison with that joy and blessedness which overflows the heart of a poor sinner, when, by faith, he gives ear to the sweet and soft sound of grace, to the voice of Jesus, which says to him, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; go in peace." We know that sins are often represented as debts; our creditor is the justice of God, who has a right to demand of us even to the last farthing. And by nature we are all insolvent debtors; very far from being able, even in the smallest degree, to diminish aught from this mighty debt: man can only increase it each day, and each moment of the day. And what would have become of us if God had not had compassion on us-if God, in his great love, had not given us His Son, who has paid all for us, who offered up Himself a ransom for us?

It is "in Him that we have redemption through His blood; the forgiveness (the remission) of sins, according to the riches of His grace." We have to do with a compassionate master who has freely forgiven us all our debt (Matt. 18:27). The death of Jesus has been, so to speak, the payment of

this debt; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; He voluntarily took it upon Himself: this was why He tasted death and passed through the prison of the sepulcher.

When a debtor comes out of prison, it is a proof that he has satisfied his creditor; much more so if he comes out of his prison with glory. Thus Jesus, who was considered a debtor in our place, has fully satisfied the justice of God, who has raised Him up and glorified Him.

"To Him, give all the prophets witness, that through: His name, whosoever believeth on Him, shall receive in His name, the forgiveness of sins. Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him, all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 10:43;13. 38, 39). It was thus the apostles preached to the Jews the gospel-jubilee. And now it is to us that these words are addressed: " And you, who were dead in your sins, and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting, in ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the midst, nailing it to His cross" (Col. 2:13,14).

This is, in reality, for us, the trumpet of Jubilee; this is the good news which rejoiced our hearts with joy unspeakable and full of glory, when it was given to us to receive and believe it. And we see, that this blessed news, this forgiveness, this free and full pardon, most intimately hangs on the perfect work of our High Priest; it depends on it, it flows from it, as well as all the other blessings of which we have yet to speak, in like manner as the Jewish jubilee preceded the day of atonement.

But further, the jubilee opened a spring of great joy to another class of unfortunate creatures, namely, to such as, from the depth of distress, had found themselves under the hard necessity of selling themselves to their brethren or to the stranger (ver. 39-55) " And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor and be sold unto thee... Then he shall go out from thee, with his children; he shall return unto his family." Certainly, it was not the will of God that an Israelite should be treated like a slave by another Israelite. Certainly, it was not His will that a stranger should rule hardly over a son of Abraham; moreover, God had given to the slave the right of redeeming himself, in case that any of his relations could and would redeem him, or that he himself possessed the means for it. "And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family: after that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him: either his uncle or his uncle's son may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself.

And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of jubilee: and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years, according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him." But notwithstanding these precautions, provided by the compassionate care of God, it remains not less certain that the position of these poor creatures must have been both hard and cruel, who were no longer their own, and consequently could not dispose either of their time or their strength for themselves or their families. How must they have longed after the happy day which was to bring round the year of deliverance. With what transports of delight did they welcome the sounds of the trumpet which proclaimed liberty in the country to all its inhabitants-which enabled them to say to their masters, " Behold us free and in

liberty like yourselves; you have no longer dominion over us: we return to the full enjoyment of our rights. God has declared it; the sacred trumpet proclaims it as from Him."

Well, whatever were the transports of delight of a poor Israelite, set free from bondage by the coming in of the jubilee, they were a small thing compared with that which fills, or which ought to fill, the soul of a poor sinner when set free by grace from a yoke that was heavy, ignominious, and hateful, though in a very different way. Truly, we are all by nature the poor slaves of sin, of death, and of Satan. For, says the scripture, " Whom a man obeys, of the same also is he the servant...And, whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin.... Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, ye are servants to him to whom ye obey; whether it be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.... When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then, in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death."

And is it not true that, we also " were servants of divers lusts and pleasures; the slaves of corruption, walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience?" Were not we-even we also--amongst the captives of the strong man, fast bound in the snares of the Devil, by whom we had been taken captive alive to do his will? Was it not " the spirit of bondage" which governed us? And did we not know, by sorrowful experience, that humiliating slavery to which they are condemned who are still under bondage through "the fear of death"-the wages, of sin? Well, the gospel is for us the good news, the proclamation of liberty as to all that about which we have just spoken. The knowledge of the truth has set us free. The Son having made us free, we are free indeed. We are the children of the free woman. It is the spirit of adoption that we have received; and there where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, therefore thou art no more a slave, but a son. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." "Having been made free from sin, ye have become servants of righteousness-servants of God." Yes, "the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, has made us free from the Jaw of sin and of death."

Sin has no more dominion over us, for we are under grace.", Jesus, He who is stronger than the strong man, has come, and having conquered him, He has taken from him all his armor and has divided the spoil, He has delivered the captives of this tyrant. "Having ascended up on high, He led captivity captive." "Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly; triumphing over them in the cross." He has conquered the, world and its prince. By His death, He has destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the Devil, and he has delivered them who, through fear of- death, well deserved to be all their life subject to bondage.-Very far from still being in dread of this king of terrors, each of us can say with Paul: "To me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?-Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

The third class of unhappy beings, whose hearts were rejoiced by the sound of the trumpet of Jubilee, were such as from poverty had been obliged to sell their houses and their lands. As soon as the Jubilee commenced, they had the most perfect right to return into the possession of their alienated properties. The only exception was for houses which, belonging to Israelites, not Levites,

had been built within cities enclosed by walls. If these houses were not redeemed within a full year, they remained absolutely the property of the purchaser (ver. 29, 30), probably signifying, that that which was specially the work of man could be alienated, God only secured possession of the land, and of the country dwellings, of which the villages were considered as forming a part. All that is redeemed of the Lord shall abide; all that is of man shall be consumed. But as to the houses of Levites, even within cities, they could not be alienated, because they were a gift of God on their behalf (Rom. 11:29). Barnabas, a Levite, when he sold his field, showed that his possessions were now elsewhere than below (Acts 4:36,37). " It shall be to you the year of Jubilee; and ye shall return each one into his possession and every one into his family.", And here again was the restitution of all things, for each one returning to his possession, the land of Canaan was found at each Jubilee anew divided into portions amongst the families of Israel, exactly as it had been at the beginning by Joshua (ver. 10, 13). What joy for these poor creatures, cast out from their possessions! They could appear with confidence before their creditors, their successors in the enjoyment of their fields and houses, and say to them: " It is enough-now these goods belong to us again. The trumpet of God has proclaimed it; God has said it." How sweet for them again to find themselves possessors of the places which recalled to them so many happy remembrances; of the houses where they had passed their infancy in the bosom of their families. What joy for those who thus freely recover all that they had lost!

But again here, what was this joy when compared with that which our hearts feel at the thought and in the assurance of all that the work of Christ has recovered for us?-Man, as I have already said, is like a dethroned king. The Devil has spoiled him of all the privileges he once possessed; sin has blotted out the image of his Creator from him, and banished him from Eden, from the presence of God. Now by nature, there is no difference between one man and another, since all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). In the solemn history of the passion of the Savior, when even the words of the enemies of the Son of Man seem to partake of the deep solemnity of the moment, or were prompted by the Spirit of God whether in order that the scriptures might be fulfilled, or in order to express truths important, though unknown by those who uttered them-it was thus the impious Caiaphas prophesied, and Pilate, a heathen, the profane, indifferent Pilate prophesied in like manner, when he said, " Behold the Man!" Pilate had taken Jesus, and had scourged him, and the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it upon His head, and clothed Him with a purple robe. It was in this state that Pilate presented Jesus to the Jews, and that he said to them, "Behold the Man!" Yes, it was indeed "the Man," O Pilate!--Jesus, the Holy One of God, was there as the representative of sinners, presenting before all the image of what man had become through sin.

Here may truly be seen what has become of the primitive glory of man. His crown is a crown of thorns; the royal garment which he wears is only a clothing of derision, and which, like that of Jesus, covers wounded and bleeding shoulders. His scepter is nothing more than a scepter of a reed! Glory, dignity, moral excellency-he has lost all by the knowledge of good and evil.

But, in Jesus, dead and risen for us, we recover all these blessings, or rather blessings infinitely more precious, and which no one can take from us. The new man, with which we are clothed in Christ, is created after God in righteousness and true holiness; it is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created it. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation." We who once were far off, have been brought nigh by the blood of Christ; we have, through Christ, access by One

Spirit unto the Father. In Jesus, we are already glorified; He has made us kings as well as priests to His God and Father. Partakers of the heavenly calling, we have our citizenship in heaven. There is our country, and every day we are nearer to it, while passing through this world as pilgrims and strangers. There is our inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Christians!-then each one of us has the privilege to exclaim with the apostle of the Gentiles: " I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

But lands and houses could be recovered before the Jubilee, provided the seller had a near kinsman, possessing the right of redemption who could and would redeem the thing sold by his brother, or if he himself could find sufficient wherewith to redeem what he had sold (ver. 25-27). It was the same, as we have seen, with the redemption of a Hebrew become the bondman of the stranger (ver. 47-50). This particular ought not to be passed over in silence, because it brings before us afresh the work of love and redemption of Jesus on our behalf. There never was a man in a state able to redeem himself; none of us could have ever found sufficient wherewith to redeem his soul sold to sin and Satan. -No man, no earthly relation could "with his riches redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of the soul is too costly," and could never have been accomplished by man. But Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, Jesus took on Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself fully partook of the same. He was made like unto us in all things, except sin; He became our kinsman, our near kinsman, and as such, He has been, He is the Purchaser, the Redeemer, He " who had the right of redemption;" and the manner in which He exercised His right was by shedding His blood for the ransom of His people. He perfectly fulfilled the part of our Goel.

He could and would redeem us out of the hand of the stranger, and restore to us infinitely beyond all that of which sin had robbed our first father. He has eternally ransomed us, and that before the jubilee. To Him be the glory and the praise.

In short, all the poor, in general, had reason to rejoice both at the approach and the arrival of the jubilee, as also in the sabbatic year; for in these years; there was at the same time for them, abundance of provisions and rest. No harvest: all the produce of the fields, the vineyards, the olive-yards, belonged alike or equally to all -to the poor as much as to the rich proprietors. And even one of the objects clearly pointed out by these institutions, was, as has been already said: "That the poor of thy people may eat of it" (Ex. 23:11). And on the other hand, perfect rest, at least, as to all culture of the soil; for as there was no harvest, neither was there any plowing nor sowing. Thou shalt give rest to the land, and thou shalt let it rest. It was to the poor Hebrews the realization of that word in the Proverbs, " The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He giveth no sorrow with it" (10:22).

Behold, here again, blessings which we enjoy spiritually through faith in Jesus. In Him there is provision in abundance for the souls of the poor who believe in His name. They who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. "I am," said He, " the Bread of Life; - he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Again He says, "I am the door;

by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved; and shall go in and out and find pasture... I am come that my sheep might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." God has appointed Jesus Heir of all things. All glory has been given to Him; and his desire is to share all that He has with the church, His bride, His co-heir. "Out of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace"; and now the Holy Spirit tells us that all things are ours, whether the laborers of the Lord, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come. Yes, "all things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." -In Him likewise our souls find rest and peace; in Him, whose voice of love still calls poor sinners, saying to them, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.... Learn of me... and ye, shall find rest unto your souls. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; the peace of God to keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus, and the God of Peace, who shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly, and who, ere He does it, is able to sanctify us wholly, and to preserve us blameless, until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have indeed then every reason to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

Now I would speak to you, my dear reader. If, as I cherish the hope, you are a child of God by faith in Jesus, you know, by precious experience, all the blessings which I have just recalled to your mind. You know and believe that your sins are forgiven you; you know, in some measure, the preciousness of the liberty of the children of God, into which you have been called; you know that heaven is yours, with the favor, the loving-kindness, and all the treasures of the grace of the God of heaven; you have part in all the blessings with which the Father has blessed you in Christ; and you taste, I hope, with delight the unspeakable peace of Jesus. And what more can I say to you? Nothing, unless it be: Rejoice in the Lord; oh! yes, rejoice always in Him. Be joyful in hope, and walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you are called; walk in Christ as the redeemed ones, as citizens of heaven, as children of the light and of the day, as the freemen of the Lord, the witnesses of Jesus, the friends of peace, should walk. As much as lieth in you, follow after peace; live in peace, both among yourselves and with all men, and let your words minister grace to those who hear them. In a word, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's; for having been bought with a price, ye are no more your own.

But if you are still a stranger to Jesus-to the grace and peace of God, I can only solemnly beseech you to believe in Jesus, in order to be saved. More than once, the gospel trumpet proclaiming a jubilee for souls, has sounded in your ears. Without doubt, more than once, the gospel of salvation has been preached to you. But, should it never have been before, it is at this time. It makes itself known to you in these pages. Now, if you will hear the voice of the Lord, harden not your hearts. While it is yet time, while it is still called to-day, before the last jubilee, which certainly would otherwise be to you only judgment and condemnation, believe, O believe the gospel. May the God of all grace grant you His grace, and give you ears to hear. May the Lord Jesus, the Friend of sinners, pronounce over you His powerful Ephphatha! that you may hear His voice which calls you, and see for yourselves fulfilled that promise of the Lord: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear, shall live" (John 5:25). The desire of my heart for you is that you may be saved. And may God work it according to His mighty grace in Jesus.

But I would repeat it: this is rather a moral application than a fulfillment of the type of jubilee. The time for its fulfillment is not yet come: it is Israel, rather than the church, which is directly concerned in the realization of this magnificent type; so also is the land of Israel, and in a more distant sense, the whole creation.

The sabbath of the seventh day coming after six days of labor, as the year of rest to the land succeeded six years of labor, without doubt, prefigured the rest of God; but so did it likewise that blessed time for the earth and its inhabitants after the other times of suffering, groans, and labors of every kind. Now, the jubilee, which returned or came round after seven sabbatic years, after seven times seven years, after the perfection of the fullness or the fullness of the perfection, pointed out, in a still more striking manner, that time of peace, of happiness, of liberty, and of rest: that time, called by the Holy Spirit, "The dispensation (or economy) of the fullness of times" (Eph. 1:10); generally called the millennium. Then alone will be seen the perfect realization of these types which I have first considered, in the establishment of the kingdom of Christ and of God upon the earth.

And here I would recall to mind that the jubilee only began at the end of the day of atonement, after that the high priest and the people had each fulfilled their respective parts in this most solemn day. Now, we have seen, that Israel, through its hardness and impenitence, knew not the time of its visitation, and refused to turn to the Lord. And on the other hand, Jesus, the Great High Priest, has not yet come out of the true sanctuary in order to bless the people in the name of Jehovah.

But very soon this long interval, without feasts, which succeeded the Pentecost, will end for Israel; very soon, the antitype of the feasts of the seventh month will begin for this people of God; very soon, these words will again have for the Jews a real meaning—a blessed reality: "Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day: for this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob. And it shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come who were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." Later still (for in these passages it is either the trumpet for the assembling of the people, Num. 10:3, or that of the jubilee which is spoken of), behold "the Son of Man, coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

But most especially in Joel 2 is it that we see the people summoned by the sound of the trumpet, before the great day of humiliation, and engaged to prepare themselves for it. "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. Who knoweth if He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind Him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their

God?"

The faithful remnant give ear to these exhortations, and at length, through the grace of their God, come to the knowledge of the solemn reality, as to themselves, of the great day of atonement. This we see in Zech. 12:10-14, where the Lord thus speaks: " And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him as one that mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Meggidon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart... In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." Israel or the remnant having afflicted their soul before God, as the law relative to the day of atonement appointed or required of them, then will Jesus close His service as high priest after the order of Aaron. "He will come out of the heavenly sanctuary, and reign after the order of Melchizedek; He will be Priest upon His throne. And the Lord shall be King over all the earth."

Then will the children of Israel enjoy perfectly, and in some respects literally, all the blessings prefigured in the jubilee, and that always on account of the perfect work of Jesus, the Messiah, the King and Priest. Thus, as to the remission of debts, these prophetic words will have their perfect fulfillment: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and say unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins... And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I shall make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.... I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Or is it deliverance from bondage that is in question? " As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee." Thus hath the Lord said to His Christ: I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves... Shall the prey be taken from the mighty? or the lawful captive be delivered? Thus saith the Lord: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.... and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior, and thy Redeemer (Goel) the Mighty One of Jacob." For "the year of my Redeemed is come."

Or, the benefits which the jubilee brought to the poor who had been deprived of their lands are thus expressed: "Ye shall return each one to his possession." It is here especially that the type will be seen realized to the letter. According to the plain and unconditional promise made by the Lord to Abraham, the land of Canaan has been given to the children of Abraham for an everlasting possession (Gen. 13:14,15, etc). They have been driven out of it because of their unfaithfulness; but this is but for a time. The promise of Jehovah abides, and very soon the oracles of God declaring their re-installation in their land will also have their fulfillment. Amongst a number of

passages I could mention, I shall only quote the following: " Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children 'of Israel from among the Heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land... And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children, forever and my servant David shall be their prince forever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore... I will be their God and they shall be my people." "And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel; and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God."

Again, Jesus says to the Jewish remnant who had followed Him, "In the regeneration, every man who shall have left houses, or brethren, or fields, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit eternal life" (Matt. 19:28, 29).

In the last place the jubilee was a season of abundance and rest to the poor, and this again is what innumerable prophecies promise to Israel for the last days. After the long ages of desolation, during which the land will have rested, enjoying her sabbaths, it will again be inhabited; then "the wilderness and the solitary place shall rejoice and be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes, him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt."

The Lord hath said, "Zion is my rest forever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread." "The Lord hath sworn by His right band, and by the arm of His strength:... They that have gathered the corn shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought the wine together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness." "In those days, Judah shall be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby she shall be called: The Lord, our righteousness." " All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." " And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." " And they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it."

All these blessings which await Israel, will be found beautifully summed up in chap. 36 of Ezekiel, ver. 22-38. " Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you an heart of flesh. And I

will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings which were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord God; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities, I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it. Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. As the holy flock; as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the Lord."

Such is the deliverance, such the blessings, which the Redeemer (the Goel) will bring with Him, when "He shall come to Zion, unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob." How true will then be those words of the Psalmist: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound [or sound of the trumpet]. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.... For He hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat."

Then the jubilee millennium will be indeed for Israel, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. It will be also then the time of restitution of all things of which God hath spoken; and the whole creation shall partake of it. "For the earnest desire of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God (for the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same), in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

Then will end forever that deep groan now unceasingly rising from the whole creation under the weight of the curse; suffering as they also do from the consequences of sin and death come into the world. Then there will be rest for the earth, restored to its state before the fall. Then even for the animals, freedom, relief from pain, and restoration to their first estate. The same God who gave this promise to Israel: "Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy," said immediately before, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind." Then "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them; and the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the

sea."

" And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which come against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles." "The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of the holy city. Then shall be sung, songs such as these, which will then have a glorious reality: " The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice, yea, let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof... The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory." "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind fulfilling His word: mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars, beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl: kings of the earth: and all people, princes, and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens, old men and children: let them praise the name of the Lord: for His name alone is excellent; His glory is above the earth and heaven. Hallelujah!"

And let it be well observed, as our redemption and that of Israel is only in consequence of the work of Christ, so is it with this glorious deliverance of the creation. He is likewise the Goel for the earth. The earth is also "the possession which Jesus has bought" by His death. The world is the field in which was hidden a treasure (the church), and Jesus is the One who has sold all that he had (or given His life) to buy the field. Very soon He will come and deliver His purchased possession, which is still under the yoke of the adversary. Very soon He will break the seals of the book which contain, as it were, the contract of the possession, or the titles of the Lamb-Redeemer-to the possession and inheritance of all things. When all the seals have been opened, then the jubilee of the creation will commence, for the reign of the Lord will be begun (Rev. 5, 11:15, 17).

Christians! But we ourselves also, we who have the first fruits of the Spirit, we who are united to Christ and made partakers of the divine nature, even we groan within ourselves, because, though by our inner man we belong to the new creation, by our bodies we still partake of this creation which groaneth and travaileth together. Beyond a doubt, our life is hidden with Christ in God, but, we have not yet put on immortality. We groan, being burdened, waiting for the moment of exchanging our earthly house, which is but a tabernacle, for our eternal house, which we have from God in the heavens, the body of glory. Now our citizenship is in heaven; but we are still waiting for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body. In Jesus we have redemption, even the forgiveness of our sins; but we groan after the redemption of our bodies, ever miserable vile, feeble, mortal; and in this respect we are saved but in hope. We are the Lord's freemen, but ever exposed to the attacks of the enemy, ever in conflict or warfare with spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, carrying about within us the Spirit of God, undoubtedly, but also the flesh, ever rebellious with its desires contrary to those of the spirit. We belong to heaven, undoubtedly, but living still in a world which is wholly lying in wickedness, a world which is altogether at enmity with the truth of God, and against Jesus whom it has crucified, a world that is already judged. Thus, though enjoying by faith the peace of the Savior, this is not our place of rest, and for us likewise this world is a dry and thirsty land, where no water is. In passing through it we must meet with trials, conflicts, tribulations, of every kind. " In the world ye shall have tribulation," Jesus has said to us. Rest, happiness, glory, are still before us. Dear brethren, we know that " there remaineth a rest for the people of God." Glory: is promised to us by the same God who has already given us grace. Now already we are adopted by Him in Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of His grace. Very soon we shall be to

the praise of His glory. Very soon, yes, very soon the church will realize, but in a manner altogether heavenly, what was shown in type by the year of release and the jubilee. " It is a righteous thing with God... to you who are troubled, (to give) rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven. Praise to the atoning work of Christ, we shall soon be clothed with a glorious body, and according to His promise, introduced by Himself into His Father's house, where there are many mansions. "I go," He said, "to prepare a place for you; and if I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory." To Jesus all the glory belongs, but by adoption and redemption we have become joint heirs with Him. As He said to the Father, "The glory thou hast given to me I have given to them."

These "great and precious promises" will be fulfilled for us at the moment when the Lord shall descend from heaven. Then the saints who are sleeping in Him shall be raised by His voice, and we, who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And here is a thing to be remarked! In the same way, or in the like manner, as the Jubilee was brought in, with the sound of the trumpet, so likewise it is at the sound of the trumpet of God-for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible-and we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

Dear brethren, Is this what we are all waiting for? Is this our future-our only future? The last words we find in Scripture the Lord Jesus spoke to His Church was: " Behold, I come quickly." The last words which in the Scriptures the Lord Jesus puts into the mouth of His Church are: " Even so, come, Lord!" Do our hearts often repeat them as the' expression of our sincere desire?

It is most important to be able to give an answer to these questions. Truly, the looking for the Lord Jesus has the most powerful influence as to practical holiness in all the details of our life. This is what I would desire to skew whilst unfolding the only two passages of this chapter which appear to me remain to be considered on this subject, in order to arrive at the end, at least, of my feeble light and small measure of understanding.

Vers. 14-16. " And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbor, or buyest ought of thy neighbor's hand, ye shall not oppress one another. According to the number of years after the Jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbor, and according to the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee: according to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it; for according to the number of years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee."

The reason for this clause in the Ordinance is most easy to understand. Every Israelite, in the Jubilee, returning to his possessions, it is quite plain that it was not properly the lands that were sold, but only a fewer or greater number of harvests, according as the Jubilee was more or less distant. Thus, the man who sold his field two years after the Jubilee, sold consequently the -product of forty-seven years, or, more properly, of forty years, for the years of rest for the land, when no harvest was gathered, must be deducted. Again, a man who sold his vineyard two years before the Jubilee, consequently sold only one or two vintages of his vineyard. Thus the interest in properties differed in value according as the Jubilee was more or less distant. The farther of was this year of redemption and restoration of all things, the more value had the lands and fields; on the contrary, the nearer it was, the less value every earthly possession had. Dear brethren! the

very same thing. is true as to the Church.

As long as the redeemed ones of the Lord kept the word of "Looking for the coming of the Lord"; as long as they really believed that the night was far spent, and the day was at hand; as long as they could say truthfully with Paul: "WE which are alive and remain" till the coming of the Lord; as long as each one amongst them could say with David: " My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; more, I say, than they that watch for the morning," their affections, loosened from things below, were set without an effort upon those in heaven: there were their possessions, their treasure, their life, their rest, their glory, their city, their country, their eternal house; in a word, Him they loved was there, and consequently, their hearts, their thoughts, and conversation. They were Nazarites purer than snow, and whiter than milk. They walked upon earth as strangers and pilgrims, as citizens of heaven; loving neither the world nor the things which are in the world, but on the con-tray, spewing by their whole life, by their moderation, their disinterestedness, their sobriety, in every sense of the word, their spirit always happy that they were dead to the world. They understood so much better, because they realized in their daily life this exhortation of Paul to the Saints at Corinth: " But this I say, brethren, that the time is short: it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not-abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away." Their riches were in heaven; they took literally, and in earnest, that command of the Lord Jesus: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth." They had not the thought of heaping up to themselves "thick clay." Their conversation was without covetousness, being content with such things as they had. Like Paul, they could say: "Every where, and in all things, I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."

But as soon as Christians lost sight of this precious truth; as soon as the servants had begun to say, " My Lord delayeth His coming;" as soon as science, falsely so-called, had treated as enthusiasm the expectation of the coming of Jesus, and taught that the multitude of passages relating to the coming of Christ apply only to the death of the Christian; from the moment that the coming of Jesus to receive His Church was commonly confounded with the coming of the Son of Man with His Church upon earth, for the judgment of the world; and consequently, when events which Scripture say are - to precede this last, were placed arbitrarily before the first; from the moment when, for the gospel of the kingdom, preached by John the Baptist, Jesus Himself, and His Apostles, the reign of the Gospel was substituted (which after all is but a human invention); from the moment that men thought they could work for the advancement of the reign of Christ, as it is called, and began to dream of the conversion of whole nations, notwithstanding the plain and positive declarations to the contrary, as in Luke 17:26-30; 2 Tim. 3:13,1-5; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; then, most naturally, the children of God, thus badly taught and led astray, waited no longer for the Lord, but for the realization of the dreams of their own fancy and feelings. And what has been the principal moral result of this departure from the truth? Alas! it is but too manifest in every place. Is it not evident that a worldly spirit has come into the Church, and has taken possession of it, just in proportion as the expectation of Jesus has been lost by it! Yes, the Church, in ceasing to believe in the coming of the Lord being at hand (and, consequently, the introduction of the glorious and heavenly Jubilee which awaits her, though even she may have ceased to wait for it),... the Church

has become worldly; she has placed herself under the patronage of the great, the noble, the rich, and the powerful of this world; she has despised and defiled her Nazariteship, and has become drunken with the wine and strong drink of the world; she has become united and mixed up with the enemies of her Savior; she has sought to settle herself down in this world, and to find here ease, honor, and rest. From hence arises a walk frequently so low among saints-thoughts, opinions, a language, and actions which have too much resemblance to the acts and language, the opinions and thoughts of this world-whereas they ought to be the contrast or them. They have no longer desired to be citizens only of heaven; heavenly blessings, which alone are promised and secured to us in Christ, were no longer sufficient for them; they sought their own, rather than the things which are Jesus Christ's; it might well be said of them that their thoughts were on earthly things. The heavenly calling has been despised and forgotten. The character of strangers and pilgrims has been looked upon as an exaggeration; the salt has lost its savor; selfishness, avarice, and worldliness, have ravaged, weakened, and dishonored for ages the Church of God. Alas! it can no longer be said as in the early times: "Behold the heavenly people of the Lord, a gathering of those who are not of the world, even as Jesus was not of the world; of those who, after the example of their master, testify of the world that the works thereof are evil; for these the world is still the same, the enemy of Jesus, the world of which Satan is the God."

But notwithstanding all the unfaithfulness of the Bride of Christ, the heart of Jesus cannot for a single moment forget or forsake her. If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful. He cannot deny Himself. Also, through His patient grace, better days seem now to dawn upon the Church. To day, perhaps, more than ever, since the days of the Apostles, is she exhorted afresh to awake and wait for her Lord. Every where, God is raising up a number of witnesses of the near appearing of Jesus,- truth of all importance, on which the word of God insists, and turns to again and again, perhaps more than to any other. To-day, more than ever, the Holy Ghost causes the sound to be heard on every side. "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation [the true Jubilee] nearer than when we believed." On all sides the cry has been heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him." What is this a proof of, but that the time is near!

May the Lord, who acts thus in Grace towards His poor yet blessed children, give us to understand, from the heart, and in a practical way, these calls which He addresses to us; and may we more and more see our brethren, the saints, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, living as though always at the very eve of the solemn day when the trumpet shall sound, to proclaim the eternal Jubilee. Then also, by happy conformity to them, will they understand better such exhortations as these: "Seek the things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God; set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."

But if the effect of looking for the coming of the Lord is to loosen our hearts from the possessions, the joys and vanities which are here below, on the other hand it would never turn from the path of obedience, specially from the work of faith and labor of love, whether towards our brethren, or towards those around us. On the contrary, nothing is more calculated to send home responsibility on the conscience. This is what I would desire to show in closing.

God foresaw that in the case of badly disposed persons among the Israelites; their covetousness, selfishness, indolence or indifference, might lead them to take advantage of the approach of the

Sabbatic Year or of that of Jubilee. And in reality there was a way of speculating upon it and making it an occasion of gain, or rather a means of justifying a man's own avarice and hardness of heart. They might say, "The year for the restoration of the poor draws near when they will again have abundance, then they can do without my lending a helping hand to their need since there remains so short a time for them to suffer. Besides, all debts will then be remitted. So it would be merely a trick and a loss to me to lend to them now; so I shall take care how I do it. Such a one among my brethren is the servant of a stranger; I could redeem him, but see, the Jubilee will soon set him free; why then should I spend my money only to save him so short a time of servitude. Let us wait quietly for the sounding of the trumpet of liberty, he can very well do without me."

We see how God answered these calculations of private ends: "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, the seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him naught; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto" (Deut. 15:7-10). And in the chapter we are considering, see again the charges which God gives to His people as to the Jubilee: "And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen into decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the Lord thy God which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God. And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant: but as a hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and he shall serve thee unto the year of Jubilee.... Thou shalt not rule over him with rigor; but shalt fear thy God" (ver. 35-43).

Thus we see, that the glorious prospect of the Jubilee does not by any means make us careless as to our present duties; but on the contrary it encourages us in them and urges us to fulfill them. However near it may be to our hearts, this looking for "The blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, the grace of God does not the less teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteous and godly in this present world."

Without doubt, in all ages, impious fanatics have known how cleverly to spread abroad rash and absurd predictions of the pretended end of the world, in order to enrich themselves at the expense of the credulous multitude; but the children of God, who are subject to the instructions of the word, will ever keep themselves far from such enormities. Nothing so much as the persuasion of the near return of Jesus, would lead them to obedience and holiness. Let it never be forgotten, this is the great motive, the motive generally presented in scripture as the strength of the precepts given to the saints; it may well be said that there is not a duty, not a detail in the walk of a child of the light which is not founded upon this truth, which comes so home, and is so certain, and so solemn, and so glorious.

For example, is it said, that the daily expectation of the return of Jesus will make us indifferent to the physical or temporal miseries of those around us. For myself, I can only say that nothing would so seem to me to draw out the sympathies of a Christian for these sorrows. Did not, to take an example, Noah, a preacher of righteousness, Noah warned before of God of the judgment about to burst on the world of the ungodly, did he not with so much the more earnestness beseech those around him to turn and flee from the wrath to come, by taking refuge in the ark, as the respite of 120 years granted by the Lord, drew near its close. And for ourselves, beloved, if we really believe that the Lord is at hand, and that when once He who now letteth be taken out of the way, then that wicked shall be revealed, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, a strong delusion being sent to them that they should believe a lie; the time of patience and of grace will be past for them; the apostasy will be at its height bringing with it the great tribulation and the judgment.... Yes, if we really believed these things, of which, we also, have been divinely warned:-Ah, I ask, could we remain indifferent to the fate of those around us? Shall we not be forced to cry to them to save themselves from this untoward generation which is going on to perdition, to believe on Jesus, in order that they might be counted worthy to escape all those things which shall come to pass, and that they may be in the number of those whom Jesus will keep from the hour of temptation, that is coming upon all the world to try them which dwell upon the earth (Rev. 3:10). Being convinced of the truth of such things, is it not powerful to cause each one of the redeemed of Christ to give a faithful testimony to the grace and truth of his God; as also to urge on those whom the Lord has more especially given as messengers of the Gospel, to proclaim the salvation which there is in Jesus, the only name under heaven which is given among men whereby they can be saved. And on the other hand is it not as discouraging as deceiving the expectation of the spiritual kingdom of Christ and of the conversion of the nations by means of the preaching of the Gospel, an expectation ever found false for ages, always falsified by facts, and which nevertheless continues to be the moving spring of the missionary labor of a number of pious laborers of the Lord.

As to the temporal miseries of those around us, how is it possible that the hope of the glory and of the appearing of Jesus should make us indifferent to their relief: since, as we have seen, on one hand, this hope loosens our hearts from the things of this earth, and, on the other, we know that the Lord will be pleased in a special manner to acknowledge and reward in His grace the works of love. But it needs only to open the word, and it will be seen how these works are joined with the looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus.

1 Thess. 3:12, 13: " And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another and to- ward all men.... To the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."

Heb. 10:24, 25: " And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

I would now from amongst many passages, cite some which prove the practical and sanctifying tendency in general of the belief of the near approach of the Heavenly Jubilee; they show the all importance which this truth ought to have in the eyes of every Christian who desires to glorify the Lord.-In fact, it is held out to us as a motive for love for Christ.

1 Cor. 16:22: " If any man love not the Lord Jesus. Christ, let him be anathema maranatha, that is to say, the Lord is coming."

For the mortification of fleshly lusts.

Col. 3:4, 5: " When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

To obedience and holiness in general.

1 John 2:28: " And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before. Him, at His coming." Chapter 3:2,3: " We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

2 Peter 3:14: " Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace without spot and blameless."

To guard ourselves from forming rash judgments.

1 Cor. 4:5: " Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come," etc.

To vigilance.

Luke 12:35-37: " Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching."

Mark 13:33-37. " Take ye heed; watch, and pray; for ye know not when the time is: as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye, therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning; lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all: watch."

To patience and long-suffering. Heb. 10:36,37: " Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise. For yet a little while (how little, how little!), and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

James 5:7,8: "Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it.... Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

1 Peter 4:12,13 (compare 1 Peter 1:6,7): " Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

To moderation, sobriety, and confidence, without disquietude.

Phil. 4:5,6: " Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand; or, the Lord is near. Be careful for nothing."

1 Peter 1:13: " Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind; be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the \_Revelation of Jesus Christ."

To faithfulness in. the use and exercise of gifts received of the Lord for common profit.

1 Tim. 6:13-15: " I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times He shall spew, who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." See also 2 Tim. 4:1,2.

1 Peter 5:1-4: " The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

And how many more Scriptural declarations might there not yet be mentioned. When speaking of the end of God in converting sinners to Himself, it is a double end: 1st. To serve the living and true God; 2ndly. To wait for His Son from heaven whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1:9,10). Is it to give comfort to those who mourn for relatives sleeping in Jesus: " Comfort one another with these words," said the Apostle. See what these words are in 1 Thess. 4:13-17. Do we want to know to whom it is the Lord will appear when He returns, we read, He " will be seen a second time without sin, by those who look for Him unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). Do we want to know until when the Church ought to continue to observe the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Jesus, it is said, that as oft as we eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death until He come. Does a question arise concerning the confidence we may and ought to have in Him who has loved us, each faithful one may say, as to himself, as did Paul: " I know in whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Tim. 1:12). And as to our brethren, it can be said: " Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). In a word, is there a crown of righteousness, of which Paul, ready to seal by his death his faithful service, could say, " The Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me in that day," and who shall receive with him a distinction so special? "And not to me only, he adds, but unto all them also who love His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8).

And what could I more add to this mass of testimonies to prove the solemn responsibility we are set under to keep this Word of the waiting for the Lord, and consequently the waiting for the true Jubilee, unless it be this voice of Jesus Himself to each of those who keep this word: " Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11); or this prayer of Paul's, which I would now put up for us all, to the Father of all grace: " And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ"? (2 Thess. 3:5).

" Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Through Israel's land, the Lord of all,

A homeless wanderer pass'd,

Then closed His life of sorrow here,

On Calvary, at last.

O Zion! when Thy Savior came

In grace and love to Thee,

No beauty in Thy royal Lord

Thy faithless eye could see.

Yet onward, in His path of grace,

The holy Sufferer went,

To feel, at last, that love on Thee,

Had all in vain been spent.

Yet not in vain-o'er. Israel's land

The glory yet will shine;

And He, thy once rejected King,

Messiah shall be thine.

His chosen Bride, ordain'd with Him

To reign o'er all the earth,

Shall first be framed, ere thou shalt know,

Thy Savior's matchless worth.

Then thou, beneath the peaceful reign

Of Jesus and His Bride,

Shalt sound His grace and glory forth,

To all the earth beside.

The nations to thy glorious light,

O Zion, yet shall throng,

And all the list'ning islands wait,

To catch the joyful song.

The name of Jesus yet shall ring

Through earth and heaven above;

And all his ransom'd people know

The Sabbath of His love.

" As regards the coming of the Lord, the purpose of God is evidently to make saints always wait for it as a present expectation; and this is shown in never telling them the moment. Nothing can be more explicit than Scripture on this head. St. Paul then made no mistake in expecting 'the speedy return of Christ from heaven.' He waited for God's son from heaven, and taught others to wait for it continually. He never prophetically announced the time. In each he was perfectly guided by the Spirit of God. That this was the Lord's mind as presented in Scripture, the following passages skew: But let your loins be girded about; and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that.... they may open unto him immediately. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch and find them so, blessed are those servants.... Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not.' So again, 'If that evil servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite.... the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him.... and shall appoint him his portion with hypocrites.' Yet in the very same discourse, directly after, the Lord says, While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made,' etc. That is, if the heart counted on delay, it betrayed its wickedness; yet the bridegroom would delay, so trying the faith of his own. Yet, adds Peter, the ' Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish.... for the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.' That is, the delay is not slackness in His promise to us, but God's patience with men prolonging the time of grace and salvation. But the same Apostle warns us that there would be scoffers, saying, Where is the promise of His coming?' The Apostle then, taught of the Holy Ghost, acted in the Spirit of Christ's direction to His disciples in the lively, and joyful, sanctifying, yea energizing constant hope of His coming, and yet never predicted the time which He had put in His own power, who had said, Sit on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool.' "

## Notes on the Prayers in Paul's Epistles

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In the Epistles of the Apostle Paul we may find five prayers for the saints, which follow in remarkable order.

In Eph. 1:15-23: Fundamental principles of truth are shown.

In Eph. 3:14-21: The family relationship, knowing the love of Christ.

In Phil. 1:9-11: Practical walk and blessing.

In Col. 1:9-14: A present deliverance and redemption.

2 Thess. 1:11,12: Counted worthy to suffer. We thus perceive a beautiful succession in these prayers.

## Eph. 1:15-23. First Prayer

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"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him." The soul is here led into immediate association with His glory present and future. "The Father of glory." We being now united with Him in glory, having been already quickened: yet how few are alive to all this!

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

Wisdom, revelation, and understanding, connected with knowledge, are needed, in order to enter into all this. The Ephesians were addressed as in a lower standing than the Thessalonians. They were "in God the Father." But here it is that "the Father of glory may give," etc. Paul asks these two things, wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, that they may be enlightened to comprehend not merely the God of Christ, but of our Lord Jesus Christ, thus blending the two; and know "the hope of his calling": this does not mean our salvation, but our association with God, All that the Lord inherits now is the saints. What power we should have, if we realized that we are "His inheritance"!

19, 20. "And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised him from the dead, and set him at His own right hand in the heavenly places."

Here we find another step-resurrection; but peculiarly with reference to a present thing: the present power of God put forth not merely in quickening, but in raising up, and seating in heavenly places: the same mighty resurrection-power which raised His Son is now exercised to lift up our souls to Himself But man is so utterly dead, that who can realize thus being set so far above!

21. "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

Paul here is tracing Him from higher to lesser glory. How ought such a view as this to lead us to a true estimate of forms and ordinances down here. What have we to do with such?

22, 23. "And hath put all things under His feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

The glory which fills the church as an empty vessel" the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

## Eph. 3:14-21. Second Prayer

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14-16. " I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man."

A prayer in association with the Father. Remark here, a distinction between this and the previous prayer 1:3, 17, " The God and Father," etc. Here it is " the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," shelving a distinct. realization of Christian association with the family.

17-19. " That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be. able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."

Every day we need to learn more of this height and depth of love. In the first prayer, the apostle's desire is that we may know the position of the church as so set in the heavenlies; for the more we know of God's glory, the more we are fitted to understand His love who brought us into such a place. Therefore this wondrous mystery had been hidden so long because the church was not prepared to receive it until now;-"Strengthened with might by His Spirit" that they " might be filled with all the fullness of God." He first prays that they may know what the church is, and then that they may practically learn this, and enter into it. In the first prayer, he asks that they may have the knowledge of God; in this prayer, that they may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. We may find here a sevenfold blessing supplicated, closing with asking that we might be " filled with all the fullness of God," beyond this the apostle cannot go, therefore he casts us on Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think (20, 21): and who will have glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

## Phil. 1:9-11. Third Prayer

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" And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

Paul here prays for practical blessing, that their love may abound, and that they may be filled with the fruits of righteousness.

First, he prayed that they might have the knowledge of the Father; secondly, that they might know the love of Christ, and here that their love may abound. Beautiful order in all this, in accordance with the character of each Epistle. The one to the Ephesians is addressed to them as revealing their position, and the love of Christ in bringing them into that high place. Here it is from servants to servants,-and that they may act like Christ the perfect servant. See Paul's service in chap. 1, Christ's service in chap. ii.; also the service of Timothy; and that of the Philippians, who were not only standing in the same blessing and grace as the Ephesians, but they had " fellowship in the gospel" unitedly seeking God's glory. We ought to watch opportunities for serving one another and for fellowship. What a depth of joy there is in Christian fellowship-in realized union -we ought to seek to cultivate this.

"Love" abounding "in knowledge" should be in the intelligence of the mind of God. Our love may not be true, because not in consistency with God's love. God always punishes a fault, and never passes it over: I might exhibit false love to a saint, and do away with God's discipline.

Paul prays that their love may be of such a high character, because they were in such a high place that he could thank God upon every remembrance of them (ver. 3).

We should ever be willing to receive any chastisement of our Father. " Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions" (Psa. 99:8).

Suppose we are acting in any way contrary to God, He punishes but forgives (see David, etc.) We ought to love as God loves, "in all judgment," that is true love. "By this we know" that we love the children of God, when we "love God" and "keep His commandments"; but we must never go on in evil with our brethren. God's love is a perfect love; and our love to one another should be like His.

"That ye may approve things that are excellent." A quick sight and sense to take up what is excellent-a fine sense of spiritual discernment.

Refinement of spiritual sense is alone known by that heart who is walking with and in the Lord.

In passing through a world of evil, we ought to touch only those "things that are excellent," and thus seek to "walk worthy" and "without offense." "That ye may be sincere"-we fail most here; it is the last thing we attain: we are made up of deceit to God and to man.

Look back at a past day, and see what failure. But let there be full acknowledgment and confession, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin; but there must be a true and hearty desire to turn away from everything that is insincere, that we may be " without offense till the day of Christ." We should earnestly seek to be no stumbling-block to others, causing no scandal, but exhibit Christ in our walk. If we thus closely tested our hearts, blessing would surely follow.

"Abound" in love,-approve things excellent, and be sincere and without offense till the Lord's return. Everything we do now should be with reference to that day when we shall be acknowledged openly by Him, and all so done will be gain to us as done to the Lord, and will have a future reward; all will be loss if we are walking in the flesh.

" Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.". Marvelous words! What condemnation to each -how are our fruits manifested? Are any of us filled • with the fruits of righteousness? A few may show forth a little fruit here and there; but no words can express more fullness even to excess than these. All fruit will be to the praise of God's glory and that by us! He gets glory by us! Oh, who would not desire to give it to Him? Every act goes back to Him and He remembers all! First, abound in love; second, approve things that are excellent; third, be filled with fruits to the glory and praise of God.

## Col. 1:9-14. Fourth Prayer

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The various characters of these prayers are founded on what the apostle had heard of their condition (ver. 3, 4, 8); they had faith and love to all the saints in the Spirit: this was not mere natural affection. What we see of Christ in each other that alone will stand.

Here he prays " that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Paul asks that the Colossians may be strengthened with all might, and "filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding"-wise in spiritual applications. Many gather up much of God's word and wisdom, etc., and yet have not spiritual intelligence and comprehensiveness.

He first prays that they may be filled with the knowledge of His will; and then follows the exhortation to walk worthy: the will being known, then comes the walk "worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing"; and then being fruitful in every good work, going on increasing in the knowledge of God. Know and then act. Lastly, he prays that they may be strengthened unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness, and give thanks for being made fit for the inheritance of the saints in light, as also for being delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of Christ.

All this is shown to be a present thing-secure-"hath delivered from the power of darkness," "hath translated us into the kingdom," etc., "have redemption," etc.

If, in suffering, we contemplate the greatness of the inheritance, the trial sinks into insignificance. Let us note the remarkable order in which these prayers follow each other.

## 2 Thess. 1:11,12. Fifth Prayer

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" Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

This church was in the highest standing; therefore we find a deeper order of truth in this prayer, and a closer application. " We are bound to thank God always for you-your faith groweth exceedingly-charity aboundeth," etc. Paul entreats for the Colossians, that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, giving thanks for the love manifested by them; but here he asks, that " God would count them worthy of this calling." How? By putting suffering on them-such honor!

They had received the word in much affliction at the first (1 Thess. 1:6), and now Paul says, " we glory in you in the churches of God," for your patience in " persecution (4, 5) and tribulation that ye endure," " counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer." Like old John Bradford, thanking God at the stake for the honor of suffering for Him.

The Thessalonians were " in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"; then note their conduct, " faith groweth exceedingly," and charity aboundeth, patience in persecution, thus " counted worthy" to suffer (see 1-5). But, alas! how little our hearts estimate this honor.

The Galatians and Hebrews were not fit for this; but the Thessalonians had evidenced a true testimony (ver. 10); and in the second chapter, Paul can say, " we are bound to give thanks always to God for you. Therefore they were to rejoice that they were counted worthy of this calling, knowing that " the Lord is faithful to stablish and keep" them.

Paul desires that they may not only be counted worthy to suffer, but "fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness and the work of faith with power" (ver. 11). That is the power of faith in endurance; "the good pleasure of his goodness," that the name of the Lord may be glorified; your sufferings to minister to His glory! Marvelous place to put the creature in! "Ye in Him."

Works failed to glorify Him in creation (see Rom. 1), so that the only way God gets glory is in the walk, and ways, and sufferings of His people |

E.F.

## Praying in the Holy Ghost

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The great practical security of the believer against the evil working of the enemy is, that he is himself indwelt of God. As it is the fearful, but also the universal character of the natural man to obey the influence of him who is the prince of the power of the air, so, on the other hand, it is they who are led by the Spirit of God who are effectively the children of God. They yield themselves, in the sweet enjoyment of the liberty of redemption, to the self-same guidance as that to which Jesus willingly submitted, when, in gracious humiliation, He obeyed for our sakes (Eph. 2:2; Rom. 8:14; Luke 4:1).

The house has now changed masters. He who once ruled it undisturbed, and kept secure possession of his goods, has been dislodged by rightful conquest; and the victorious Redeemer has become the everlasting owner of the spoil. "Ye are Christ's" is now the assuring testimony of the Holy Ghost to those, who, from the once hopeless bondage of sin and darkness, have been called by the voice of Jesus into the new and marvelous light of the Divine glory. They are become sons of God, through the grace of Him who made Himself the Son of Man, that in their stead He might strive lawfully and win the crown of their redemption. As their triumphant Captain of salvation, He has made them free from that first bondage, that they might become the fellows of His own rich blessedness as the Beloved of the Father.

It is by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Adoption, that all true Christian experience is regulated, and the whole tenor of it is determined. As sons we suffer, and as sons we rejoice. If we know our standing, we find it to be purely filial. Hence the Holy Ghost, who bears us witness of this blessed assurance, becomes the forming power of the Christian character. For He is not only the original communicator of life to our souls, but also the active power of its sustainment and its exercise. It is for this reason that all these varied sentiments and emotions which distinguish the believer from the natural man, are attributed in Scripture to the Spirit as their effective cause. Dwelling in our hearts, according to the purity and knowledge of the Divine nature, He sometimes brings heaviness into the soul, through the discovery of evil and infirmity, while His end is always the practical sanctification of the children, by leading them more and more fully into the knowledge and enjoyment through the faith of Jesus, of their own sure portion in the love of God.

The believer's condition, as a justified heir of salvation, is not only peace but also light. "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye the light in the Lord" (Eph. 5:8). It is in Christ that they are beheld, in the view of the Spirit, in all the purity of the Divine righteousness. Such is the believer's standing. The walk of such is expected to agree with their vocation, whose calling is into living union with their risen and glorified Head. And so it is added: "Walk as children of the light... proving what is acceptable unto the Lord." The conscious enjoyment of this wonderful position, as well as that devotedness of heart which makes the pleasure of the Lord to be the chief desire of the really growing Christian, is effected by the gracious operation of the Spirit. Being Himself pure light as well as love, He morally transforms the subjects of the better ministration of life and righteousness into the likeness of that abiding glory, upon which, because it displays itself in the person of the

Savior, they can now look steadfastly with unveiled face (2 Cor. 3:8-18).

As praise is the just expression of that peace and joy which the knowledge of the God of hope excites in our hearts (Rom. 15:13; Heb. 13:15), so the natural utterance of spiritual desire is prayer. But it is evident that the tone and quality of Christian supplication will vary according to the measure and present activity of the Spirit's operation in the soul. The God of patience, who is in us by His Spirit, can go very low in search of what He desires to hear from us in prayer. The vague and sorrowful expression of inward conflict and distress is aided by the groaning sympathy of the Spirit of grace (Rom. 8:26). On the other hand, the intelligent, and therefore fervent aspirations of a heart, whose knowledge both of present things and things to come is according to the full revelation of the word of truth, are dictated and directed by the same Spirit, as the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God (Eph. 1:17). Whether, while reminding us of our personal necessities, or those of the suffering body of Christ at large, or while animating our hope and stirring within us more zealous desires for the glory of God, the Holy Ghost invariably leads the suppliant, whose heart He fills, to Jesus. It is He who is the Author and Finisher of faith.

True prayer in the Spirit must embrace, as its final object, the fulfillment of the purposes of God. Its scope, therefore, will vary with the progress of the children in the way of God. Displaying to the heart of faith the finished glory of the Savior in the heavens, the Comforter not only feeds the Church with the last hope of future entrance into the enjoyment of that rest, but acts meanwhile within her as the monitor and guide of her obedience. By showing us the things of Christ, He makes us know the hope of our heavenly calling as a present truth, while He enables us also to anticipate the future manifestation of the glory of Jesus, in fulfillment of the sure word of prophecy. The world to come-the liberation of the groaning creation-the abasement and effectual expression of the evil which afflicts, as yet, that earth which God has ordained to be a witness of His own power and goodness, when its dominion shall have been committed to the hands of its true Governor-such things, being comprehended in the promises of God, are a part of the natural aliment of the believing soul. They form, therefore, subjects for prayer in the Spirit; for all that pertains to Jesus must be the desire of the heart, in which the Spirit of adoption dwells. Moreover, by unfolding to us the divine instructions of the word, that Spirit enables us (because we have the mind of Christ) to think rightly, and judge safely of the progress of that evil world in the midst of which we walk, as strangers, through the love of Him who has redeemed us for Himself (John 17:14-16).

It is remarkable, that, while the exhortation to continual prayer is addressed repeatedly in Scripture to the saints, it is in this passage only, that the full expression "Praying in the Holy Ghost" is found. If we observe the context in which it stands at the commencement of that striking valedictory exhortation with which Jude closes his stern prophetic warning of the Christian apostasy, we can hardly fail to see that there is a highly characteristic force in this expression. The faith in which we are there exhorted to build ourselves up, is called emphatically "our most holy faith." The prayer by which we are to make known our requests to God, in the midst of the growing evil of the times, is to be "in the Holy Ghost."

The reason of this emphasis it is not hard to see. For it is as truth grows less and less estimable in the eyes of man that its priceless value is more thoroughly felt and understood by those who find in it their life and hope. God sympathizes perfectly with this feeling, in itself a gracious affection of

the new nature, which clings with fresh tenacity to Jesus as His precious name becomes more vile and dishonored in the world. While contemplating a time when sound doctrine would no longer be endured, and Christian hope would have become a mere derision, His Spirit grows more earnest and emphatic in His commendation of the Gospel. "Most holy," is that precious faith affirmed to be, which purifies the heart of the believing sinner from the corruptions which are in the world through lust.

The distinctive truth of the Christian dispensation is the presence and power of the Holy Ghost in the church, as the divine Witness of the glory of the ascended Savior. With the progress of spiritual corruption in that dispensation, there would naturally be a growing insensibility to the nature and value of this characteristic doctrine. At its close, the spirit of error will, with a fearful though most just retributive effect, possess itself completely of the minds of those who could not be persuaded to the love of saving truth (2 Thess. 2:11, 12). Men will then be scoffers, not carelessly but upon deliberation. They will give reasons for their disobedience to the faith (2 Peter 3. passim). They will be liars against God upon principle and conviction. In willing ignorance of his first acts of judgment, they will deride the Spirit's warnings as a weak and fabulous tradition.

Such will be, to speak generally, the temper and habit of men's minds when those perilous times shall fairly have set in, which form the last days of the Church's patience here below. It is in the midst of the common prevalence of men's unbridled evil, that those who are beloved of God are so earnestly exhorted to prayer in the Holy Ghost. For it is only thus that they can be preserved in practical separateness from that which God will judge.

But prayer in the Holy Ghost implies a full subjection both of heart and conscience to the word of God. And so, because that word is, to the believer, evermore the word of grace, not only needed warning, but also a more abundant fullness of consolation, will be received by those who, instead of living in pleasure upon the earth (James 5.5), are awaiting in sure hope and long tried patience the coining of the Son of God from heaven (Heb. 10:36-39).

It is more especially with reference to this last effort, that the apostle Jude addresses us in the prospect of the dreary but inevitable fulfillment of the Spirit's testimonies concerning the closing hours of divine long-suffering. To keep ourselves in the love of God. Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life, is the trial of our faith and patience in these latter days. The effective means of both these things is watchful prayer (1 Peter 4:7).

To be holding truth doctrinally, and even founding right expectations on such views, is not enough. If faith is not active, edification is impossible. Thinking upon the name of Aim who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, reminds us of the faithful promises to which that gracious name is pledged. Those promises again, in their exceeding greatness and their preciousness, when pondered in simplicity of faith, prepare us for a riper communion with the God of hope, who has made himself to be in Christ the portion of our souls. The light of the divine glory shows itself in. its undying brightness to the eye of faith. Above the heavens, whither Satan, as the accuser of the brethren, has his present access, we perceive the glory of Him who is in readiness to come forth suddenly and take us to Himself. While man, in his madness and folly here below, is the daily grief and bitterness of our souls, man there, the man Christ Jesus, is the sure witness of our complete deliverance from the wrath which is coming on the children of disobedience, as well as the bright token of the manner of that love which the Father hath already bestowed on us in Him.

Thus for the vigilant believer the visible existence which surrounds him is but as a curtain which conceals for a season from his expectant gaze the glory which is ready to be revealed. Divine truth is with him to assure him of his coming joy, and to expound to him, meanwhile, the nature and necessity of those moral phenomena which, without such explanation as the word of God alone affords, would prove too perplexing and disheartening to be consistent with our peace. For grievous indeed is the burden under which we groan while in the body. But in the sanctuary all is clear; and that sanctuary is the appointed station of the Christian all the long night of his patience here below (comp. for the principle, Psa. 134).

When engaged in the contemplation of that which is above us and yet for us, we are spiritually minded in a practical sense. Jesus is filling our thoughts and keeping them in happy exercise about Himself. Desire grows together with that love which, being of the Spirit, looks towards the Spirit's things. Hence, prayer will abound, and will be mingled with thanksgiving, while the exercise of this divine communion will tend, by its own sweet necessity, to the furtherance of spiritual fellowship among the saints. For faith in the Lord Jesus must produce, as its shadow and effect, love unto all the saints (Eph. 1:15).

The desires of the Spirit in the church can never willingly contract themselves within narrower limits than the perfect truth. What Christ loves, we love who are His. And because this love is absolute; and is the very life of those who are "of God," it is not extinguished, though it may be sorely tried by the abundance of still accumulating evil. The "comfort of love" may oftentimes be easily sighed for, in a day of multiplied division and much spiritual feebleness, but, as a living principle, it continues to be the taken of our personal interest in the things of Christ. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14).

But at a time when Satan's work is nearly at its height, and the corruption of the general mass of Christian profession is complete, the Spirit's operation, in the true remnant, of the divine mercy, will naturally have reference to the special circumstances of the times. It has been always so.. Sighing and crying for the daily outrage and systematic desecration to which the truth of God is subjected, the few whom God preserves by grace are presented to us in the scriptures of the prophets, as speaking often to one another in the fear of the Lord. They slave in hope to the sure promises of Jehovah, who, in His covenanted faithfulness, shone on them from afar with reassuring hope and comfort, through the dark and heavy cloud of His impending judgments (Mic. 7). We also have our ministry of comfort. To us the written testimonies of the apostles of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, are in the place of the prophet who spake audibly to the remnant of Jehovah's earthly people; while the indwelling Spirit of adoption, is as an unction of sure knowledge to the Father's little ones, to make them see and know the living truth, that by means of this they may continue to abide in Him (1 John 2). That Spirit is given to us as the Spirit, not of faint-heartedness and indecision, but of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7).

Prayer is not always an impulsive thing. It is more usually regarded in scripture as a deliberate action of the-spiritual understanding. Thus it is often found associated with ideas of labor, of perseverance, striving, etc. Like every other genuine spiritual exercise, it has its origin in the heart, in which the Spirit dwells. Faith in God is its producing cause. The known will of God must, therefore, be its regulating principle. While, therefore, it is shaped and colored by the particular exigencies which call forth from time to time the sympathies of the believer, whether as a member

of the one body of Christ, or as an isolated man of God in the midst of a mixed world, prayer in the Spirit must be a habit of the really spiritual man. In point of earnestness and fervor, its flow will be languid or abundant, as the Christian is himself accustomed to be much or little in conscious fellowship with God.

It is, perhaps, on the whole, less needful to admonish one another to a diligent culture of personal communion with the Savior, in a wise appreciation of our daily and incessant need of Him, than that we should be kept in continual remembrance that the rule of our life as Christians is the will of God. We serve the Lord Christ. To serve the living and true God is our present occupation, while awaiting in sure hope the revelation of His son from heaven. The same spirit who attests our perfect freedom from all legal bondage and all guilty blame, through the effectual purging of our conscience by the blood of Christ, is our instructor in the way which God has chosen for our walk.

Hence the notion of inactive contemplation is excluded from the picture which the gospel spreads before us of true spiritual blessedness. "For we are not our own." But to recognize this truth is to accept a permanent responsibility to Him to whom we now belong. His mind, then, must be studied, or His will can neither be apprehended nor obeyed. His sayings, therefore, are His people's guides. But the sayings of Jesus are not limited to sentences of consolation and assurance to our guilty souls. While sustaining us in never-failing mercy as our great High priest, He admits us (because we are His brethren) into fellowship with His own thoughts. He confers with us, as friends, upon the general interests of God. The Father's things are His; and what He has received from Him He has communicated freely to His own. It is this that gives to true Christian service its lovely and ennobling character, dating its commencement as it does from the consciousness of that new and wondrous relationship between the Sanctifier and the sanctified, from which also its entire competency is derived. The natural effect of this must always be, that in the mind of a growing Saint his own personal interests will be less habitually in his thoughts than the general interests of the body of Christ. Cheered and led on by the clear shining of the Savior's glory, he will feel that to run in the race on which grace has set him, is to increase his distance daily from the former things. He will look on the things of others rather than on his own; because prayer (Col. 4:2; Phil. 4:6)-seeing that the very basis on which prayer proceeds is the covenanted grace in which we stand-is doubtless an intelligent exposition of our wants to God. Now these wants will vary, as has been already said, according to the spiritual growth and practical condition of the suppliant. When the Spirit is not hindered, He will surely produce in us an enlargement of divine knowledge and desire which will find its meet expression in our prayers. True, however, as this is, it must not be forgotten that all such intelligence is limited, and falls short in its measure both of the extent of our need, and of the perfect grace which meets it. "We know not what to pray for as we ought." But if so, we are comforted by the knowledge that we have to do with "one who is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think;" and that, too, according to the power that worketh in us. The mind of the Spirit in His groaning intercession for us is always in advance of our own consciousness (Eph. 3:20; Rom. 8:26, 27).

In proportion to the measure of existing evil, and spiritual danger, is the effective energy of the Holy Ghost displayed as the faithful watcher and guardian of the Church of Christ. God ever rises higher than the adversary as the defense and keeper of His own. His songs of deliverance are round about the righteous (made such and so preserved in Christ alone) all the long and dreary day of that "much tribulation" through which, as the companions of Christ's patience, they are

called to enter into the kingdom which is ready to be revealed. He is, in Christ, His children's hiding-place and joy (Psa. 32:7; Rev. 1:9; Acts 14:22).

Hence prayer in the Holy Ghost will never savor of despondency. For, while the fearful nature of the evil in the midst of which our lot is cast is clearly apprehended, and a searching consciousness of that corporate as well as individual responsibility is acknowledged, the neglect of which has led, practically, to such results, the expectation of the children will not cease to be according to the grace in which they stand. They will continue, therefore, to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, amid the sorrowful confessions which the Spirit of truth must needs bring from their lips. They will be happily conscious, that while all that is sorrowful and humiliating is but momentary, the things which they desire by the Spirit are eternal. Already more than conquerors through Him who loves them, they will desire earnestly the day of manifested triumph. Pressing on with weary but still eager steps, they will look hopefully toward the goal. In their weakness they will find the grace of Christ a still sufficient strength. The world around them will be busy and in earnest in its wickedness; and they will be no less decided in their purpose to wait patiently for Christ. They will willingly occupy until He shall return. As God is more and more forgotten in the world, the riches of His glory according to the mystery of His heavenly calling will be more fervently admired and delighted in by those who are kept in their steadfastness by His unwearied grace. Their faith and hope will be in God (1 Peter 1:21).

At the present moment, there is nothing to which Christians have more need to turn their thoughts than the inquiry, how far the daily habit of their limes really tallies with the expressed mind of the Spirit respecting these latter times. The question is not what we think, but how we act: for faith is an active principle, and loves the labor unto which it leads. Doctrinal notions, on the other hand, are powerless for good, and only tend to blind the theorist to his responsibilities as a holder of the truth of God; because mere notion does not touch the conscience, though it may fill and interest the mind. No one will exert himself to pull another from the fire who is not thoroughly alive to the reality of the danger; as well as heartily interested in the sufferer. Now spiritual interests are analogous, in their activity, to natural ones. To attempt the rescue of a fellow creature from a perilous position, is to obey a natural impulse. To be unconscious of such a feeling, or to disregard its promptings, would argue an unnatural insensibility, or a selfishness beyond the ordinary measure. So also in spiritual things. If we really are awake to the evil of the day, and mindful of the snares by which the souls which Christ has purchased with His blood are often taken at the fowler's will, we shall not be indifferent. While warily attending to our own concerns, and endeavoring to bear without staggering the burden which belongs to each (Gal. 6:5), we shall be desirous of helping one another. Remembering that the battle is of God, we shall not cease to fight the good fight that we may keep the faith. While others work a lie we shall be doers of the truth.

Knowledge of every kind but one is cheap and easily attainable in our day. True knowledge of God remains indeed a secret still, except to the unworthy vessels of. His mercy who receive it from Himself through faith. But religious knowledge is abundant. Nothing is more common than to find a considerable fund of doctrinal information accompanied by much accuracy of general religious idea, in the minds of men who are, nevertheless, completely in the world. Evangelical theories may indeed be justly classed, in the present day, among the rudiments of the world, so easily are they embraced by -those who, in ignorance of the true meaning of the cross and the power of the resurrection, find Christian profession an honor rather than a reproach. Yet nothing is more certain

than that the truth of the gospel is abidingly the abhorrence of the natural man. "If I please man," says the apostle; "I am not the servant of Christ." Christian opinions confer no life; divine grace does: and where it acts, it brings forth faith in Jesus as its echo from the living Christian's heart.

We love God if we are Christ's; but the friendship of the world is enmity with God. If, therefore, we are praying in the Holy Ghost, we shall not be desiring the things of the world. With respect to this, the Spirit's limitation is, that all that is not of the Father is of the world. Now nothing is of the Father which is not in the Son. In Him all fullness dwells. Essentially, the fullness of Godhead is in the man Christ Jesus. By appointment, also, He is heir of all. The treasures, therefore, of wisdom and knowledge are in Him not less than (rather comprising a part of) the riches of Divine salvation. Christ, then, will be the object of His search who seeks the Father's things. But if we are seeking Him and His, our eye and our heart will 'be for heaven not for earth: for Christ is not here but there. If in us by His Spirit, it is as the hope of glory, and the earnest of a life which is our own indeed but hid for us with Christ in God. The mists of death have gathered for us over earthly things, since the day we knew that we were crucified with Christ. To be minding; therefore, earthly things, is to be unthankfully forgetful of the grace in which we stand. For it is through death that we have come to life in Him who is gone into heaven for our sakes. But the eyes of the dead are closed to sublunary things. The world is crucified to the believer whose faith perceives, in the ascended Jesus, the substance of that blessedness of which he speaks. Christ is in heaven, and our interests are where He is. Our expectations also are from thence alone. Our work, meanwhile, is here, in the confession of a hope which makes the world uneasy wherever it is faithfully expressed; for we expect Him as the Savior whom the world knows only as the Judge.

The world will not be persuaded that the end of all things is at hand, so long as it is able to taunt those who say that they are crucified with Christ with a manifest relish for, and an eager interest in, earthly things: for the world is not dull in its appreciation of the claims of Christ upon the conscience of His people, though it be (as alas! it must, or it would cease to be the world) incapable of rightly estimating that pure and living spring of genuine Christian conduct which lies hidden in the heart that knows the love of God. Assuredly, a lively dread of furthering in any way the devices of the enemy in his great work of deception, will not fail to stimulate to personal watchfulness and soberness of mind, the Christian who is habitually praying in the Holy Ghost.

It is well for us to remember, that if we are not walking in the Spirit, we are surely grieving Him: but we are not walking in the Spirit unless we are sanctifying the Lord Christ in our hearts, and so living in a conscious readiness to give to every inquirer a reason of our hope. Meekness and fear are the never-failing witnesses of spiritual walk (.1 Peter 3:15), while joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ is the inward habit of the spiritual mind (Rom. 5.11). Strife and fretfulness of spirit are the natural though sad effects of the pressure of an evil day upon the weak and earthen vessel (Psa. 73 passim). The sole security against these things is to be found in the secret of the Divine Presence. We willingly are still while conscious that God speaks and acts. The battle is His own; and our constancy and courage must oftener be shown in the patient endurance of an evil report, than in the 'victorious assertion of triumphant truth. Yet truth will surely triumph in the end. God will send it forth to victory in the manifested glory of His Christ. Till then we wait as men who know the manner of their patience, as well as the certainty of its expected end. It is, no doubt, a trying thing to see the house of Him who is the Author of peace and order turned into a spiritual chaos. To see evil clearly while conscious of disability to work deliverance, is a deeply mournful spiritual

experience. The possession of light is not here an unmixed enjoyment; for it shines in a darkness which it shows indeed but cannot dissipate. But if truth brings with it its own peculiar trials, it is, on the other hand, the means by which we may walk safely and watch hopefully until the darkness of the night be passed: It is a holy sorrow which finds its pang in that which makes the world rejoice: but the morning light is even now at hand to turn that sorrow into everlasting joy. A.

## Prophecy: No Salvation for Those Not Interested in It

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I use the term prophecy here in its widest and most popular sense, as being equivalent to prediction given by God-or the communication by God to man of the knowledge of events long before they take place.

My statement is plain and distinct; and if it seem hardy, yet it is correct: no prediction-no salvation; no interest in divine prediction-no salvation for an individual.

My statement is two-fold:-1st. That the salvation provided by God is inseparable from prediction; take away the prediction and itself is gone; 2ndly. That individual participation by this or that person in the salvation is inseparable from the interest of the same individual in the prediction; to have no interest in the prediction is to have no interest in the salvation. A most important difference, however, as we shall see, exists between salvation as proclaimed for earth, and salvation as preached for a heavenly people.

If this position is tenable, it gives a wholesale value to prophecy which is immeasurably more weighty, more important, and more calculated to arrest the soul's attention than the proofs in detail from Scripture,-justly interesting and all-important in their place as these are-which spew us that all the details of practical conformity in life and walk of both the former people of God, and of the disciple to His master, are, in one place or the other, connected with hope and with promises. These may not, cannot be neglected-they speak most clearly the faithful love of our Lord on high, who in His word has applied to our hearts, minds, and consciences, things yet to come in detail; but that which gives even to this truth its fullest weight and importance, is its connection with the other: that is, that Christ, by His Spirit, applies in detail from the Word, items of what has been a grand principle of God in His own plan of redemption.

When sin had entered, and man was under its power, and estranged from God in heart and mind, God declared to Satan, "The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head." This was not a promise given to man; it was a prediction as to Immanuel, the light of which, as so given, fell on things as they were around the scene then present, and so was prophecy in the stringent sense of the word: yet, as we know from the light of 1 Cor. 15, Col. 1, Rev. 19 and 20, it had to do with One who had other scenes and other places to cleanse than those of earth alone. "The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head"-we have here a prediction most explicit-a sure word of God, who cannot lie, and who is able to make good His word-and this word was the sole basis for faith to fallen man. Has God said, that the seed of her who was beguiled and was first in error shall destroy the head of her betrayer?-then to God sinful man may yet look up. Self-betrayed and ruined, man need not be the prey of Satan; a Deliverer is predicted; in Him that has predicted, Man may rest; and if he rests, there he must hope. This first ray of redeeming love, this first dawning of the compassion and mercy of God in Christ was so given as to guard every point that needed guarding. It was an open declaration of war by God against Satan; it declared how, through Divine power and wisdom, the wicked one should eat of the fruit of his own doings, and have his power annulled by the seed of his captive; it made good the claim, in word at least, that the world thus betrayed to Satan

belonged to another; it condemned man's sin, while it showed out his position, and silently put forth the truth, just despised, that a creature's' blessing is inseparable from obedience to the Word of the Creator. Man's tenure of Eden was in obedience in not touching a tree; to fallen man what ray of light, repose, or hope, save in this declaration; he that received it as the true and sure word of God would find it more mighty than the woe and ruin of sin and the power of him whose head was to be crushed by the seed of the woman. This avowed intention of God for the future, was his mode of giving both repose and hope to the sinner. If Adam rejected this intention of God for the future, he had no rest, no hope; if he received it, he virtually took the place of a fallen creature, but of a fallen creature who, having despised his Creator's word, when subjection, easy enough, was the security for continuance of enjoyment, had now, amid ruin, to receive that which every testimony around and within seemed to declare to be impossible, and which, moreover, involved in it the declaration that there were higher and deeper glories in God than those displayed in creation, or which he could find out. Implicit, blind reception of, and submission to, the divine word, with a " Let God be true and all else liars," was fallen man's sole ground of blessing; • and it put man into his proper place; it made him not the end, center, or object of the blessing; but another, even Christ, and man, got rest, 'repose, and hope by-the-by. God's display of Himself in the annulling of the power of Satan by the seed of the woman involved, indirectly, what a humbled heart, and it alone, could rest upon.

I call attention to the fact, that God kept fully His place of God; and that the counsel and plan were His and His alone; why he chose to let the rays of the light of redemption in, in one way more than another, is madness and folly to ask, if the question proceed from sense and reason in an unreconciled sinner: if from humble inquiry, as of one that has tasted that the Lord is gracious, it is a question well put by a worshipful spirit and heart, and has its answer most abundantly in many parts of the Word. But the fact that such was the way chosen-which is admitted and established by the question being put (in any spirit, good or bad)-and not the answer to the question is my theme. The declaration, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent" was a testimony of some one to come, not as yet revealed there; the essence of whose virtue was not present in root even in the woman, as we well know. Analyze the declaration, and you will find it contains the description of that, of which there was not one element present in Eve; the germ, nor the power to germinate, was not in her, but in another; the range of whose power, as there looked at, was, for the scene there pre- sent-earth: and it was prophecy. The Word of God may try man as well as bless him: if it does so, it shows that there is nothing in him but sin; it finds nothing in him that it can approve save the need in the midst of which, however great, it can display its creative power-the fullness which is in God and of God. This trying of man was one great object of the law in the Old Testament; it proposed to man fallen a blessing, upon condition of an obedience which supposed him to be unfallen; and it thus discovered and made manifest the self-ignorance and pride of man's heart; for man, instead of crying " Woe is me!" when he thinks of the law, finds in it (not his own condemnation before God but) a means for him to condemn others-a distinctive privilege of light when used out of God's presence. The sinner can condemn another sinner for the sin he himself commits, and even, as did the Jews, condemn him who had not sinned, lint kept the law, because, in his zeal for Him that gave the law, he showed mercy on the Sabbath, and so disturbed the self-gratulatory conceit of the Jew, who would bind down " rest," to cessation from all that was not needful for every-day profit in a world of sin. And yet, while the heart of a Gentile (to whom law was never given of God, and who, if under law, is self placed there), can glory in Law

and self-righteousness out of God's presence-nor Jew nor Gentile, so exercising themselves, ever thought of what Paul says, that all such glorying is outside of God's presence. For when man, in receiving the Law, found himself in that presence, even Moses said, " I do exceedingly fear and tremble;" and Israel begged that God might not come near to them after that manner again.

But so far as God's mode of acting and displaying truth is concerned, man has been tried and been measured: under the Law's reign, the only One that kept it was murdered-murdered by Jews, who vaunting themselves in the Law, were too proud to have any association with the dogs of the Gentiles, save to murder the Prince of Life-murdered by the Gentiles, who (despising both Law and Lawgiver), in the pride of their darkened hearts, lent their power to the rebel Jew against the Son of Him who, because the Jew had rebelled, had transferred to the Gentiles the power of government in the world, taking it away from the Jew. Man had measured himself herein; and, more than that, had produced, in the Cross and death of Christ, a measure of what man was, altogether new in kind, and as perfect in the application of details as it was infinite in principle; because it applied itself not as the Law to things done merely, but to spirit, and thought, and affection in man; and because it brought the infinite God, and that too in the character of a merciful and compassionate though despised Savior, close to man, to man fallen and ruined yet a rebel against mercy and love.

There is but one Name given under heaven among men wherein is salvation-but one Savior. Yet, since His coming into the world, since that God has been manifest in the flesh and rejected, there are differences to be noticed in the statements of grace from those which went before. Then an earth was to be blessed; and the testimony flowed forth of what He that was to come would

be and do; the Law, in the meanwhile, while it was a Law given to measure, as to Israel, the Blessor that was to come in His character as man and Jew, necessarily passed every other Jew through the crucible, and found him wanting. When it had found Him whom it described-Himself (who had fuller virtues and glories than it could paint) took His own place-and it was of Him that God gave witness once and again:-" This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased;" and not only did God thus testify to Him before man, but in the stream of mercies addressed to man in ruin, under the wages of sin, He gave a testimony which left man's selfishness without excuse, if not won by it. The sightless eye that regained its power of using light-the deaf ear that opened afresh the channel to the inner man-the sick-the hungry and needy-the dead-the devil possessed-which were as brands plucked from amid the destroying influences of sin, were all, and that in fallen man's circumstances, testimonies from God to the heart of man, as to the person of His Son. But, as there was no room for Him in the inn when born, but the ox's or the ass's manger was His crib; so was there no place for Him in man's heart-no place on earth fit for Him, according to man (the Jews being empaneled jury, and the Gentiles being judge), save the Cross. The most that love could give Him was seen in John at the Cross; and, after that, in the costly tomb and burial of Joseph of Arimathea, where the world lost sight of Him; but shewed, alas! afterward, that it willed to lose sight of Him. God having presented the One who was the subject of His testimony, the Center, as the Beginner and Ender of all His ways, does not now speak of Him; He cannot speak of Him (He being in heaven on the throne where the Father is), as One that is to come; neither, when He proclaimed our gospel, could it be said that in the scene there present there was no element, no root, no germ, no power of germinating existing there. All, and more than all, this is in Him, the Lamb that has been slain, but is alive again for evermore; in Jesus our Lord and our

God-all is there; and what is more, the blessing proclaimed in our hearing (if it has fruits and a harvesting yet to come), is present and positive-eternal life in the Son-that in Him is the fountain of life; and that it forms, and fills, and feeds the church. One Spirit with the Lord. " Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" The testimony is about the seed still, as at first; but it is the declaration with delight of what the Father finds present with Himself in heaven on His throne, for Himself as Father and the God of heaven. I in the Father and He in me-Christ Head of His body the church.

In this view, the gospel, our gospel, is neither prophecy nor even prediction; it is the declaration of a certain counsel of God, and of certain thoughts of His mind, which are not to come, but are realized; for Christ is in heaven, and we know Him-are in Him; God, even the Father, has placed Him at His right hand; and the Holy Ghost has come down and made efficacious the testimony of the divine thoughts, not only as to the resurrection, but also as to the glorification of the Son of Man upon the Father's throne. And be it remarked, that the Son of Man upon the Father's throne is altogether extra-dispensational. It was a secret hidden from ages, even as He is also personally hidden there, and the church is hidden in Him. Being there, He is not the Blessor of Israel, or of the prophetic earth, or of the nations that lie outside; to all these He is as a certain Jesus that was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. Neither does He fill the heavenlies: the place where our developed glory is to be. No; He is most anomalously placed-where He alone of man ever can be; where alone He can exercise actively none of the offices which pertain to the earth (though all are in Him and recognized as in Him, for all power in heaven and on earth has been recognized as His); a place where He makes good all for the heavenlies and the earthlies; a place where He prepares now a people for the heavenlies, and is personally all to them in the wilderness, a place He must quit ere He can enter into possession of the heavenly place, which will be His abode when He begins to act for the earth. When the Lord left the grave ere He formally and normally took His place on high in the glory which, as Son of God, He had with the Father before the world was, two things are to be noticed:-1st. He tarried here long enough in the earthly places to look around upon Jerusalem and the scenes given for a time into the enemy's hand; and this while in love He lingered forty days, and was seen among His own from time to time: and, 2ndly. He passed through the heavenlies (Heb. 4:14, διεληλυθη τα τοιαυτα ορανοσ), and saw the places now scenes of conflict to them that have faith, and of Satan's presence, but where He will display His glory for the church when He quits the Father's throne. Our blessing is to be displayed in the heavenlies; but it is too full to be measured by them; and the existence of it and its display are separable. The church is in Him, who is Head of His body, the church, and those to whom He and the Father's thoughts are revealed are in Him-they are blessed, and they have the blessing.

In saying this, it may seem that I abandon in measure, my position taken at the commencement of this paper; but not so. They that think so have not, perhaps, weighed fully the distinctive peculiarity of our blessing; or the difference between being and having. Our blessing is this, we are blessed in and with the Blessor. It would be false to say that Christ is not now as fully blessed, and as sensibly blessed, in separation from all trouble and in possession of as positive blessing as He ever will be. Well, we are in Him; as He is, so are we though in this world; and in Him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heaven in Him. That the savor of His joy is Now more manifested in connection with His Father's presence as such, and pleasure, as HEREAFTER it will be characterized and designated rather by His being manifested as the living link between the Lord God Almighty in government, worship, and blessing, and all in heaven and earth, through His

church, is true. But what we are in Him, we are, as much as we ever shall be; and, more than this, it is the higher and better portion. What would all the glory to come be to me if I could have it without Christ, and without being in Christ? Naught; but if one say, "What is it to be one with Christ and in Christ, if I have not the glory?" My answer is, It is everything. The goods get all their savor from the company, and as expression of the communion; but the communion, the fellowship, is the ONE all-important expression of the Father's love, of the Son's joy-of a Bridegroom's heart, of his bride's response. But not only so: for as thus partakers of the divine nature, the heart, satisfied with divine grace and love, all shines; the desert where we are, all things are of Him who hath reconciled us to Himself; and the anticipation of glory is. unselfishly tasted as the expression of His unselfish love, which will have the church to be seen loved as He is loved and displayed in the glory given unto Him. But, further, while we are already blessed in Him, and while our gospel is rather the revelation of the secret delight of the Father in the Son, and of what He sees in Him as Son of Man, Head of His body, the church, the reception of the blessing by faith is absolutely and entirely inseparable from the reception of the Spirit, who is the seal and earnest, not of our getting a blessing hereafter in Him, as though we had none yet, but of the inheritance of which He will take possession when He leaves the bright place of His present rest, to take up the position of King of kings and Lord of lords for the earth; and of the Lamb, united openly with the Lord God Almighty in the throne, in worship, in light, and in active blessing; when the people now blessed shall be shown in glory. If in our gospel the blessing is all in Him where He is; and it is participation with the Blessor, and fellowship in Him in the delight which is in God over His purity and perfect righteousness (in the liberty of which His every office and even position as Son of Man is sustained), this is ours already in Him; but it is ours, not according to the flesh or world around us, but as exclusively according to the Spirit of life and the Holy Spirit, as these things are exclusively in heaven and not at all upon earth. And until the Spirit ceases to be the seal and earnest of the inheritance, or until faith in the Lord and the presence of the Spirit can be separated, he that has faith as necessarily looks forward in hope for glory to be revealed in the heavens, and then in the earth, as he knows certainly that the blessing of being one with Christ is his already, and is immeasurably beyond the having in possession the glory to come.

As to prophecy for the earth-the salvation was connected, and still is, with One that is to come to deliver it from its thralldom. As to us the blessing is found; it is in the Deliverer; but placed where He is, no one ever knew Him, as being known of Him, save through faith and by the Spirit: who, if he be a witness to Jesus, as a Giver of life, is here-and makes it known to those in whom he works, that He is here-until the glory is ready for Him to whom and for those in whom He testifies.

However feeble my statement be, I present it; let them that are Spiritual discern as to it, as well as to all else in the presence of the Lord, and according to the sure word of His written standard.

By the Law, God measured man; in the Gospel, He presented the measure of Himself in grace. In the former, the trial was twofold: of man fallen and of the Son of Man, as under the law perfect, before Jew and Gentile, as man perfect; the fruit of whose perfection will fill the scene of His then trial with every blessing it can contain, which He will divide, yea, to the rebellious also. In the latter, have we not also two things, as it were, measured? 1st. The Father's estimate of the Son of Man, as placed upon His throne; and 2ndly. Of the Son in all glory in the majesty of the highest, as in Hebrews. According to which He will fill:-first, the Father's house with an adopted family; and, secondly, the heavenly places with a new glory, the glory of the court, whence He will fill earth with

divine blessing fitted for it, while Himself has there the bride of His love-and is the central living link to unite all in blessing.

## Remarks on Puseyism

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I am satisfied that the great business of the Christian, the great utility of such a work as "The Present Testimony," is to bring before the saints, and the world, if they will read it, the great principles of Christianity, and more particularly when they have been buried under the rubbish of man's mind, plentifully heaped up in the early ages, and built up by schoolmen in the middle ages with Aristotle's help: and to bring forth from the revelations of the word the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the thoughts and ways of God. This is the true preservative against the errors and seductions of the time; and indeed nothing else will preserve from them. Still I suppose it may not be wholly useless, though an inferior part of Christian service, to point out anything peculiar in the forms of evil, the notice of which may help to clear the minds of God's children from them; or to bring before the watchful eye of the saint the bearing of facts and events in the current of evil which Providence allows to go on, or of which, in order to bring about blessing, it may hasten the development upon earth. Governed by this feeling I send you a few words on Puseyism, and, first, a remark or two on the census of religious denominations. There is one effect of the late census in this respect, which probably has not struck all who have read it. The number of sittings afforded by bodies not belonging to the Establishment is, to those it provides for the population, as 93 to 100; but owing, as it appears, to the greater number of evening services, the attendance on places outside the Establishment is in point of numbers some half million more than that of those who frequent the opportunities it offers to the population. The relative proportion of town accommodation to country is greater also, in the case of Dissenters, than in that of the Establishment.

Now it seems to me, that this report will have a very dissolving tendency in the country. The plea that the Establishment meets the wants of the masses is gone. Its public claim as in woven into the constitution of the country is immensely weakened. It is clear, that no particular body can take this place. Could any one do so in point of numbers, it could not in its associations-it could not by its antiquity-it could not by its principles. The aggressive action, which is the vital principle of all dissenting energy, be it for good or for evil, its professed disconnection with the State, debars it from this place. They are too religious in their profession, and too little ecclesiastical, too little founded on successional consistence, too little bound up with the social and successional ties of family (and if you embrace popery, the same thing is true for other reasons) to become, in the common use of the word, the Church of England. The people may be very religious, but the country has not a church (a term I use now in its familiar sense). Now no one can doubt that the religious institutions of a country are one of the strongest bonds by which it is united. If it can do without them when beginning its career, it cannot break them up when it has long had them, without its being the signal of the dissolution of the whole edifice. Be it for good or for bad, such surely is the case. A religion may have become incapable of holding its influence and exercising its cementing power over a corporate population; but it will, be found that when it does, and an active religious energy of any kind undermines and subverts it, the corporate condition of the whole is endangered. I say this without any reference to the truth or error of a religion. See Egypt, see

Greece, see Rome, where on the inward decay of Paganism, Christianity, in its early energies, made its way among the population, saving it from utter moral anarchy, yet Rome could not subsist. Other energies may come in and concentrate elsewhere a predominant influence over the population, or it may be handed over to some other subsisting power which the dissolution does not reach; as in the case of Napoleon, or Papal influence, or even Mohammedanism in the Eastern empire, but the dissolution of the corporate system takes place. God's mercy may accomplish it gently, or spare its worst features for other reasons of His grace or wisdom: the coining of the Lord may be the common term of all that is dissolving and dissolved, of inroads and resistance, but the principle, I am persuaded, will be found to be true. The Divine truth of Christianity, the portion of the Church of God, is entirely independent of all this. It is heavenly, and has its resources in God, who cannot fail.

Two things may be alleged in reply to what I have said-that the Establishment has shown unwonted energy in enlarging its borders, and that the religious energies of the Evangelical world were never so great. I think this will be found not in any way- to alter the case. For the moment I will only speak of the latter; I think every observant mind will recognize that what are called the Evangelical clergy, have, as a body lost their moral weight in the country. As an energy, the influx of truth had power; as a party, the Evangelical body have not that; nor can they, when that does not characterize them, have the dead weight of mere respect for institutions. They may insist, in defending themselves, on this respect for institutions, and guard against accusations of failure on this point, but this is not the weight and power of their cause. This, as an influence, is evidently on the other side. I think it will hardly be said that the vigor and power of the influx and onset of truth subsists. General Evangelical activity is outside the institutions we speak of. Many persons belonging to these engage in that activity, but these are not the channel of it. Exeter Hall is independent of the Establishment, though the members of the Established Church may form the most numerous portion of those who take part there. An energy which acts outside of and independent of an established system tends to throw this into oblivion, and to supplant it. And it is evident that the energies which are active in Exeter Hall supply nothing which can make an established institution for the country. It is not its intention. It could not have this effect. God may in his grace spare the institutions because the energy is such as He approves of in the main character of its purpose and intention, as being that of the grace of the gospel: the truest exhibition therefore of himself. But the energy does not move within the channel of local institutions, nor form in itself a stay to them.

I will touch on the extension of Churches in a moment. I now turn to the effect of the discovery that the majority of the Sunday-service-going population do not go to the services of the Establishment. It is evident that this, as a body, cannot lean upon its value as the poor man's religion, as embracing the masses, as the resource of the great body of the population. It is not their resource. The greater part go elsewhere, from finding services more suited to their habits. Will the clergy of the Establishment give up the conflict for this reason? Surely not. But they will be thrown on what is their more distinctive pretension, that which the others cannot have in such a shape. They will insist on being the Church. They have succession, bishops as in early ages, sacraments with priestly competency to consecrate and administer them, a clergy which bears the stamp of apostolic order. Here there is but one body in the country which can pretend to stand on common ground with them. Driven back from the ground of being national, on which Evangelicals and High

Church and no Church principles had a common field, the Establishment is by the census forced upon what is commonly called Puseyite ground. It has no other left. The true Puseyite will take it up in its energy, and it is a very powerful one, and has the largest hold on human nature. The old High Churchman, though occasionally murmuring against Rome, will necessarily follow in the wake of what constitutes the energy of his own system and the Evangelicals, though crying out against Puseyism, when there is any energy, will, while guarding against false conclusions, and warning against abuses, fall into the path of sustaining the influence of that which distinguishes him from the Dissenter; his system is the Church," the rest is Dissent. At Exeter Hall he will go with Dissenters (and a few will hold up the "Evangelical Alliance,") but in his parish he will be what is called a Churchman, he will minister de facto to the strength of that party, the energies of which are elsewhere. In a word, the Census will, I cannot for a moment doubt, throw the Establishment into the hands of the Puseyites. What was the Establishment? It was a body by which general Protestant truths and Protestant feelings were linked with everything that nature clung to religiously; or rather, one by which every natural tie was linked with respectable Protestantism. A man was married there, his wife churched there, he said his prayers, if he said any, there, he had been christened there, his family, his children, gone before him, were all buried there. All his religious associations, and the common respect for moral order were linked up, with the parish church and the Protestant Establishment. That was moral and Protestant; I am not speaking of saving souls but of religious habits. The country was thus characterized. This, except in country places, has been outgrown; other religious energies have grown up; the mass of the population has escaped from this influence. It has, in a national point of view ceased to exist. This is a momentous fact. As regards the Establishment, the clergy as such, take its place. They characterize the system now. The validity of apostolical ordinances, the true and only 'channel of grace, dependent on them is the link which binds now what remains of the once national Establishment together: for they have that, while none of the others, except Romanists, possess them in this manner.

What is the import of Church extension, the second objection I referred to, when this state of things is considered? Take the general spirit which animates it-of course there may be exceptions-is it Evangelical or ecclesiastical? no one could hesitate a moment. It is done in a mediaeval spirit. It flows partly from, and ministers still more to, the spirit which I have spoken of as tending more and more to characterize the Establishment.

I turn to another point which you will be surprised, perhaps, to see connected with this-the war. I have the clearest conviction that the real and sole effect of this war-besides exalting France, who represents the principles of the latter days now at work in their three aspects,-will be to increase Romish Papal, and French influence in the East, and to give both-for in this respect they are co-ordinate-a greater hold upon it. Every one knows that the quarrel began about the privileges of the Greek and Roman systems in what are called holy places. Some of your readers may perhaps not know that in the East France has the right of protection over Catholics as French subjects. Europeans are called " Franks." Already the French ambassador, when the Greeks were expelled Constantinople, insisted that united Greeks, i. e. united to the Roman see, should remain. He has been recalled for the violence he displayed, but I refer to it as skewing the principle which is at work; the exclusion of Russian influence is the consolidating of Romish. The Romish party are not at all unaware of this, though they hesitated on account of the usefulness of the Russian Emperor

politically. But, without committing itself, as usual, the see of Rome profits by it. Louis Napoleon is the instrument of this. Satan is fully at work in it.

And now what is Puseyism? I mean not in its grosser forms of wax candles, fald-stools, and surplice-preachings; or the darker shades of confessionals and floor-lickings to please the God of grace with, but in the substance of its doctrines as it sets itself forth in its most favorable light. I say nothing here of its overweening confidence and pretensions, nor of its want of straightforwardness, nor of the doctrine (worthy of Rome) of mental reservation. I repeat, I would take the essential principles of its doctrinal foundation. If, indeed, we can justly speak of the essence of error which has no real or substantial existence, but is the mere falsification of something else.

The doctrine, of Puseyism, as put forward by its best, and, as it appears from the sale of his books, its most acceptable advocate, is this-that the sacraments are a continuation or prolongation of the incarnation. The assumption of manhood into God made, they say, that manhood the medium of communicating life to the souls of sinners; that that which Christ did personally when present, He now does by the sacraments; that, in the Eucharist, Christ's body is really present in all this vital power, and communicates life to the receiver; that all receive Christ himself, not carnally but really, only that He does not profit them in whom that reception is not made effectual by faith; that whoever denies this denies mediation. These are, evidently, very material statements. I pass over, for the present, what the writer I have alluded to, though seeming to explain, really passes over too, namely, that the first sacrament, baptism, is, as to its elements, confessedly no part of Christ. Yet, according to his theory, sinners or infants get life by this sacrament, which is not the life-giving humanity of the Mediator at all! I have a more serious account to settle with the system than its folly and its inconsistency. It denies the whole substantive truth of Christianity as a system of reconciliation of man to God; even supposing it orthodox as to the truths connected with Christ's person, which, in its excessively rash and bold meddling, it can hardly be allowed to be. That meddling rashness is most reprehensible and dangerous; but I believe that the writer to whom I allude does not mean to be unsound. It is mere heady confidence, so that I do not here take up this part of the subject; but he intends to teach what denies Christianity, viewed as a means of reconciling the sinner. I do not say he intends to deny it, for he seems to be profoundly and totally ignorant of the truth; but he intends to teach what does deny it. The Scripture, while teaching that the Son had life in Himself, and maintaining the glory of Christ's person as God, manifest in the flesh, in all its blessed fullness, teaches that, "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die it brings forth much fruit;" that no link could be formed between man in his natural state and a living Christ, looked at as come in the flesh. He might act divinely in men's hearts, but Christianity is not His becoming a new stock and root of humanity while living here. Not because the power of life was not in Him, but because the union of the church with Him could not be formed till redemption was accomplished and Christ gone up on high. He dies, and accomplishes redemption, and sits down in righteousness at the right-hand of God and there as risen becomes the head of a living race, standing in Him in righteousness before God. The first Adam becomes the head of a sinful race when he had accomplished sin; Christ of a saved, and righteous, and holy race, quickened with Him when righteousness is accomplished. Being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation to all, them that obey Him. Therefore we are described as quickened together with Him; raised up together, and sitting together in Him in heavenly places. And hence the very first instituted sign of being a Christian, which, whatever else

does, certainly, as a sign, gives the character of the place a Christian takes as such; has for its sense and meaning, death and resurrection. We are baptized into His death, wherein also we are raised again. If I had known Christ after the flesh, says the apostle, yet henceforth know I Him no more. Hence the Savior's positive declaration that, looked at as man, He abode alone till death; the apostolic teaching as to the sense of the introductory rite, and all the instruction He gives on the Christian state concur to prove that our position as Christians is founded on an accomplished redemption; that our union with Christ is with a risen and glorified Christ; the head being set in heaven that we might be united to Him there; and that only so is He the head of the church; that so only can man be really associated with Him; that thus, as having received life from Him, and being sealed with the Holy Spirit, we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones; and finally, that it is not His partaking of our flesh, that was a step towards it, as to His person, by which union takes place. He is not united to sinful man, but redeemed quickened men are united to Him, as the exalted man in heaven by the power of the Holy Ghost. He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit, for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. In a word, believers are united to Christ in heaven risen and glorified; not Christ living on the earth to any sinful man whatever. In the theory I comment on, Christ takes whole humanity into His person, and purifies it, communicates it, while living, thus purified to sinners, and then by the sacraments communicates it and purifies ours. The sacraments being said to be an extension of the incarnation. Where is the place of redemption? Where of a risen Christ? a glorious man, to whom the church is united, the source of life as man through faith; though a divine source of a divine life. But that. I may do the system I condemn no injustice, I will quote the words of the book I have alluded to. In the beginning of the "Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist," it is said-" The present work is the sequel of a treatise on the doctrine of the incarnation." It was then asserted that " Sacraments are the extension of the incarnation." Having this general principle thus laid down, I shall now cite some passages in another work, in which there are some truths set forth in opposition to rationalism, but which will afford us large insight into the system.

In this work, the same author, after speaking of man as one family, as a " co-ordinate whole," continues:-"Now, into this family it was that Christ, our Lord, was pleased to enter. When He took man's nature, He vouchsafed to ally Himself to all members of this extended series, by the actual adoption of that transmitted Being which related Him to the rest."

Now, it is impossible to appreciate too highly the truth and preciousness of the reality of the humanity of the Lord Jesus. All that Archdeacon Wilberforce could say to exalt the importance of this, and its essential connection with the mediatorship of Christ, as the one way of blessing, would be ever below the importance of the subject: I think I may say, the importance I would attach to it. Without His Godhead, it is nothing; but that once owned, it is His manhood, which is above all truths the blessed spring of all our hopes and joys. In it we have the realization of the condescension in which He is with us and near us the needed basis of all He has done to make us one with Himself. I know God thus in love. But He is not in that state the head of the new race. That is the point, I urge. He accomplishes righteousness and atones for sin before He becomes so. He must have done so; he Himself declares He must, and otherwise abode alone. Now, the author makes His manhood a communicative source of life while He was down here, so as to connect men with Himself' as a head; and indeed makes Him the pattern, and model, and head of restored humanity in His living condition as united to all men by incarnation; however, according to

their own will they might or might not profit by it. Scripture does not. It is to bring this point out that I cite many passages which attach a great importance to the humanity of Christ, but teach what is utterly unsound as to the connection of men with Him in His incarnation. It is necessary that I should make, and that my reader should clearly seize, this distinction between incarnation and the manhood of Christ being a uniting source of life while He lived, or the reason for quoting passages which bring both out would not be understood. This confusion is the essence of the dark apostasy which passes by the name of Puseyism. "It implies," I continue to quote, "the reality of a common humanity, and His perfect and entire entrance into its ranks. Thus did He assume a common relation to all mankind. This is why the existence of human nature is a thing too precious to be surrendered to the subtleties of logic; because, upon its existence depends that real manhood of Christ which renders Him a co-partner with ourselves. And upon the reality of this fact is built that peculiar connection between God and man which is expressed by the term mediation. It looks to an actual alteration in the condition of mankind, through the admission of a member into its ranks, in whom and through whom it attained an unprecedented elevation. Unless we discern this real impulse which was bestowed upon humanity, the doctrines of atonement and sanctification, though confessed in words, become a mere empty phraseology. That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself implies an actual acceptance of the children of men, on account of the merits of one of their race, as well as an actual change in the race itself, through the entrance of its nobler associate."

Now, that the incarnation was necessary to the atonement is self-evident; but the apostle's words, "that through death," find no place in the Archdeacon's mind. He speaks of atonement, but it is only, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." But this was in His life. The apostle adds, "not imputing their trespasses to them," and then goes on to say that he and the rest were ambassadors for Christ, because God had made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, etc. This the Archdeacon entirely leaves out, and declares that God being in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, implies an actual acceptance of the children of men, on account of the merits of one of their race, not a personal substitute made sin for others, but the merits of one who is one of their race by incarnation. "What Christ associated to Himself, therefore, was no individual man, but that common nature of which Adam was the first example." He could not associate an individual man. It would be sheer nonsense; and no doubt He took our nature, but surely He became an individual man in taking it. But this the Archdeacon strives against. "It was not any human person in particular," says Bishop Beveridge, "but the human nature which He assumed unto His sacred person." "The Word," saith St John, "was made flesh and dwelt in us." "The evangelist useth the plural number men for manhood, us for the nature whereof we consist." Such are the grounds of the Archdeacon for what he calls Christ's co-partnership with us.

Again, "He who was personally God, took His place in this series by incarnation, and thus assumed a common relationship to all its possessors." "What was there in Christ's manner of adopting our being which marked Him out from others, so that, when he was pleased to introduce Himself into the family of human beings, He became at once the first-born of every creature-the beginning of the creation of God?" He then refers to the title, last Adam; and afterward, "And if His relation to His brethren is to be as perfect as that of the first Adam, it must rest on the same conditions. He must be the stock from whom all are descended, and the new type after which they are to be formed. Now, the first of these grounds of connection shall be touched upon hereafter,

when we speak of the sacramental union whereby men are united to Christ.... But what is asserted in this chapter is, that- the new Adam was as truly the type and pattern of the renewed, as the old Adam of the first creation. Thus did He occupy a place corresponding to our original father, and became, though in a different manner, the representative of the race."

Now, I affirm that Scripture always teaches that the risen Jesus is the head and representative of the new race; and note the importance of this, that it leaves place for redemption, death, and atonement for sin, to come in as the ground on which men could belong to the second Adam and be formed into His image, which the making Adam as such in incarnation leaves entirely out. We are told to walk as He walked. But sinful man therein the body cannot be what Christ was down here who knew no sin. He was perfect, and walked perfectly; He had life in Himself, but the corn of wheat necessarily abode alone, and in that character of man, alive down here, He was neither the head of the new race nor the type and pattern of it according to the counsels of God. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8). We have borne the image of the earthly, we shall the image of the heavenly (1 Cor. 15). Our point of attainment is the resurrection from the dead (Phil. 3). When Christ shall change these vile bodies, and fashion them like His glorious body. We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. The practical effects are fully stated in Phil. 3, and 1 John 3; but the time of likeness is resurrection and glory, and atonement and redemption by death, the ground and basis of it. Incarnation was needed to His being the head and type of the new race; but it was not in incarnation that He was that head and type, but when risen after He had accomplished the redemption needed to give man a share with Him in glory before the Father. If Christ does not wash us as so gone on high, we have no part with Him. The water itself as well as the blood flowed out of the wounded side of a dead Christ.

I must confine myself to my proper subject, or there is a mass of statements -of the Archdeacon as to the first Adam wholly unfounded and unscriptural. But I pursue my subject. "Christ became the head of man's race, that in Him we might recover the likeness of God, which in Adam we had lost." "This presence of a superior being was what gave perfection to that likeness of God in which man was created." He then quotes Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 15:49; confounding them with Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:22,23; 1 John 3:2; 2 Cor. 4:4. Whereas the whole argument of Rom. 8, from ver. 18 onward, is the contrast of the saint's future state with his present; as to 1 Cor. 15, every child knows that it refers to resurrection; Col. 3:10, being with equal certainty applicable to the saint now, as also Ephesians; whereas 1 John 3:2 is with the same certainty only applicable to a future state. It is said, "When He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

Indeed, in these citations the Archdeacon is trifling either with his reader or with Scripture. To say the truth, his use of it in general is such as must astonish any one who has any serious respect for it; skewing a carelessness and ignorance of the passages he quotes from, which may be very patristic, but is certainly anything but respect for God or for His word. A few more quotations will suffice. "When the Eternal Word created the first man in God's image, He bestowed the beginning of this gift; its fullness was vouchsafed when He gave Himself to be the second man in the flesh." I have noticed, farther on, another inconceivably monstrous principle contained in this phrase. Thus the glorious state of man consequent on redemption is wholly excluded and left out of what is "designed for the family of man." "All these passages [those to which we have just referred] spew that the gift of the gospel is that knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,' which

had originally, though as the apostle implies in inferior measure, been designed for the family of man." Now, it is remarkable, that the apostle here quoted had never seen Christ living here amongst men-had never seen Him as incarnate upon earth-knew Him only in the glory, and here speaks in the most emphatic manner of the ministration of the Spirit, revealing that glory of an ascended Christ as He had promised. His gospel was the gospel of the glory of Christ.

The Archdeacon's doctrine, in this part of His book, as to original sin is as unsound, I apprehend, as the rest; but I cannot here enter on this point. It is a transmitted disorganization of the lower appetites and powers resulting from a withdrawal of divine light. "One circumstance which must, of course, greatly affect this whole question, is the perfect parallel which exists between the first man and the second- between the type and the antitype; him in whom humanity fell, and Him in whom it rose again; between Adam, in whom a divine Spirit was united, only for a season, to our mortal being, and Christ, in whom the same Spirit dwelt permanently and without measure." This is really rationalism in its worst features, what is called on the continent the Christ as found in humanity in all manner of shapes. Adam was a kind of partial temporary incarnation, and Christ merely a more fully inspired man. "Its fullness," says the Archdeacon, "was vouchsafed when He gave Himself to be the second man in the flesh." "Thus as Adam was a type of humanity in his constitution, so also is Christ. True it is that men are not united to the second man by that actual paternity by which they are all bound to the first. But the pattern form is perfectly developed; it remains only to find some no less real means of union, whereby they may enjoy the blessing of this higher descent." He is speaking of Christ as come into this world-of the incarnation. "For the Word was made flesh. He clothed' Himself in man's whole nature," etc. The means of union he refers to are the sacraments. The author concludes by saying-" Thus is that object attained for which man's heart had always longed-the union of our inferior with that superior nature, by which its weakness might be redressed and its ignorance enlightened." Again, after largely speaking of Christ as on earth as having no form nor comeliness, etc., as " coming to His own;" in a word, of what He was on earth he says-" Thus was then exhibited a true pattern for the children of men, in whom was set forth that gift of which all may have participation. For here is restored that true constitution of our being, and man renewed takes the place of man fallen."

The force of all this is evident: man lost a supernatural union with God by the fall; and it is restored in incarnation in Christ in a better way, and Christ, incarnate, living in the world, is the pattern-man, after whom all are livingly remodeled. Men received life of Him through His body, and now He is gone, the sacraments, which are "an extension of the incarnation," supply the place of His living bodily presence, and by them we are united to this divine source of life. Before quoting some passages as to the "means of union;" I would remark, that as in the case of the spiritual rationalism of the continent, the Spirit's personal presence is wholly overlooked. With the Archdeacon, it is either man's mind or a sacrament. He alleges, I am aware, that Christ is set aside by them who look to the Spirit's work. It is possible it may be so by some; I cannot tell. But the thought of union with the glorified Head in heaven, the incarnate glorified Man who had accomplished redemption before He went up on high, does not seem to enter into his mind. According to the Word, " he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit";but with the author, it is man's mind or a sacrament, by the flesh having life in it. Now, as I have already said, all blessing is in and through the Incarnate Word, it is impossible to hold this too distinctly or too fully. All is treasured up in Him-all flows through Him. If the Father's love (He with whom He is one) is the eternal source-the Incarnate Word-the Son of

God- is personally He in whom we have all the blessing that flows from this source, the power Of the Holy Ghost being that through which we -are put in communion with it; and, further, for my own part, I can say, I know no place in which, as to means, I find so peculiar an& especial a blessing as in-the Lord's Supper, and that in special connection with the suffering and. Now glorified Jesus, He who if He is ascended first descended into the lower parts of the earth, that, now ascended up far above all heavens, He might fill all things, not only as seen as a creating God, but in redemption glory as a redeeming man, and yet have 'the church united to Himself in a special way as "His body, the fullness of [completing] Him who filleth all in all."

All this I adore the grace of God in. But our question is not here whether all fullness is in the person of Christ. "In Him dwelleth," and surely was it so when on earth, " all the fullness Of the Godhead bodily;" but it was not in the state in which He was on earth that it was God's mind to unite the Church to Him, and the rather, as then that union would have been independent of redemption, and made man's sinful unredeemed state immaterial as to that union, and the Holy Ghost in man the seal of his actual sinful, and not of his redeemed, condition. And hence, though all the fullness was personally in Christ, yet He could say; "I am come to send fire on the earth, and what wilt I if it be already kindled. But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Was He straitened in His own 'bowels of love? Every believing heart will well know He was not. He was straitened, because the love in Him was infinite, (for God is love) and could not flow forth in its own proper fullness and full display, till the death due to man as a sinner was come in, till the flood-gates were opened by redemption, and the whole tide of Divine grace flowed forth justly and unhindered on a lost and ruined world. Yes, that blessed One was straitened; and death and bearing wrath though it were, He could look to His own suffering as opening the way for the full manifestation that God was love, and for the exercise of it in the salvation of the lost. The blessed perfection of Jesus, the witness of sweet and precious love in Jesus, to which every heart surely ought to have bowed, was, on the contrary, putting man's heart to the test, in one sense the final test, so as to prove that no union of Adam's seed unredeemed with a living Christ was possible. " He was in the world, and the world knew Him not. He came to His own, and His own received Him not." " The life was the light of men, but the light shone in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not." Had He not come and spoken unto them, the most favored of the race in whom all was tested, they had not had sin; now there was no cloak:- "If He had not done the works none other man did, they had not had sin. But now they had seen and hated both Him and His Father." Christ's Incarnation was His sinless entrance into the old creation, though in a way entirely exceptional, so as to be, even as man, wholly out of all the evil of it and manifest God in it. As risen, He is the head and beginning of the new. The presenting of man to God, according to His own counsels; and He is then the pattern-man. The Man as God brings Him to Himself. " The first-born among many brethren." For "He suffered the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." The fullness of Christianity is not merely that God was manifested in man; but that man was brought to God so as that God should see man in His own image, " holy and without blame before Him in love"; should see him in the Son too, so that He should be a Father to him in the relationship in which He was to His beloved and only begotten. It is, that man should be brought to Him also in a nature in which God could delight, because it was His, own (His own, I mean in its moral character, holy, blameless, and love), and which, from being such, should have infinite delight in its effect, because the fullness of this very nature was there to delight in, in God Himself. The "mystery of godliness" was not merely, then, that " God was manifest in the flesh,"

blessed source of it all! but that " He was justified in the [power of the] Spirit, seen of angels, preached to Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Thus all God's ways unfolded themselves. The veil which had hid Him till then was rent, His holiness was become a delight and not a fear to the believer, for love was known in the putting away of sin, and the middle wall of partition broken down. The accomplishment of promise, and the mighty goodness of God to man had been presented in the setting aside of Satan's power over him in every way, " healing all that were oppressed of the devil;" and by its rejection the title to promise lost to the Jew, so that he must come in through mercy, and the intrinsic enmity of man's heart against God revealed, the carnal mind shown to be enmity against God, but in its highest act in this wondrous scene, in the crucifying Jesus, the triumph of God's love over it displayed.; for that which was the uttermost act of man's hatred to God, was the accomplishment of the work of God's redemption and the sovereign act of His love. The undisturbed holiness which sin could not reach, acted in the Divine perfectness of love to accomplish its own purposes above and beyond the reach of sin when sin had done its worst. The spear that expressed the despising hatred of man, was answered by the water and the blood which washes away the sin which was shown in shedding it.

" God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;" but He was wholly rejected, " despised and rejected of men." When He came, there was no man; when He called, there was none to answer. " He spake that He knew, and testified that He had seen; and no man received His testimony." But He hath reconciled us to Himself by the death of His son. The condition of man as a sinner is not merely now his fall in Adam, so that he fled from God, and that God had driven him out; but that when in the person of Christ God came into this world, ruined and fallen as it was, into which man had sunk when driven out, and was embellishing under Satan's power as well as he could, far from God; when He came as man, overcoming Satan's wiles, delivering from Satan's power, having bound the strong man in the temptation, and then spoiling his goods bearing man's sorrows, and carrying their infirmities; when God was in this world of woe, man, as far as he could, turned Him out. Only blessed be His name! to destroy the power of Satan in death itself, "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," and reveal the perfect love of God, and enter as a redeemer and as a new risen man into the presence of God, not back into an earthly paradise, as a man ignorant of good and evil, but into a heavenly one in glory, into His Father's house itself, where He is gone to prepare a place for us; that there, in the sweetest and best Of nearnesses, He may be the firstborn among many brethren, for He is gone to His Father and our Father, His God and our God," to have us as His bride and His body with Himself, His brethren, as personally before the Father; His bride, yea His body; in our nearness to Himself.

The scriptural development of this must be sought in Ephesians. But I will cite from the Philippians the elaborate statement of the apostle, to show that it was a risen glorified Christ who for him was the pattern-man. "If, by any means," he says (chap. 3:11) "I might attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ. Jesus." Again, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," the calling  $\nu\omega$ . "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." That for which Christ had apprehended him, that to which God had called him, that which Christ would accomplish by His

power, that in which Christ was the pattern-man, was a heavenly state, a glorious body; not what He was as incarnate. So, in 2 Cor. 5 "We have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens...Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now, He that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God." Paul had only known Him in glory; His gospel is the gospel of the glory... So it is not after the image of the first Adam that we are created, anew at all; nor is it any infusion of divine principles into a partly fallen man, restoring him, which is contemplated by grace. All this is false. The cherubim and a flaming sword kept from the first the way of the tree of life. Death is pronounced, and maintained on all that is of the first Adam. The second is a new life. "That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of truth." Not after the first Adam, but after God. Shall we be insensible to this immense privilege? Christ is the -true image of the invisible God- God manifest in the flesh-He in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Is He a mere restoration of the first Adam, or, just, as indeed, the Archdeacon horridly makes Him, a degree of progress upon him? And, mark, it is not to innocence we are ever restored, nor to the ignorance of good and evil, which was Adam's unfallen state. When God had said, "the man is become as one of us," return to that was impossible. The condition of man is now involved in the knowledge of good and evil; and he is created anew after the image of Him, who, in righteousness and holiness, knows evil perfectly, and, in the righteousness and holiness of His nature, judges and perfectly rejects it all. This is that of which we are made partakers " of the divine nature" not of restored Adam's. And this, indeed, we have only in and through Christ, who is this perfection in man, our life, and the blessed and perfect object of it. We are crucified with Christ. There is no lingering, as men vainly say of crucifying. The apostle speaks of being dead; for he says, "nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Hence we are to reckon ourselves dead, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ-as He died unto sin once; and in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. " We are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God." Nothing can be clearer than the doctrine. of Scripture on the subject: not the amelioration of man as he is, but death in it and to it, and a new man who is Christ. Let me add here, that the notion of conscience in Adam is an unfounded one. Conscience has a double meaning: sense of responsibility, and knowledge of the difference of good and evil in things themselves. In this latter sense, people speak, as does the Archdeacon, of its not being lost by the fall. It was acquired in it. The first, i.e., a sense of responsibility, he had; the prohibition of eating the forbidden fruit put it to the test, but commandment only made this wrong. There was no knowledge of good and evil in things themselves in it, as in murder, theft, corruption, and the like. Man was there to enjoy, in innocence, the blessings which God had showered around him, and the Blessor, who had given them. He was ignorant of evil in itself; happy state! but gone forever. Who would think of saying, " God is innocent"? The phrase offends and shocks at once. He knows, is above, and judges all, distinguishing perfectly evil from good. There is another immensely important principle connected with this, in the difference between our state and Adam's. Adam's moral position was happy-thankfulness and praise in the enjoyment of the position he was in. Indeed, the desire to get out of it was the entrance of sin. Ours is in no way such. We are called by glory and virtue. We seek to attain. This is a total change in our whole moral condition: we live by an object to be attained. He did not. His wish to be like God, in any sort, was his sin. It is what is presented to us

as the spring of life and virtue, that for which we are apprehended, that to which God calls us, our only deliverance from the evil we do know. The more this is weighed, the more important it will be seen to be. It alters fundamentally the whole moral condition. Contentedness, morally, is sin, self-righteousness, and ignorance of God and good. Nor is our condition one of law, neither a rule of life, to a people called and put as such in relationship with God upon the earth. We are called by glory (it is a point to be attained), and by the virtue which measures the difficulties, and leaves behind what attracts the flesh. And, mark here, it is by glory-our calling above. To be like Christ in walk (for in sinlessness of nature we cannot, which shows that His state here cannot be our pattern, though His walk is), to be like Him in walk is the effect of the heavenly calling, for He was the heavenly man. A word on this point.

I am quite aware it will be said, " But you are lowering the idea of the image of God from a moral to a kind of physical glory." I would recall that. It is strongly and justly urged, that it is in the manhood of Christ that the blessing is present, though, of course, not separating it from His Godhead. The only question is, in what condition of His manhood is He the pattern-man. Now, the foolishness of God is wiser than man; and He teaches us that it is by the revelation of a heavenly glory in the pattern-man, that His image is formed in us-whatever the means. That it is in making us heavenly that we cease to be earthly and carnal. The life of Christ here is the pattern of our walk; but it is by abiding in Him on high, that we are like Him below. He was what He was by always abiding on high. "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and no man receiveth our testimony. And no man has ascended up to heaven but He who came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, who is in heaven." It was the life of a heavenly man. He could say so, as a divine person; we, by being united to Him, and knowing Him there. For the Spirit takes the things of Christ and shows them to us; and we "beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory." Hence of that eternal life, which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us, and which, so to speak with the apostle, "we have seen, heard, looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life," but which abode alone while here. It can now be said, "which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." But this is when He was on high; for He is spoken of as our advocate with the Father, as the propitiation for our sins. Though it was the same, even eternal, life in Him (and hence an old commandment had from the beginning), manifested in all its perfectness in that Blessed One. Blessed be God, it is so I for in Him, as living down here, I can see that heavenly life, which is mine, in all its proper perfectness, and yet say that is my life, for Christ is my life. But yet it is a new commandment, as true in Him and in us, because He had. ascended up on high when He had made propitiation for our sins, that He might be the Head and Source of life to a new family, to be formed after the pattern of the heavenly man: a life to be manifested in the mortal body, by always bearing about in it, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be manifested in these earthen vessels. It is the Gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God. As another apostle says, as we have seen, "We are called by glory and virtue." The humiliation of Christ in love draws our affections by Grace.

The knowledge of and union with Him in heaven forms us into the walk and spirit in which that heavenly man, that Blessed One, walked upon the earth; of Him to whom our souls are knit in love, to whom we are united by the Spirit. One is the practical reflex down here of the other.

It is living union that we have with a living Christ by the Holy Ghost, through whom we are one with Him (for by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, and He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit, in contrast, note, with one flesh)-a union which will result in our fully bearing the image of the heavenly, who is the image of God-not union with a Christ in lonely love on earth, when perfectness was shown in that He was alone, yet not alone for the Father was with Him, but of man none to reverence, none to see beauty in Him., For we speak not of what grace can do, but of what man was, and in himself is. Surely that divine love pierced through; and helpless sinners, through grace, found their resource in it; and, however straitened, the power that could say, " Go, and He goeth, and Come, and He corneal," could recognize faith in a Gentile; and the love that found no answer, could prove it was there to answer that faith of a once accursed Canaanite that overstepped the bounds of dispensed barriers, and maintained that God was good enough to look upon the worthless, to help and meet their need:- The love that had its just sphere where there was nothing to -attract it, so as to show it was perfect and divine, could attract and win the heart, and draw the shameful sinner where no shame would be cast upon, them; but with the dignity of divine excellence upon him who saw no beauty in that love so as to-desire it; upon that wisdom of human righteousness-which could discern that he was no prophet, in whom the poor lost one could find the absorbing renewing refuge of divine love, and return from it in peace forgiven and saved: knowing God and a Savior in the love that had drawn the heart and answered to the need of conscience, knowing from His own lips that it was saved. Yes, the divine love of a Redeemer pierced through the veil. The fullness of Godhead was there, and God is love. It could not be hid, even if it were straitened; but the time was not come for, union with that blessed Source of all blessedness. The Head must be exalted before the body could be united to it. He was alone; His loneliness was the essence of the beauty and perfectness of that place of love. He could be as a sparrow upon the housetop, and as a pelican in the wilderness; in His sorrow look for some one to take pity, but there was none; and- for comforters, but He found none. He could eat ashes like bread, and mingle his drink with weeping. This is a different thing from union. That blessed truth, so blessed for us, has its own place; the lonely (lonely as far as man was concerned) perfectness of Christ and the infinite divine fullness of His person is another. The sources were all there; the communications which united the members of His body to Him were not. Man was a lost sinner, enmity against God. He must be redeemed, as well as attracted and quickened, to accomplish the purposes of grace in Him: and heavenly glory and blessedness were what alone met as recompence the work of redemption in which Christ glorified God, and because of which He was glorified with the Father Himself; God glorifying Him in Himself, not merely in the future royal dominion. If He was obedient to the cross, He was highly exalted; and, even, He, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross and despised the shame, and is set down at the right-hand of God, sat down when He had by Himself purged our sins. It is not, I repeat, the true humanity in the divine fullness of Christ that is the question, or whether that is the only means of blessing. It is not whether rationalism or the adorers of human powers are right. For the Christian there can be no question, there. The question is in what condition of the person of the blessed Lord is our union with Him; in what is He the pattern-man? Is it antecedent to redemption, and in incarnation as alive down here, or consequent on our redemption and in resurrection. Scripture leaves no doubt upon the subject.

But I will clear up the other view of the subject by some more quotations referring to another part of it-the means of union. I abhor rationalism; I adore the person of the Lord; but I do not believe a

lifeless sacrament to be that person, most precious as it surely is in its due place. I must have a person to love, however His lifeless body may recall that person. The blessed Lord would respect and honor the affection of a Mary Magdalene, but correct an erring spirit by revealing Himself living. To say, "I will carry Him away" was touching affection, but it was unbelief too. But I must continue:-

" The question at issue in the present day is the reality of our Lord's mediation-the truth of that system of spiritual influences which was bestowed by the re-creation of man's race in the person of the Son of God, and that whole doctrine of grace which is characteristic of the gospel. If it should be true, as was always believed in ancient times, and as will be stated in these pages, that sacraments are the extension of the incarnation, that through their agency the Son of God effects that great work which He took our nature to perform, it will not seem surprising," etc.

Nothing can be plainer than this.

In answer to the question of what regeneration is, we have the views of the author brought out more in detail. The question is, now that Christ is glorified, and absent as to His bodily presence in the world-how can grace be communicated-how regeneration wrought, and what is it? Its connection with Christ, no Christian will deny; the question is-" What is it? how communicated?

The answer of the archdeacon to this question is this: -" It has always been understood to refer to some gift of grace bestowed by God, the result whereof is the renewal of man's nature." Thus, "In what way does God bestow grace? In what way is man its receiver?" As to the first, "they are expressly stated to be bestowed through the mediation of our Lord's humanity." I pray the reader to remark this. It is not the mediation of Christ, but of our Lord's humanity giving a most exclusive and very peculiar sense to mediation. Because it is not a personal action but the intervention of a nature. He quotes " There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus," not the humanity, note. "This," the writer adds, "is the manner in which divine gifts flow into the world." "As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world." For "this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."

I am not here going to comment on the loose way scriptures are quoted. I am not engaged in criticizing the archdeacon's books, or I should have most serious questions to advert to. I use them as the means of getting at a particular system, as represented by its moderate and esteemed advocates. Now that Christ is the only way of grace, I need not say I admit; and that eternal life is found in the Son only for man. Our question here is as to the means of union; and the quotations are to show, that while in the world union was to be found. " In the manhood of Christ was a new door open to mankind. This is that new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh." I remark here, that there is no suggestion of death or sacrifice. Still the author must pass on to Christ's glorified state, for he is no longer on earth. But in treating of this, we shall find sacrifice really passed by. I do not mean that he denies it so as to be heterodox, but it forms no part of his system of truth in connection with our renewed intercourse with God.

Thus he presents it:-

"The Gospels then speak of grace, not as bestowed on humanity at large, but in the humanity of Christ. For it was the appointment of infinite wisdom that this gift was not bestowed from him to

others, till humanity had first been perfected in Himself." This is not consistent with other statements, but I do not enter on that here. "It became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.' Though the humanity of the second Adam had been by nature pure from spot, yet was suffering the appointed course through which it was perfected for the work of mediation. 'For their sakes I sanctify myself that they also may be sanctified through the truth.' Thus did that manhood, which was taken in the virgin's womb, become a meet instrument for leavening the whole mass of corrupted nature. And this work [What work? His own sanctifying of Himself though without spot?] being perfected, we see the new Adam who, like his earthly predecessor, had been made a little lower than the angels, crowned, through the suffering of death, with glory and honor; and then did he ascend up on high, and having led captivity captive, gave gifts unto men. That which he had received because he was human, He had power to give because he was divine. Thus did He bestow on all his members that gift of grace which had hitherto centered in Himself. The love of God had flowed forth into the manhood of His incarnate Son, that thence it might diffuse itself through his brethren."

He came, then, "to reconstruct the very foundations of humanity in Himself." "Thus did he become the second Adam, in whom the deep foundations of humanity were again constructed, so that through Him and in Him do men receive that gift which by Him God bestowed upon His creatures," i.e., it is a renewal of that which the first Adam had received by Him, once bestowed, lost in a measure (for He teaches that the loss is but partial) and now renewed in Him. So elsewhere the restoration of the ancient pattern of man is not attained through the natural perfection of individuals, but because in Christ, our Lord, was the personal presence of that divine word which was above nature.

Christ removes the obstruction to this preserved image being in intercourse with God, and gives fuller objects. It is not death come on the first Adam and utter condemnation, and in us, that is in our flesh, no good thing, and Christ, a sacrifice to put away sin, and, as second Adam, an entirely new life in which, in the power which is in Him, we live to God. It is a renewal of the old intercourse, improving it perhaps, but Christ adopting our humanity in its disordered state and reconstructing it in His own person as alive here, and then, according to infinite wisdom passing through sufferings and glorified so as to communicate it there. "Our ancient intercourse with God has been given back only through that new Founder of man's race, through whom alone we can approach the Father." And again, "This He did, not by the creation of materials which did not, before exist; the materials were drawn from that stock for which the benefit was designed. 'He was made of a woman.' (It is merely *γενομενου εκ γυναικος, γενομενον θεο νομον*). The materials, therefore, which were employed, were weak and dis-organized, because they were taken out of one who naturally was heir to Adam's defects. But then, He who took them was the Word of God. Into these weak and poor elements of our nature, there flowed the very might, wisdom, and purity of Deity itself. Thus was their weakness from the first corrected; from the first moment that His nature existed, its disorder was counteracted by the perfect order and harmony of God's Spirit, and though made of a woman, He was made without sin." I do not expatiate on the excessive looseness of the archdeacon's statement; and he is the most inaccurate, loosest writer, with the pretensions he has to philosophical theology, that one might easily find; the statement, for example, that the disorder of His nature was counteracted by the perfect order and harmony of

God's Spirit, which may be said of us, but certainly not of Christ. I do not expatiate on it, because I hope and suppose he means no harm; nor on the doctrine, which is really, as it stands, practically Apollinarianism, because I believe he does not mean it, but is merely loose in his statements, from extreme inaccuracy and carelessness in mind and habits of thought associated with exceeding boldness and even irreverence as to the subjects he treats. But what miserable materialism there is in all this! They were materials whose disorder He corrected. But I especially refer to the passage here in connection with regeneration. It was a divine person taking the old materials and counteracting their disorder. Is that all? The might, wisdom, and purity of Deity itself, flowing into the weak and poor elements of our nature? I repeat, it is Apollinarianism really, but is there no really new life which Adam had not? Is it merely Deity correcting, or, as the archdeacon heretically expresses it, counteracting the disorder of fallen Adam's elements? Let the reader note this. The doctrine is elaborately wrought out in the system: it is sacramental materialism. A correction by a kind of divine physical process. The very words I use offend me, but what can I do, when men speak of materials and of taking the same composition of parts? I do not doubt he did, so as to be as really man as we are; but is this eternal life in Christ? Is this what Christ is as a new life to those united to Him by grace? Life is in Him and He is our life. Is this merely a counteraction of disorder in the weak and poor elements of our nature

But I must close this note, only I recall here the archdeacon's account of the first and second Adam, that we may see the utter and fundamental unsoundness of the whole system as to what Christ's person is-what sin is-what the fall is-and what our recovery is. "One circumstance which must of course greatly affect the whole question, is the perfect parallel which exists between the first man and the second - between the type and the antitype-him in whom humanity fell, and Him in whom it rose again-between Adam in whom a divine spirit was united only for a season to our mortal being, and Christ, in whom the same spirit dwelt permanently and without measure." Again, "For in His [Christ's] constitution there were the elements of Adam's being, together with the perfect presence of that wisdom of God, which had vouchsafed its influence as an in-dwelling gift to our first parent." And, as regards the pattern-man and the exclusion of resurrection." In Adam was humanity, and the presence of the Word superadded as a guiding light. In Christ was God the Word by personal presence, who for our sakes had added to Himself human flesh. Thus is attained that perfection of man's nature, which, in the case of our first parent, was only transiently set forth. For that perfection lay in the intercourse with God, which Adam so soon renounced. But in Christ is this intercourse restored permanently and in its completeness." Is this a just account of incarnation, to say nothing of resurrection?)

"It is plain, therefore, that the whole of man not only needs reconstruction in Christ, but is susceptible of it." The new creation extends to it all. All the parts of that common nature which is borne by every child of Adam, were refashioned in the head and model of the christian family, that the renewal of our nature in Christ might extend likewise to them all. Christ's humanity is further declared to be the means of having life. "To partake of His sacred flesh is the method by which men enter into relation with Him, just as by birth men partake of that old nature which has been transmitted to us by Adam." It is not that the incarnate Lord is "the mediator through whom all divine gifts were bestowed upon men. He adds a further truth in John 6:51-58, and declares that the eating of His flesh and of His blood is the Method by which these gifts are to be received:"

Quoting St. Cyril, his great authority in these matters, he says, "The sacred body of Christ gives life to those in whom it is, and preserves them for immortality by being mixed with our bodies"- "that eucharist which lies in the reception of His sacred flesh and blood, whereby man obtains the gift of immortality."

"He is life by nature; inasmuch as He has been born from the living father, and His sacred body is not less life-giving."

And the archdeacon himself, "As His godhead flows into Him by necessary derivation from His eternal Father, so does He assure us that He communicates His manhood by merciful gift to His earthly brethren. Thus there are three stages in great work. The godhead imparts itself to the coequal Son. This is His eternal generation. The Son unites Himself to man's nature. This is His incarnation. He communicates His manhood to His brethren. This is His real presence in the eucharist. As the first, then, is the communication of that substance which is common to the three persons in the blessed godhead, so is the last the substantial communication of that manhood which has been hallowed by taking it into God." Nothing can be more definite than that it is distinctively and properly thus. " There are two main systems according to which it is supposed that spiritual gifts are communicated; the one implies that blessings are bestowed upon men by individual gift as a consequence indeed of Christ's death, but through that separate process whereby the Almighty holds communion with each man's spirit." I do not take His account of the matter here, nor own to be just the separation of this work from the person of Christ. I quote to give distinctively what follows. "The other supposes all blessings to be embodied in the humanity of the word, and from Him to be extended to His members." And note, "This communication takes place through His coming down upon earth and manifesting Himself among men, and then it is added in ver. 51-58, that to partake of His sacred flesh is the method by which men enter into relation with Him,, -just as by birth men partake of that old nature which has been transmitted to us by Adam." That is incarnation and the eucharist, as partaking of His sacred flesh, that humanity in which all is embodied, is the means, the one means, of having life, just as we are naturally born to have natural life. Remark, he says nothing of drinking the blood nor of death. Popery has gone a step further in this system; but of this hereafter. It is consistent.

" There must be some means, then, by which we must be put into relation with the new man, even as we have a natural relation to the flesh of the old one; we must be united by grace to Christ, as we were united to Adam by nature. Neither should it surprise us that the processes should present some analogy; that if the poison of the sin is transmitted through his flesh, so His flesh should be the medium through which is transmitted the virtue of the other." " This (our common) nature is transmitted according to the most mysterious of earthly laws through the continuing of the flesh. It was not inconsistent, therefore, with the order of the divine economy, that our Lord's flesh and blood, mysteriously and supernaturally communicated, should be the principle of a higher life to His brethren."

" The Holy Eucharist, therefore, is the carrying out of that act which took effect in the incarnation of the Son of God. It was by the incarnation that God and man, the finite and the infinite, were brought into relation, and that the graces which were inherent in the one were communicated as a gift to the other. Now, the medium through which these gifts are extended, is not the Deity, but the manhood of Christ." And he quotes Cyril. " For being life, as God, He has made it life and

life-giving." This doctrine, with all manner of monstrous statements, original and quoted, is over and over again insisted on. Thus, " Now it must be remembered that he speaks of two things in this chapter (John 6); first, of the general fact of His mediation, and that His humanity was the medium through which divine graces found their way to mankind; secondly, that the eating His body, and the drinking His blood, was the method in which this gift was to be participated [sic always] by individuals." I cite this passage to show, in the clearest way, that it is not mediation nor the humanity of Jesus as the one sure full way of grace found in and by and through Him. It is, further, that eating His flesh (and here he adds, " drinking His blood," though not sheaving what it has to do with incarnation), is the way of having share in what He was (as incarnate). " His body," he says, quoting from St. Cyril, "was sanctified by the power of the Word, and it is thus rendered effective for us for the purpose of the mystical Eucharist, so as to be able to implant in us its own sanctification." St. Ignatius and St. Irenaeus "dwell on the truth that our Lord's body, as communicated in the Holy Eucharist, is the renewing principle by which His people are to be quickened both in body and soul." "St. Irenaeus speaks of it as the cause of resurrection."

And the manhood of Christ is so truly in the sensible creatures of bread and wine that "all who receive one receive the other." I leave to others to judge of the Archdeacon's deliberate contradiction of the twenty-ninth article, of which the title is, "Of the wicked which eat not the body of Christ in the use of the Lord's Supper." The Archdeacon might cavil at the absence of the negative of the *res sacramenti*, which the article does not speak of in any way; but the title leaves no loophole for this artifice; but my business is with the doctrine itself. Now, the consideration of the sacraments themselves is fatal to the whole theory, and at the same time demonstrates the fact, that it is in resurrection, not in incarnation, that Christ is a source of life to others. According to their own theory, it is in baptism that a man is regenerate and receives life. But they admit that in the elements used in baptism, the matter, as they speak technically, there is nothing really nor spiritually of the flesh or humanity of Christ. I would here recall the statement, that it is not merely the doctrine that His humanity is the medium through which divine graces find their way to mankind, on which the Archdeacon insists; but that the eating His body and drinking His blood, was the method in which this gift was to be participated in by individuals. The flesh and blood thus communicated are the principle of a higher life to His brethren-that to partake of His sacred flesh is the method by which men enter into relation with Him. This is put in contrast with the system that implies that blessings are bestowed upon man by individual gift as a consequence, indeed, of Christ's death, but through that separate process by which the Almighty holds communion with each man's spirit.

Now this in baptism, according to their own theory, that men enter into relation with Christ, and God by Him, and receive the principle of life; but here all such communication of His humanity as really present is out of the question. The element is water. They do not deny this. " In baptism, therefore, the outward sign has no permanent relation to the inward grace."... "Our Lord used no words which imply that any particular portion of the element employed is invested with a specific character." "The inward grace is associated with the act not with the element." "And for the same reason, the intervention of the minister, however desirable, is not essential;" "because baptism depends upon an act which all Christians may perform and not upon any consecration which requires a special commission." That is, the whole system is overthrown-its foundation subverted. For the communication of the humanity of Christ, through a direct sacramental participation in it as

present, whereby we enter into relationship with Him, as by birth we are so with the first Adam, is here impossible, for there is confessedly no such sacramental presence. And this, in the sacrament in which this relationship, and in which alone, according to their theory, this relationship is properly entered into. The whole system and theory is false upon the face of it: false in its own sacramental way. It is apostasy if compared with the Scriptures of truth.

But, farther, if we examine both the sacraments, the great truth for which I contend will be clearly established. That is, that death comes in before the possibility of being blessed in Christ as a living Head; and that it is the life of a risen Christ, who has wrought atonement for us (so that we can be livingly blessed, consistently with God's righteousness), that we are made partakers of; and that it is not with a merely incarnate Christ that we are united. Being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation to all those that obey Him. Both sacraments present death in Christ, not life, save as we center into resurrection as emerging out of death. But they are expressions not of the power of life in Christ, but of the power and efficacy of death in grace; so that in having life from Christ risen, we have the knowledge of the perfect love in which He gave Himself for us as sinners, and of the entire putting away of sin which He wrought by His death, so that we are not in the nature or person at all, before God, in which sin subsisted. He that is dead is freed from sin. Were I united to Christ as a living man in the first Adam, and He incarnate, the body of sin were not destroyed; death would not be adjudged to it; I could not reckon myself dead; I were yet living in the power of the flesh of the first Adam departed from God. But I am baptized into the death of Christ (buried with Him by baptism into death) for I, morally dead in trespasses and sins, find Him by grace judicially dead for them; and know my sins, and sin in nature, all gone, the very life to which they attach gone for faith. Nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ lives in me, and in a life in which He dies no more, nor I therefore, for because He lives I live also, death hath no more dominion over Him. Of this participation in Christ's death, baptism is the expression, and, to use the words of men, the sacrament. I live, for therein also I am risen again, through faith in the operation of God which raised -Him from the dead. But I have part in the death and resurrection of Christ; and as a sinner cannot have part with Him till then. His death is the uniting point, but it, is in death. As living by Him risen, I can reckon myself dead. The old life was all sin; but it is dead, crucified with Christ. The sacrament is not the medium of union with an Incarnate Christ, not dead; it is the expression of exactly the contrary, that we can have no part with Him upon this ground. It is the absolute sentence of death upon man in connection with the first Adam: a sentence judicially suffered in grace by Christ, and into the confession of which I come alone admitted to have a part with Him. If I enter into life, I do so in the admission, that death is my only ground of hope, and that I cannot turn to God in the life of the first Adam.

The other sacrament, that of the Lord's Supper, is equally significative. It represents definitely and specifically the death of Christ. "Ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come." Nothing can be more emphatically death. "This is my body which was broken for you. This is my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins." It is not, then, participating in incarnate living humanity, but in the death of Christ. Is the breaking of the body in death, the flowing of the very might, wisdom, and purity of Deity itself into the weak and poor elements of our nature? That all the perfections of Godhead were displayed there, so that God has been glorified in the work wrought about our sin is most true: His love, His righteousness, His truth, His majesty; but to say that death is the communication of the fullness of the gift of grace to humanity, and by humanity to us as life,

is nonsense. It is death we celebrate in the Eucharist, neither a Christ alive as man through the incarnation; nor a Christ alive again in resurrection; but a body broken, and the blood shed out, the sure emblems of death, and given as such; and therefore the Lord, when speaking of this glorious mystery itself, of His taking manhood and dying, says-" The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give," not will take or have taken, though that were a necessary step towards it; but " which I will give for the life of the world:" that divine life in man, and in which God was truly manifested in flesh and amongst men, was shown to be the object of flesh's hatred, and the new man took His place as head of the new race, when atonement had been made for fatal and otherwise irremediable sin; and in both the ordinances which the Lord instituted for our blessing as Christians, He stamped this truth of the death of the old man, and death to it; but that death became ours in a saving way through Him who by the grace of God tasted death for us. Quickened together with Him, and raised up together, we own His death as our necessary door of entrance into life, and do not think of uniting two incompatible lives with one another. We were dead by, we are now dead to, sin through Jesus, and, alive in Him, feed on that precious sacrifice which He has wrought for us, making death our life and security forever, where the power of Satan, where sin and all that belongs to it end with the life they attached to, and where a new life in righteousness has its origin, all trespasses being forgiven us, righteousness in Christ Himself before God, and righteousness by Christ in us before men.

Such is the doctrine of Scripture. To make the blessed, glorious truth of incarnation, the source, indeed, of all our blessings, to be not the display of divine life as of God Himself in a man, but the medium in that state of communication to others as imparted to humanity, as a reconstructing of it in that form, declaring that rationalism, or the power of the human spirit, is the only alternative, is under the plea of denying rationalism, apostasy from the true foundations of Christian truth, and a denial of the real effect of the Fall, of the condition of the sinner under it, and of the true need of the death of Christ in order to our participation in life. - "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man you have no life in yourselves:" that is, you cannot be associated with Him living his a Savior by means of death that will introduce you to God.

I am aware that it is urged, as regards baptism, that it is said by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body. Now, in the first place, the one body into which they are baptized here, is the unity of the -church; but the truth is, the passage does not speak of baptism by water, but does, very definitely, speak of something else. Baptism with the Spirit is a well-known Scripture doctrine. " I, indeed," says John Baptist; " baptize you with water but.. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." " Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." This we know was accomplished at Pentecost. When Cornelius is called by grace he receives the Holy Ghost as they did at the first, called baptism of the Holy Ghost (Acts 11:16), and thereupon is baptized or received into the visible church on earth. In the twelfth chapter of first Cor., where the passage we are speaking of occurs, the subject expressly treated of is the Holy Ghost or Spiritual power, πνευματικα, the sense of this is the baptism of the Holy Ghost by which, the Head being exalted on high, all are brought into the unity of the same body, and exercise the gifts given of the Spirit, as members of the body. Baptism by water is nowhere spoken of as engrafting into the unity of the body. The Lord's Supper is the expression of that truth (though not that alone). We are all one body, inasmuch as we are partakers of that one bread (loaf). But no such thought is connected in Scripture with baptism. It is simply death and resurrection, terms applicable to individuals. We are

baptized into His death, buried with Him by baptism into death. It may be the natural consequence of putting on Christ, but the act is individual; the individual puts on Christ. It is the sign of his regeneration in the death and resurrection of Christ, whereby he is received into the visible church of God on earth. We learn, in the case of Samaria, that those thus received had not yet received the Holy Ghost, and Simon Magus never did, though baptized, as Cornelius? receiving the Spirit as the seal of faith was the warrant for his being publicly received by baptism. Besides, then, its connection with the fundamental doctrine of the necessity of redemption and, our total ruin by sin, the truth that death must, come in, in order to our union with Christ, is clearly established by the characteristic ordinances of the Christian religion; and it is shown, that it is not by a rectifying of the old man, in connection with the filling humanity with divine power and grace by The incarnation when Jesus was in the likeness of sinful flesh, by which we are regenerate in union with the Lord Christ; but by the establishment of a new man, of which the pattern in power of life is in Christ risen and glorified, to whose image we are to be conformed, and that consequent not only on His being in the likeness of sinful flesh (though sinless) but in His being (a sacrifice) for sin, so that by His death fin in the flesh has been condemned (Rom. 8:4) and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, thus risen from the dead, has made us free from the law of sin and death. Hence; having Christ for life, we reckon ourselves dead and do this one thing, press towards the mark of our calling on high. The effect is the walk of a heavenly man, such as Christ was on earth, because we are in Him who is in heaven. It is when

He was raised from the dead and set in heavenly places, far above all heavens, and filling all things that He was given to be Head over all things to the, church, his body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. This is the question with Puseyism then. Is redemption the necessary ground of our living association with the Lord Jesus Christ? Puseyism is merely the old effort of Judaism against the doctrine of Paul-the doctrine of a full salvation through a dead and exalted Savior. The not thus holding the Head, as risen with Christ, is the cause of insisting on ordinances, as though we were alive in the world in connection with the old man as if we were " in the flesh," and not in a risen Christ before God in the Spirit. The true Head is not held; we are not known to be risen with Christ, and hence we have voluntary humility and subjection to ordinances, and all the train of fleshly observances, and not sparing of the body, which the Apostle denounces as the consequences of departure from Christ as He is risen and exalted on high. And hence I called it apostasy, 'for so the Apostle does. It is not a nominal denial of Christ, nor did the then Judaisers so deny Him. It is not a question of mere orthodoxy as to His person, though the orthodoxy of Archdeacon Wilberforce's books is to me most doubtful, and his statements most hazardous, and his contradiction of the thirty-nine articles flagrant. There are two great points, as I have stated elsewhere, in Christian truth. First, the fundamental doctrines as to the Trinity, the person of Christ, the atonement, and then, secondly, the way in which sinners receive the value of these great facts. The question with the Romanist and the Puseyite is on the second of these points. So was it in Paul's time. No doubt the full development of apostasy will be in the rejection of the fundamental truths; but he who denies the true way of their application to the sinner, is, the Apostle declares, fallen from grace, and Christ profits him nothing. That sovereign grace may pierce through the cloud, and attach the heart by living faith to Christ is, blessed be God! true; and hence men may be saved, though they are Romanists and Puseyites. But this does not hinder their system being cloud, and not light at all. I have not thought, as I have stated, of giving a review of the Archdeacon's books, but merely used them as a means of having the system before us fairly and

in its best shape. Our dispute is not as to an incarnate Lord being the one only and blessed medium of grace. It is impossible we can hold this too firmly or estimate it too highly. It is our all. He is the second Adam, Lord of all, Head of His church, sole spring (drawn from and communicating the Father's love) of blessing, and life, and joy, through the power of the Holy Ghost. I am willing, most rash and hazardous as I think them, to take the intentions of the Archdeacon and Puseyites in general to be orthodox. The question is, is the communication of living blessing to sinful men, and the setting up of a new race in Christ as a pattern-man in incarnation; or, consequent on accomplished redemption and divine righteousness in man in resurrection. The Scripture teaches us it is in resurrection, and that the incarnate man was rejected, and remained alone, bearing fruit after falling into the ground and dying. All the truths of Christianity as applied to men are engaged in this question, what sin is-what regeneration is-how man is renewed-what the extent of the fall- what original sin-what death as the wages of sin-what practical restoration and sanctification-what eternal life. Every essential practical doctrine has a totally different character in the two systems. It is not, as the Archdeacon would allege, whether the mediation of the incarnate word be the only way of blessing. There we are wholly agreed; wholly agreed, that rationalism is a return to direct communication between God and man, only forgetting that sin has made it impossible, actually, and judicially. Our question is, how this mediation is effectual. Is it by the transfusion of the grace of the incarnate word, communicated to Him from the Father into disorganized man, so as to ameliorate and reconstruct him; a process carried on now by ordinances? Or is the sentence of death and utter condemnation passed on the old man, and the proof given in Jesus' death that there can be no connection between them (though man be responsible-though conscience be there by the fall, and famine awaken desires in the Spirit); but that in that death redemption has been wrought by grace, and sin put away, and a risen Christ, who has triumphed over death, because, as so risen a new source of life, a new life rather, to the sinner by faith, through the quickening power of the Word and Spirit, giving Him the title to reckon Himself wholly dead as regards sin, the world, and the law too, and alive unto: God through Jesus, risen with -Him, to mortify His members which are on earth, but made the righteousness of God in Him; the sacraments being an abiding sensible witness of these truths; that is,-Of entrance by death, as regards the old man, into blessing, and- in no: other -way but by death in Christ, so that that entrance is salvation, and the complete deliverance from the whole state of sin in which we were (though the body still hinder us as yet unredeemed by power), while they are, I doubt not, also special means of blessing. For I speak here only of the character these sacraments give, to Christianity by their nature.

Such is the vital-question involved in what is now called Puseyism. It is a denial of Scriptural Christianity. It takes up one blessed truth,- incarnation-most miserably treated, I judge, but still a blessed truth under the plea of using it against rationalism-that is miserable infidelity; but really overthrowing the doctrine of the total sinfulness and loss of man, lying in death and condemnation; the need of redemption and accomplishment of righteousness by another; and a new resurrection state of man in Christ in order to our union with Him, and our participation in-, the heavenly blessings of this new manhood: a union of which the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven is the power, while the sacraments are, both of them, the witnesses of the death through which we have this place, and one of them, of the unity of the body in which we all enjoy it.

I have not cited the Fathers, nor gone into their doctrines. While I do not doubt that the truly pious among them were guarded in the faith; yet, as doctors, nothing can be more uncertain-as moralists, scarce anything more objectionable. God has preserved truth in and for His church-blessed be His name!-but the Fathers are the expression, not of orthodox truth, but of a mass of mental efforts on divine subjects, of heavings to and fro on subjects which escaped their grasp; of the efforts, too, of minds, for the most part, seriously corrupted by Platonic philosophy, and shrinking from the attacks of Pagans, on the point of the unity of the Godhead, which they feared to compromise by the doctrine of the eternal Sonship and divinity of Christ. Save Jerome and Origen, they did not understand Hebrew, and could only use the Septuagint version; valuable, no doubt, as testimony; but most imperfect-as representing the meaning of Scripture, and 'sometimes any meaning at all. I believe the Trinity and the incarnation, along with the atonement; and, I might add, the resurrection, as already accomplished in Christ, to be the great foundation and distinctive truths of Christianity; but it is not in the Fathers of the first four centuries, that I should seek for the proof of, or any certain faith in, them. I certainly judge the Ante-Nicene Fathers to have failed (as doctors) in the assertion of the true and full divinity of the Lord. You may find it stated, perhaps, but you will find it undermined and contradicted. Every one in the least acquainted with them knows that they read with the LXX. not "the Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways;" but, " the Lord created me," εκτισε με. And that the doctrine that the wisdom, or λογος, which had subsisted in an unseparated state in the divine mind, took personal subsistence, only immediately preceding and for the purpose of creation. You may find what maintained the truth, I freely admit it; but their having nothing in this passage but " created me," and constantly using it in connection with their philosophy about the λογος, embarrassed all their teaching, producing the doctrine of the λογος ενδιαθετος and λογος προφορικος. On the doctrine that Christ "is the true God." God over all, blessed for evermore, all were infirm, to say the least, some undoubtedly heterodox. The doctrine of the Trinity suffered in proportion; although when Arius would have defined these expressions in a way which affirmed that Christ was a creature, the instinctive faith of Christians resisted and repelled the abomination. Yet the famous ομοουσιος, by which the Arians were formally set aside, in spite of their subtleties, had been as formally condemned as Sabellianism by a previous council, so that the Emperor Constantine, who had given the character of generality to the Nicene one, being impressed with the danger of using a word thus condemned, restored Arius; and Athanasius was deposed by the council of Tire. Marcellus, one of his opponents, is generally judged to have fallen-into Sabellianism; and Arius, received as orthodox, died in the communion of the Catholic church. I have a perfect horror of his doctrine. I only, say that I cannot lean on the Fathers for securing the truth. The history of Cyril, indeed of Alexander himself, is not much more satisfactory. He was the Coryphus of the Fathers as to the incarnation, and the turbulent condemner of Nestorius, the rival patriarch of Constantinople. He got his adversary condemned before the arrival of John of Antioch and the Eastern Bishops, who favored him (so that this was a singular general council); but the same John, having assembled a council of the Eastern Bishops and condemned Cyril, Cyril withdrew his twelve famous anathemas which, as Archdeacon Wilberforce states, had been adopted as the faith of the church in the council [of Ephesus], and accepted the creed proposed by John. Indeed, the language of Cyril is very equivocal, adopted, he says, from the Fathers (Gieseler says, from Athanasius), μιαν φυσιν του θεου λογου σεσαρκωμενην, that though there were two natures united, and not confounded as he states just before, yet, when united, it was one nature of God the word made flesh. But this may

suffice. I have only one remark to make, which is important as to the principles on which the Fathers are referred to, for there are two. One is, development, that Christian truth of which the power is all in full perfection in the word, was developed and fully formed by the Spirit residing in the church, so that we learn more perfectly developed and defined truth, as we proceed, say, not to go too far, for of course, Romanists would go farther, during the first four or five centuries, embracing the four first general councils. That is one principle. The other is, that the early Fathers, as nearest the sources, must best know what the apostolic teaching was. But on this principle, when there was the least development there was the surest knowledge. Yet, an awkward circumstance, as a fact, we find that the earliest (I do not speak here of what are called the Apostolical Fathers, who are a class apart, and in general the poorest and worst of all, with the exception of Platonic speculations), Fathers are the most vague, loose, uncertain, and, if it must be said, heretical. I must except from this the pious and faithful Irenaeus, though feebleness and some superstition may be found in him: It is a refreshment to read him after looking at the rest: what a difference from the wild imagination of a speculative, but I believe true-hearted, Origen; the loose and loosely expressed doctrine of a Justin martyr, willing after all to die for Christ; or the turbulent orthodoxy and doubtful Christianity of an ambitious Cyril. What a difference, I say, in all this from that piety which flows from the personal knowledge of Christ by the Scriptures, and respect for the Word as the Word of God! We find a clear recognition of fundamental truths, such as Christ's being the true God, and a true and heartfelt refusal to go on beyond what is written, in the prying impotency of the human mind; and this, with whatever defects, we do find in the good Irenaeus. The reader, who has the opportunity, may read the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth chapters of his second book (46, 47 in Feuardentii). Yet, and for this very reason of his humble submission to Scripture, he is simple and firm in what Scripture does teach; though perhaps, like all, the full divinity of the Lord Jesus has not an adequate place in his mind, for he occasionally owns it unequivocally. But one sees he has "the truth itself as a rule," hoping still to receive something more, and learn from God, because he is good and has unlimited riches. And thus he adds, "if, according to the measure we have spoken of, we commit some questions to God, we shall both keep our faith perfect and shall persevere without danger; and all Scripture given to us of God will be found by us harmonious [consonant with itself], and parables will agree with what is said plainly, and what is said plainly will explain the parables." I may add, as to the Fathers and Scripture, "But we ought to refer such things as these to God" (what we cannot solve of things which are sought out in the Scriptures) "who has made us, also knowing most surely that the Scriptures, indeed, are perfect as uttered by the Word of God and by His Spirit, but we, inasmuch as we are inferior and the meanest (novissima) compared with (or the farthest from) the Word of God and His Spirit, by so much are we wanting the knowledge of His mysteries."

I desire to bring briefly before the reader, in conclusion, the Scriptural testimony to the great truth of the utter and irremediable evil of the old man in its principle of life, and that death and judgment are its only portion. "Except a man be born entirely anew," says St. John, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It is not from above, nor merely again, but from the outset of life, as in the beginning of Luke it is said, certain knowledge "from the very first." Hence Nicodemus refers to re-entering into his mother's womb. It is a positively new nature. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Again, death and not amelioration is always pronounced upon the old man; those who have the new life having the title to reckon themselves dead. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God"; "buried with Him by baptism unto

death," and as regards practice, when thus alive, "mortify [put to death] therefore your members which are on the earth." "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" we are baptized into His death. "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature (καινη κτισις); it is a new creation, "old things are passed away, all things are become new, and all things are of God." We are created again in Christ Jesus. We are created again, not after Adam's image renewed, but after God. Further, it is in and with Christ, we being really dead in sins, i.e., having no moral movement of life in ourselves towards God, "none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God," whatever man may say. The same power has wrought in us, which raised Him from the dead. "According to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right-hand in the heavenly places; and God, rich in mercy, of His great love wherewith He loved us, when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ. Being by the Word of God, it is by faith; "Of His own will begat He us by the word of truth;" but this revelation of the glory of God is not the amelioration of the old, but the revelation of the New or Second Adam, which judges the old and sets it wholly aside and condemns it, and draws it out after the new Adam, even after Christ; so that we are renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created us; who has manifested Himself in love to sinners, the spirit of forgiveness, grace; to go no farther, which in the first Adam had no place. For Christ was not only a perfect man in righteousness and true holiness, but the manifestation of God in grace; and we are called, on to follow Him in this, which neither innocence, nor law, have anything to do with. Being by the word, it is by faith, and so renewed in knowledge, according to God's revelation of Himself as a man. Hence, though it be a real communication of life, of a nature, as it is said, "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "Having loved the church, and given Himself for it." Yet it is of water. He sanctifies and cleanses it by the washing of water by the word, it is the cleansing of a man who remains the same person still, but cleanses by the judgment of the old, according to the revelation of the new, and the renewal of desires, according to the blessed object thus presented, who is also our life. He is come not by water only, but by water and blood, cleanses as well as expiates; but it is out of His pierced side, out of a dead Christ, this water flows. This cleansing is a real thing, by spiritual power; and of this John 3 speaks. Hence baptism, which is the sign of this regeneration, is baptism into His death. So John 6 is the reality of what Christ has been, and done, come down and made flesh, the true bread from heaven, and given in death for the life of the world, on which we feed by faith, eating His flesh and drinking His blood; a Christ in death, of which the second sacrament is the expression? And here I will notice what I have referred to: the consistent but awful character of Roman-ism in this respect. It is well known that the cup is refused to the laity. They are consoled under this privation by the authoritative doctrinal assurance-what is called the doctrine of concomitancy-that in what is no longer bread there is the whole body, soul, blood, and divinity of the Lord Jesus, a whole [i.e., the whole of ] Christ. Now, the very essence of the Lord's teaching is, that the body is broken and the blood shed, not a living Christ, but a Christ who has given Himself effectually in redemption. We drink the blood, therefore, apart as dead. If it be in the body, redemption is not wrought; the Eucharist in the church of Rome is a sacrament of non-redemption; of the absence of forgiveness, for without shedding of blood there is no remission; but if it be in the body, the blood is not shed. Thus has Satan mocked poor souls, pardonable objects of pity, no doubt, in their ignorance, but blinded by what are called theologians, by what is really his theology, which has given, instead of the blessed sacrament of redemption, though not permitted openly to deny it, a sacrament, as far as they receive it, of

non-redemption and of non-forgiveness. Up to this point, whatever the aspirations of Puseyism, divine goodness has not permitted it yet to reach. It does its best doctrinally in making an incarnate, in contrast with a risen, Christ, the Source of life and blessing, the Head of a new race. Furthermore, I deny entirely that Christ incarnate is the pattern-man to a renewed race. He is the man who is a pattern in His walk; but sinlessness in flesh is not the pattern-state for man in the flesh, in whom "this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerate." For Christ, in the birth of our nature, was made like unto us in all things (sin only excepted), from which He was clearly void, both in His flesh and in His spirit... "but all we, the rest, although baptized and born again in Christ; yet offend in many things; 'and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.' "If it be replied, "But it is only asserted that we have the principle of it in us in this life, and it will be perfect in another," that is precisely to assert that a risen and glorified Christ is the pattern-man, and not an incarnate one here below. We are to be conformed to the image of God's Son, risen and glorified, and as we have borne the image of the earthly then bear the image of the heavenly, in its full display and development.

(\*\* These chapters present the thing itself-the two sacraments, the truths of which the chapters speak. These do not speak of the sacraments; but chapters and sacraments speak of the same things.)

## The Gospel

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There is a connection between the Gospel, and the Epistles, and the Revelation-books which God has given to us by means of His servant John-which is of no little interest in these latter days.

It is one and the same truth which is ever prominent in each of these three books; and the peculiarity distinctive to each of them depends upon the point of view in which the said truth is looked at respectively in each.

John was not the one chosen for the communication to us of the heavenly calling, nor of the mystery, nor of the organization of the churches in the wilderness. Such subjects flowed rather from the pen of a Paul. Neither does John present us with the effects of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus upon believers from among Israel, etc., etc., as do Peter and James. John's subject is Eternal Life, or at least something flowing thence. Yea, that eternal life which was in Jesus is the subject which predominates, and is found everywhere in John's writings; but each class of his works has something by which it is distinguished from the rest; the Gospel as such from both the Epistles and the Revelation; and the Epistles as such from both Gospel and Revelation; and the Revelation as such from the other two. Yet in all of them there is as the governing truth, the eternal life which was in Christ.

In the Gospel, it is the eternal life which was in Christ Jesus, together with the history of the acts and sufferings which were necessarily His, in the time of His humiliation, if He would take the blessed position of being the communicator of eternal life to poor sinners dead in trespasses and sins; but the moment that all this is finished, and that He, raised from the dead, had accomplished that which was to become His liberty and power to bless withal, He departs. He left the earth to take His seat as Son of Man at the right hand of God in the Majesty of the Highest. The curtain drops upon the scenes of His earthly career, and He is lost to the sight of those who are but men upon the earth.

In the Epistles, it is the stream of this eternal life which is seen flowing from Him as its fountain-fountain of living water, placed in the midst of the Throne on High, and which, as it flows, brings into light a heavenly people here below, and fills them, as church of the living God, during their pilgrim-course through the wilderness.

In the Revelation, it is the effects of this eternal life; it is not the life manifested as it had been in the Gospel, in Jesus in humiliation, nor as in the Epistles made good by faith to a heavenly people, who upon earth are rejected as He was; but the results of these two testimonies. The effects of the eternal life, according to God, both upon those not subjected to it, and as to those who are so whether their place be upon the earth or in heaven. The Lord who had eternal life in Himself is He who first manifested it here below; He did and suffered all that was needed either for the communication of this life on the part of God or for the reception of it on the part of poor sinners. Without that which Christ did and suffered, holiness must have kept closed the way of divine goodness on the one hand, and on the other, the poor sinner never could have been free before

God. When all was done, His grace began at Jerusalem rejected there, He gave to His church as such, a people prepared for the heavenly places-the blessing; and finally, there must be manifested what is the glory of His person, and what the judgment is which God has formed concerning Him. He must reign upon the earth over an earthly people, to whom He will be manifested in the celestial glory which He has given to His heavenly Bride. The final result of the humiliation of the Son will be that everything that will not humble itself under Him will be judged. For it becomes God to make the light of that eternal life shine forth; it behooves Him to make manifest both upon earth and in heaven what His judgment is of the work and travail of His Son. If the Son of God became Son of Man, He is the resurrection and the life; and, as such, everything connected with man must be presented in the light of His glory, be its character what it may.

The divine glory must be fully manifested; that glory which the eternal life, manifested in Jesus as Son of Man, has vindicated, even in the very moment of His being rejected.

The principle of that which we have in the Revelation seems established in that which we find presented in John 5. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him... For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." So also in Acts 10:36-42, "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." And 17:30, 31, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

The same doctrine is found in Phil. 2:5-11; and it may also be found in comparing 2 Cor. 5:10,11 and Eph. 1:10, and Col. 1:20.

The Son of God became Son of Man in order to reveal the grace of God to poor sinners. Therefore God gives testimonies to Him upon earth, but the results of such testimonies in grace must be fully made manifest. The churches, the state of the earth as a whole, the state of the Jews, the state of the nations, the power of Satan, accredited by the carnal nature of the men of this world, who have denied God both in His government and in His worship-all, all must be made manifest in its true character by Jesus, and having made it manifest, He will judge it-setting it aside in order to establish the Millennial reign. That Eternal Life of the Word of God, plainly set forth: first, in Jesus,

perfectly and according to the claims of God and the state of things upon the earth (as in the Gospel of John); secondly, by means of His Spirit in a feeble people (as in the Epistles); and thirdly, its triumph over all things whatsoever their character (as in the Revelation). Such are, I think, the governing truth and the distinctive thoughts of the writings of John.

Let us now turn to the Gospel.

a As the Son came, as sent by the Father, to give His life for sinners in order that the Holy Spirit, received of Him, might freely act in them-this interesting book (it is the only one of the Gospels in which the glory of the Son of the Father is presented as such), may be looked at in different points of view. We may consider it as the presentation of the grace and moral beauty of the Son, which is doubtless its primary object; or we can trace in it the manifestation of the glory and grace of the Father (chap. 1:18; 14:9-11); or, taking it in connection with the object of the manifestation of the Father by the Son, that is, redemption, we can consider it as the depository of the Spirit's resources in salvation. Yet we must never forget that all-important as salvation is, it is not, and it cannot be in itself, the chief end of God. Redemption is to the glory of God and to the salvation of those that believe. I notice this three-fold view of the book as explaining the different views taken of it.

It is in a peculiar sense our gospel; for if the church as such has a place peculiar to herself-that place is in the heavenly places, the court of Jesus as Son of Man and the Lamb-and the Father's house. Now this gospel presents Him to us as the heavenly man; the second Adam-the link-worthy of all admiration - which, by means of the redemption which is in Him, unites the glory of God Himself, Creator and Upholder of all things, with His creatures. But what wonders are found in Him who is this link! We may remark, as indirect testimony, that this is our gospel, that if it is found to be mystic by the men of this world, it is always the subject of study (if spiritual) to the poor Christians, to the widow, and the aged, in spite of all the difficulties. Such find it to be good reading.)

Section 1 (chap. 1:1-18) gives us the testimony of John the Apostle with regard to the person of Christ Himself, and the mission of John the Baptist. These subjects are looked at and presented according to the light which the Apostle possessed after both the resurrection of the Lord and the accomplishment of the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus, the Word, is the Eternal Life which the love of God has given to us for light. John Baptist is His precursor.

Section 2. (chap. 1:19-28) contains the testimony which John Baptist rendered to the Jews as to himself and Christ: as to himself, he was but a voice in the wilderness; but He whom he announced was infinitely above him. This took place on the first day of a week. For we find (ver. 29) " on the morrow;" and (ver. 35) "on the morrow;" and (ver. 43) " on the morrow;" and (chap. 2:1) " the third day." "Three days after" forms the week of seven days.

Section 3. (chap. 1:29-34). The testimony of John when he saw Jesus-that He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (ver. 29), and then that He it is who baptizes with the Holy Ghost-the Son of God. Blessed testimony which the personal presence of the Lord drew forth!

Section 4 (chap. 1:35-42) presents the effect upon two of John's disciples, of the testimony that Christ is the Lamb of God; their reception by Jesus with His gracious invitation "Come and see:" and the reading, by Jesus, of Simon's character and future history in the new name given; rugged

and prone to fall in nature; chosen and fitted by grace for a special place in the foundation.

Section 5 (chap. 1:43-51). Jesus calls Philip with his sovereign "Follow me;" receives and reads the heart of Nathanael and promises to him (who was, in the sight of Jesus, what indeed his name in itself imports, gift of God) participation in His glory.

In Section 6 (chap. 2:1-11), the water is changed into wine at the marriage feast in Cana.

Surely, in a book which gives us the history of Jesus, in His character of Son of God, His first appearance in the introductory chapter, and His conduct in this scene at Cana is most worthy of notice. How suited to assure the soul in His presence. Such graciousness, such accessibility were never seen.

Section 7 (chap. 2:12-23). Full of zeal for the name of His Father, whose name was dishonored in His own temple; the Lord purges it and presents His own body as the true temple.

Remark, in these two last sections, the correspondence and the contrasts: they are worthy of notice. The correspondence: Jesus, in both cases, substitutes one thing of a better kind for another which was inferior. The wine replaces the water: His own body the temple. Yet it is in both cases His grace which acts; whether among men in the desert to win them to God, or before God in His eternity, to establish a point of communication between Him and man.

The contrasts: in one case, His amiability as a guest; and in the other, His zeal as the Son, who was the servant of God: in the one case, men receiving Him; in the other, men rejecting Him, etc.

In the first case, the scene is at an assembly in honor of a marriage. Jesus avails Himself of Jewish ordinances-the avowed end of which was purification-but which were empty: He fills them with that for which they were prepared, but then bids draw forth quite another thing-suited for strengthening and rejoicing. This is typical. In the second case, the Jews had turned the court of the Lord's house into a house of trade-an exchange; He empties it, and substitutes for it another thing perfect and inaccessible to sin. Remark also the difference in His conduct, verses 15 and 16. He drives out the men and beasts; overthrows the tables and money., and bids those that sold doves to take them away. What consideration for the poor imprisoned birds.

Section 8. (2:23, Passover-chap. 3:21) shows his knowledge of man. It is He alone who is the way to God, the mean of men's receiving a nature capable of seeing the things of God, and of entering into His kingdom, etc.

It is a solemn truth that if man is to be blessed, he needs a new nature. Prophets had spoken of things for the earth; but the Son of Man, who alone was in heaven, was needed if heavenly things were to be opened. For there are earthly and heavenly things, and glories, and a kingdom on earth as in heaven. It is a solemn word (19-21) that the conduct of a man, in reference to Christ, shows the individual's moral state.

In this portion the Father gives; the Son suffers, and the Spirit acts upon. The only begotten Son of God become Son of Man, slain on the Cross, raised from the dead, and at the right hand of God, is the ground of faith which introduces us into a new life on high. Such is the truth by which the Holy Spirit in His first operation, forms in us the divine nature. And this is the truth here taught. If the view be limited to Nicodemus, he is but a poor Pharisee forced into light in this history.

Section 9. (chap. 3:22-36.) John the Baptist's testimony to Christ. He is the bridegroom-the One who comes from on high, in connection with whom the power of a new nature is found.

Ver. 34, "to him" is not in the Greek, and gives quite another sense. The truth taught us here is nearly the same as that found in 1 Peter 1:23. It is not that Christ alone has the fullness of the Spirit-which is true-but rather that the Spirit which flows from Him to all then that believe, is a life-giving Spirit; ever attendant upon a testimony fresh from God.

Section 10. (chap. 4:1-42). In the case of this poor woman, Jesus displays Himself as the One sent by God to seek true worshippers. He reads the heart of that poor sinner, and reveals himself to her as Messiah and till object of worship. He is thereon recognized by the Samaritans.

In this fourth chapter, we have the sphere and occupation of the life-the need of which, and the mode of communicating which are presented to us in chap. 3. It is the grace of the Son, the gift of God, He who opens in the heart a well-spring of living water, which springs up unto eternal life in poor sinners, whom the Father desires to have as worshippers in spirit and in truth, which are the truths that form the heart and soul in which there is life. Such are God's thoughts, such are the subjects of the toil of Him who is the anointed of God, the very truths by which the Spirit produced in poor sinners worship in spirit and in truth, and self-sacrificing devotedness. In the case of the poor woman we have a specimen of Christ's conduct as one that was a "fisher of men" and of its effects. In this the Son travails and seeks; the Spirit acts within: the Father wills and draws. As chapter 3 gives us the doctrine of the first great operation of the Spirit on the soul-the fourth gives us the second, viz. that of placing the soul in worship.

Section 11, (chap. 4:43-54). Heals at Cana the son of a nobleman without having seen him.

In the first of the circumstances of this chapter, Christ seeks and finds, a poor sinner; in the second he is sought and found by the Samaritans; in the third, he is sought and sends healing.

Section 12. (chap. 5:1-47). Ver. 1 speaks of a feast, and ver. 9, of the Sabbath. In healing on the sabbath a poor paralytic at Bethesda, he introduces the truth of the Sabbath of God, violated by sin to such an extent that he could find no rest among men, nor his Father either. The Jewish sabbath must yield its place to Him as the true Rest of God.

The grace that was found at this fountain of Bethesda, showed that God could not rest; sin and sickness were there among people; but if His grace was there to heal the sick, it was so according to His providence and Jewish ordinances, which could not possibly present all that was in Him. From time to time there was healing for any one who had force enough to get first into the pool. But in Jesus is found all the fullness of God and the Father forever; and it is always there, and for the weakest of the weak. Virtue came out of Him to heal the poor man who had no strength; but his object was to arrest sin in the poor man rather than merely to deliver him for a moment from bodily sickness. (Ver. 14) Christ has a right to present Himself as He who can be, and is, the Sabbath, or Rest of God and of poor sinners saved by His grace.

Ver. 31-47. The deeds wrought, and the words spoken are the Father's testimony to Christ. Not to receive that testimony is, in the end, to be condemned by Moses.

The connection which exists between worship (as in the 4th chap.) and rest, or the sabbath (in the 5th) is of much interest.

In ver. 24, eternal life enters into the question of the sabbath. How blessed is it that God in the presence of such a state of things as then existed, would not take His rest. As to outward things, Jerusalem was full of sickness (ver. 1-9); morally all was worse-for the Jews were condemning Christ (ver. 10-20); physically and morally there was a judgment to come (ver. 22.) It is His goodness which hinders his being at rest in the presence of the affliction of His people. And what was the answer to the gracious word in ver. 8, " Take up thy bed and walk?" In substance it was this, 'Disturb our rest in sin, and we will condemn thee.'

Ver. 19 is worthy of much notice. The force of it is this: "Instead of making myself equal to God, He reveals Himself to me, and I imitate what I see." Such was the humble answer of the Lord of life. The connection between the healing of the sick (ver. 8), the resurrection (ver. 21), the judgment (ver. 22), and life (ver. 21), is full of instruction. It is, in a sense, in the character of JUDGE that Jesus gives life (ver. 22 and 24). God has committed to His Son all that was needful, in order for Him to establish a true Sabbath. It is He who acts as Judge, in resurrection and life, to introduce by His Spirit this unspeakable blessing.

The Sabbath being treated of in chap. v.,-which was necessary for the worship of chap. iv.-the question of nourishment comes next. Jesus, the sent one, will give it-as the One whom God has given-nourishment which removes both hunger and thirst, and cherishes a life of communion with Christ and God.

This we find in Section 13 (chap. 6:1-13). He satisfies five thousand with five barley loaves and two fishes. The Passover was nigh at hand,-feast of separation unto God. The hunger was of a company who had followed Jesus.

Section 14 (chap. 6:14-21): In crossing the sea afoot, the Lord overtakes His disciples (the sea being rough); they are immediately at land.

Section 15 (chap. 6:22-71). He now presents Himself to the multitudes as the bread of life. Man ought to labor for the meat which is unto eternal life. This work is of the Father; viz. to believe on Him whom He has sent. This bread of life is the manna, Himself, in whom is the resurrection and the judgment too-the bread of God, and of communion with God.

Next comes the question of commemorating, in the rest and repose given, the difficulties and dangers of a past wilderness. In spirit and principle we can already do this, having the spirit of promise, and being dead and alive again in Christ. This truth comes naturally after that of the manna.

Section 16 (7:1-53). At the feast of tabernacles, Jesus presents himself as the source whence should flow, by means of Him rivers of living water. This spake He of the Spirit.

There seems to be a contrast in this chapter, between Israel with its feast (although still in the world, that is in Egypt, morally speaking), and Christ in the desert, and unwilling to associate himself publicly with a feast which made as if Israel was really in rest; yet, nevertheless, drawn by the desire to testify to the Jews two things; viz., that He it was who was to give water as in the desert, when he got on high. Yet t the individual, as such (after his resurrection), and that He was still seeking, as it were, a place where to establish His tabernacle in repose, as Moses also in vain had sought it. The gushing stream in the wilderness, and the feast in the land were closely linked

together; and both told the same tale as to the God of Israel.

Christ, the Sent One of God, calls men during His lingering in the desert. He opens, in those that believe, fountains which give forth living streams-the Spirit; nor will these rivers cease, till, in the land, water can be drawn from the well-spring, and poured forth before the Lord.

Ver. 7. The world is your place-I seek one (34, 35, and 36).

Ver. 8. My time; query for the feast of tabernacles? Ver. 16. He is the Sent One (29).

Ver. 21. turns upon the substance of chap. 5. Their state without a Sabbath.

Ver. 28. He reads aloud their thoughts.

Ver. 37, 38. It is for the desert that Christ pours forth water from his fountain; but the rivers thus given lead in hope to the time when, the wilderness being past, the tabernacle of God shall be our place of joy, and we shall commemorate in the land the faithfulness of redeeming love, made good to us all through our wilderness course. Blessed is this grace; and yet more blessed is the Blessor.

Section 17 (8:1-11). The woman taken in adultery. How adorable is the Lord in the bright light and divine freedom which His conduct here evinced; and darker in understanding, and more essentially slaves of Satan, than even the poor woman taken in the very fact of adultery, were those who could use such a thing, in such a place, and at such a time, in the hope to ensnare Him. But they knew Him not; they knew not themselves either. They unwittingly brought their own darkness into the light, and found themselves convicted by their own consciences-self-condemned. The instruction in the temple (from ver. 12-59), is as to light and liberty. In ver. 12, the light of life (as exemplified 1-11); and ver. 32, freedom of the truth (compare ver. 30, 33, 44, 46). As the Sent One of God (ver. 29), Jesus presents the eternal life, which is of God, in such a manner as the Spirit needs to use it, in order to make it effectual for the poor sinner.

Next comes an illustration of all that which has preceded (chap. 7 excepted, perhaps); a reply to the opposers, and an explanation of their conduct being added (see chap. 9:1; 10:21).

Section 18 (chap. 9). We have here sight rendered to a blind man, his consequent excommunication from the synagogue, and his reception by Jesus; and after that (in chap. 10), the parable of the sheepfold.

For myself, I do not doubt but that the details of the healing were typical. That which was found in Jesus (it was intimately connected in nature with the word of His mouth, and necessary for His own nourishment), mixed with that which is of the earth, applied by the son of man to the sightless eye of a poor sinner, gave to him his sight after he had recognized Siloe (Sent). Compare also chap. 8:52, Son of God.

The account of the entrance of light which is given to us here (ver. 9 and 10), is highly interesting, as also the fact of that day being a Sabbath (ver. 14). The effects of light, and the man's conduct, are also worthy of all notice (ver. 9). First, he speaks of Jesus as "that man" (ver. 11), and as a worker of miracles; then as a prophet (ver. 17); (ver. 27), as one who might have disciples; as a man of God (ver. 33); and lastly (ver. 35 and 36), as the Son of God; as Lord and God.

But a lost one, who has been found of Christ, has special privileges belonging to him as one that has been found; for He that has found the lost one has connections of His own, and His heart makes all that He has, or is to be shared by those that are His-protection from the adversary and blessing in the truth. This is seen in chap. 10.

The similitude of the sheep-fold (ver. 1-5), as well as the development of it (ver. 6-18), which treats of the good shepherd, the hireling, the sheep, etc., is addressed, not only to His own disciples, and to the poor man that had recovered his sight, but to the Pharisees (chap. 9: 40). If this is lost sight of, much necessarily escapes us. I have had the thought that the law, in its description of man, not only challenged and condemned all that were under it, but also pointed out Him that was to come-the prophet of whom Moses spake, as the one that was to be heard. If it be so, the meaning of the thief (ver. 1), the shepherd (ver. 2), the porter (ver. 3), is evident. He knows His own, and they know Him, but not a stranger. In ver. 7, the figure is changed, and He becomes the door of the sheep; door of salvation and of feeding for those that are free (ver. 8); all others are robbers. The robber's object, and the shepherd's, are as contrasted as is their conduct. What an astonishing thing is grace! The mutual knowledge of the shepherd and his sheep finds no fit illustration, save that of the Father and the Son (ver. 14 and 15). The heart of the shepherd also knows no reservation in his self-sacrifice, neither can it be divided; He will lay down his life for the sheep, and will put together in one his flock, that there may be one fold and one shepherd. And again, the Shepherd's conduct finds its origin in the love and gift of the Father (ver. 17 and 18).

Section 19. (chap. 10:22-42). At the feast of the Dedication, at Jerusalem, in winter, the Jews, unwilling to recognize Him in His true character, find Him in the temple, and there ask whether He is the Christ. To this the Lord replies, that He had told them, yet that they believed not; adding that His works bore witness, but that they were not His sheep to believe these things; and that His Father, who preserved His sheep, and Himself; were one. This was too much for the Jews: they make a move to stone Him; but He remains to reason with them, and then passes away untouched.

The Lord's patient grace towards His adversaries, and the explanation of their enmity is thus shown. Yet all this connects itself with Him as Savior of His own.

Section 20. The well-known chapter (the eleventh) of Lazarus sick, dead, and raised again comes next. It presents us with the grand truth of Christ Himself being the Resurrection and the Life; with the desire of the Jews to kill him, and with the conduct and words of Caiaphas.

The moment was come for the blessed Lord to show yet more pointedly than ever that He did not act merely according to affections in his own heart; that the glory of God directed Him always, and that the Resurrection and the Life in Him were the great blessings which He had not only to teach but also to communicate. It is important to see the double testimony which Christ had to render. His God and Father had a connection with 'a nation, Israel, according to creation and providence. If Jesus would be a faithful witness, He must identify Himself with this position of Jehovah and Israel. He did so, and gave in time, blessings which Jehovah had marked as being His to give to Israel. The Lord's goodness brought into open light Israel's state and rebellion, they would not have Him; He was free then to go on to those more important things connected with death and resurrection-heaven, and a people saved from among the Gentiles. The Lord's instruction in this chapter shows the efficacy and the value of these glories (of being the Resurrection and the Life),

and although on this occasion, manifested only in the resurrection of One that was dead, and in the giving back to Him the same life which he had laid down,-all this is closely linked with the Resurrection and the Life eternal. The miracle produced, on a small scale, that which the resurrection of Christ, as prince of life did perfectly. The Jews showed themselves and were seen in their true colors, and the Lord's people were separated more than ever, unto Him whom the Father had sent to do such things.

That which we read in this chapter marks the end of the first part, and the commencement of the second of the Gospel of John. The beauty and the glory of the Lord Jesus having been manifested in the most perfect way; the Jews feel repulsed, and His own attracted more than ever, and He Himself prepares for his death. But it is this miracle which, so to speak, places all the parties in the scene.

Section 21. (chap. 12:1-8). The Passover at hand. Mary anoints at a supper the feet of Jesus. What a beautiful expression both of the condescension of Jesus and of the love of His people towards Him is found at this feast. What a fragrant perfume does the love of Mary give, and yet far more so the remark which the covetous impudence of Judas upon Mary's act, draws from the blessed Lord.

Section 22. (chap. 12:9-11, and 12-19). The curiosity of the multitude and the hatred of the chiefs, is presented to us in the first of these portions. And in the second, the zeal of a crowd which accompany the Lord in his last entry into Jerusalem-a zeal perhaps without much even human intelligence, but which the Lord accepts (ver. 14, 15), for it was according to what they possessed.

Section 13. (chap. 12:19-50). The Greeks desire to see Jesus. The, communication to Jesus of this desire is the signal to Him that all is ready for His death. From that moment He begins to speak openly of His death, and of the principles of his called people: as God is the God of Resurrection, there is a needs be of death, if one is united to Him, if one is not of this world, is not a slave of Satan. From verse 38 to 41, we see what, according to the thoughts of God, was at that time the state of the Jews, and from verse 44 to the end of the chapter, we have the last warning which the Lord gave in public.

All the parties are now definitively placed. The chiefs have taken, with much determination, their place of being, if it be possible, the murderers of Jesus; the multitude is divided; there are in it a goodly number who are curious, but others also who are deeply interested in Jesus. The Greeks have made their appearance;-and a people drawn out from among the nations were to replace Israel in testimony and blessing; the Lord has received the testimonies of the love of His own, has explained to them the unity of the principle of His walk and theirs, and has rendered a last testimony to the world: it yet remains for Him to prepare His own people; to explain to them the details of their future position;- their sufferings in this world (chap. 13); the contrast between this suffering and the glory of their portion on high (chap. 14) first in Him, whilst they are still in the wilderness, and secondly, when these come to His home, having left the wilderness. He adds certain details connected with the testimony to be rendered here below (chap. 15); and of the powers of the world to come, which should be given to them (chap. 16); and the source and security of it all in the love which the Father had toward the Son (chap. 17). In the scenes given to us in these five chapters, Jesus is apart with His disciples.

Section 24. (chap. 13). The last supper. Apart with His disciples, Jesus shows them what is their position and their responsibility the one with the other. The Master washes His disciples' feet: such is the example He set before us all; and He does it as one that came from God and went to God, and as knowing that all things were now consciously in His hands. It is not as a slave but as the Son who serves, of right good will, that He does it. The scene is, so to speak, the Holy family in a tent in the desert. We see Christ pure and perfect as a man and Judas wicked in nature (in seeking the world, he cast himself into Satan's, hands); and Peter, whose self-confidence leaves him exposed to the wiles of Satan in the presence of the evil of the world. The instruction of what should be done is plain enough. To renounce self entirely, and to serve God perfectly according to the needs of His glory among them that are His, in the desert where we are, is plainly taught; but the power to do this is not shown to us, save in the actions of Christ Himself. The chapter should be read in connection with chap. 14; for the two are, not only strikingly contrasted one with the other, but are united together; and their connection is evident enough: having spoken to Peter at the close of the thirteenth chapter of his weakness, and of the results natural to his confidence-in himself, the Lord stops not there, but adds, at the beginning of the fourteenth chapter, the faithfulness of His own love, based as it was upon God, and what its results even to such as Peter.

The wilderness, painful service of humiliation in the family there, perils of false brethren, failure of true brethren-realization of the powers of Satan, the world and the flesh-such are the topics of the thirteenth chapter. The Father's House on high, a hearty welcome there, and the joys of His company who fetches us and introduces us there, where evil cannot come, where no weakness remains in us, for God fills us then--perfect realization in heavenly places above of the blessedness of the unhindered presence and action of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in a scene perfectly divine, is the consolation of the fourteenth chapter; and more too, as we shall presently see.

Section 25. (chap. 14). The love of the Son opens to His, people His Father's house. No springs are found there save those in God; no strength but that of the Holy Spirit; no privileges but those which surround Jesus in His own home. It is a house of filial obedience towards God and of love toward Jesus, etc.-Ver. 1. Christ Himself is to be the object of faith. Ver. 2. He acts for His own according to the greatness of that which belongs to God His Father, and according to what His Father is in Himself and towards Him. Of His own accord He loves the Church, and will honor it as being unutterably precious and dear to Him, He is the way, the truth and the life; in the Father, and the Father in Him; His words and His acts are those of the Father. He wills that His works be fully manifested in His disciples, and that all their desires expressed in prayer, should be fulfilled. Then (in ver. 15) we have the great principle that love leads to obedience. In ver. 16, the Spirit as Paraclete, Spirit of Truth, unknown to the world, but well known to the disciples of Christ; the World sees Him not; but they see Him., for His life is theirs. The twentieth verse gives us Christ for us, and ver. 21, Christ in us: a revelation of Himself and of His Father which flows from and depends upon our obedience. These things, announced by Christ to His disciples; are recalled to them by the Spirit (ver. 25). Peace He gives them in away worthy of Himself (ver. 27); and lastly, the disciples (ver. 28) can sympathize with Christ in His pleasure.

Chap. 15. The Lord being come, He, as the faithful and true Witness, makes manifest the state of Israel before God: and He abides the sole fruit-bearer before God.

Yet, united to Him and abiding in Him, He has a people who are responsible to render witness to Him, and are, through Him, capable also of bringing forth good fruit; for, being not of this world, His people have His Spirit. Nevertheless it is always Christ as a Jew who is in question in this chapter, and not Christ as in Heaven. Christ as the basis of all the actions of God upon earth being fully manifested as such, necessarily there can be no blessing apart from union with Himself. The testimony necessarily connects itself with Him; but as to men, they cannot render it unless they are in Him and abide in Him. Joy flows where there is obedience and fruit-bearing. It is worthy of notice that the state of discipleship connects itself here not so much with doctrine as with obedience and fruit-bearing (ver. 8); the same is true as to the name of Friends of the Lord (ver. 14); so ver. 15 is an argument for obedience, intelligence in doing and acting rather than a description of the position of knowledge as to doctrine; although the former suppose the latter. As the testimony of a divine government and eternal salvation are both of God, there is naturally a correspondence between the two; and oft what is true in government is true in salvation. In this fifteenth chapter the testimony of disciples, and that too under a peculiar set of circumstances, is the prominent question, and not eternal salvation; though, of course, the two should be united together by and in us, if full blessing is to be ours.

Chapter 16. He being at the right hand of God on high, the presence of the Spirit should be given to His people upon earth, in order that they might have power to render testimony. We may see by the expression in ver. 1 (I have told you these things, etc.) that this sixteenth chapter is but a continuation of the fifteenth. It treats of the means and power of the testimony of which Jesus had spoken in the fifteenth; viz., of the presence of the Comforter with the disciples, who would render a testimony to the Lord for the disciples and against the world and Satan. It goes beyond the fifteenth chapter, however, as to the character of Christ. It is frequently the case that an occurrence which makes manifest a certain truth, becomes the subject of a testimony rendered by God to His people, and by His people to the world. Admitting then the divine and direct application of ver. 8-11 to worldly persons as such, and to individuals, if it is demanded; yet it seems clear to me that the position of the disciples, and of the world too, relatively to the spirit which had been given, teaches the same truth, and that with a power and to an extent a great deal more vast and even more important. What took place on the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem seems to me to be of an importance far greater, whether God, or Christ, the Church or the world be thought of, than any effect produced upon worldly persons as such, or upon any individual as such. Christ out of sight, the descent of the Holy Ghost, and the effect of the teaching by the disciples, consequent thereon, broke the power of Satan in the world and laid the truths of sin, righteousness and judgment home to the very doors of the different parties. I believe this to be very important.

Chapter 17. Communion of Jesus with His Father concerning Himself and His people; not according to what they are in themselves or as connected with the government of God, but according to the counsels and purposes of God; their union with Himself both in the Spirit and by the Truth.

In chap. 14, we have first, "you in me and I in my Father"; and secondly, "I in you," followed by a commentary (in ver. 21 and 23), " He that loves me will keep my word.... I will love him and my Father will love him.... I will make myself known to Him.... We will come to Him and make our abode with Him."

That is, first, Christ for us. The means by which God assures to us the salvation is, that, the Church being in Christ, He places Christ (Holy ark of our salvation) in Himself, the Father. Christ our salvation is hidden in God. But, secondly, as to the other side of the question, Christ in us, it is not we who can lay hold of or retain firmly Christ; it is His Spirit which lays hold of us: and then if we walk according to the Spirit we keep His commandments (for the word of Christ must be precious to such), and we do His will; the result of which is that there is a revelation in communion, both of the Son and of the Father. if any one despise the thought of such a revelation to us-may he learn that there is not only the revelation of the truth to us, in the word, but so great is our weakness and alas! so great is our self-confidence, that we stand in need of a direct action of the Holy Ghost to give efficiency not only to the truth as a whole, but also to the details of truth. The despiser's state is a witness of this truth.

In chap. 17 we have, first, (ver. 21) "I pray... that they may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me."

It seems to me that character is here in question,-the character which connects itself with the separation which truth gives us.

Second. "And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one." Here, evidently, manifestation is in question, which is yet to come. But as to security, which is a present question, we are hidden in Christ; and Christ is hidden in God: as to manifestation (as we have seen), it is God in Christ, and Christ in the Church, that is God, even the Father, will openly display Himself in Christ; and the Church will be the vessel in which all the glory of Jesus will be displayed. There is evidently, first, the unity in nature (the divine nature communicated, made partakers of the divine nature); second, the Manner in which the enjoyment of this is assured to us, (the position " we in Christ, and Christ in the Father"); there is also, third, a present and actual responsibility which flows to us thence, and a blessing connected therewith (to treasure up the word and to have the joy of an unhindered action of the Spirit); there is also, fourth, intimately connected with that state, but not exactly the same thing, the character becoming the child of God; and fifthly, there is at the end of all, in hope, the effect of the return of the Lord-divine glory, and the Father's love filling Him to overflowing, and all that overflowing displayed in us.

It may be well to remark, that as to the gift of eternal life to His people, Jesus never prayed for it once; but that he came as the One sent of the Father to communicate it, and that they might have it more abundantly; as to the accomplishing of their salvation, He was straitened until His baptism was accomplished, and then He asks for Himself the place reserved for Him (chap. 17:5), in which their salvation was assured to them. As to the responsibility of His people, He teaches and gives them, for their encouragement, goodly promises (chap. 14:21-24); he prays (chap. 17:20, 21, and 24), that they may have and maintain such character. As to their glory, He wills that His glory be theirs also, and that they should see Him in His glory.

What a wonderful expression of the graciousness of the affections of Jesus is found in ver. 26. Not only had He left the divine glory on high (Phil. 2) for their sakes; not only had He lived on the earth, fulfilled all righteousness, and was about to die on the Cross for them, but His disciples must needs share with Him the glory His Father had given unto Him, and more than this (for what is glory compared to love), He must needs communicate to them that which was to Himself infinitely

precious, the name of the Father. He wills that that good pleasure which the Father had ever had in and expressed towards Him, what had been His peculiar joy, His own consolation in the wilderness: the expression of the whole heart of God, as the Father, and the joy of that heart towards Him in whom was found all moral glory, all the beauty of the character of the Father-that this should be opened to them and made to dwell in them.

That which most strikes me in this seventeenth chapter, is the tranquility and the self-possession of the soul of the Lord. He had just come out of all sorts of difficulties; his life had, up to that moment, been a life of suffering at the hand of the Jews, of Satan, even alas! but too often of His disciples: but we see here in the secret of the presence of the Father, after those sufferings there, and before entering upon worse (for He had to pass through sufferings which were infinitely greater, in that he was to be the bearer of sin in the presence of God). And what perfect tranquility, what calm repose, what collectedness of spirit Without a question we can see in all this the Majesty of His person; but ought we not also to see in it the effects of a will fully subject to the will of God? There is, in truth, nothing which increases suffering, nothing which hinders calmness of soul more than that will of self which unfolds itself in us when we walk in a way of our own-in disobedience.

Section 26. Everything here below now is seen in the light.

1. Judas. (chap. 18:1-11). The betrayal by Judas. We see here the reverse of that presented to us in chapter 13. There, it is Jesus, the door closed; showing his humble devotedness to His own in washing their feet, and in preparing them for what was to come. Here, on the contrary, it is (not as there, the Son of Man, pure and perfect as to His flesh, which was fully subject to the Holy Spirit, but) the carnal nature of Judas, under the -influence of Satan, and the world at his heels. But, what dignity in Jesus, what presence of mind, what courage, and what wisdom: and, alas! we must add, if truth is to be, spoken, what folly and weakness in Peter. His zeal introduces an element which deranges all, and which exposes him to a reprimand, and gives occasion and excuse to the men to take Jesus. So far as was possible for Him it was Peter, who, as a matter of fact, destroyed the effect which the majesty of Christ had upon His enemies. On the other hand (what will not gracious obedience to God and love to man do?), Christ avails Himself of the effect of this rashness of Peter, in order to show the freshness and the presence of all the grace of God in Himself.

The priests and the chief priests are fully displayed (ver. 12-24) and their bitter hatred against Jesus;-as also poor Peter. We see here the real weight and value of respectable religion; and it was under the roof of the chief priest that the fall of Peter occurred (chap. 18:10-27). It is worthy of remark that it was the ear of a servant of the high priest that Peter cut off; it was another servant (relation of him whose ear was cut off) who said to Peter. (ver. 25-26) "Did I not see thee with Him in the garden?" Was there not somewhat akin in the sin of the high priest and Peter? A zeal without knowledge, acting according to the flesh and the world, was the ruin of the high priest; Peter's principles of conduct were not for the moment better.

3: Pontius Pilate-as representative of the Roman Emperor (chap. 18:28-chap. 29:16). It is interesting to notice the effects of the various lines of conduct which are given to us here. (1). Jesus recognized in His course, and that fully, God, and God as the God of resurrection. In the presence of God there is no place for human energy, nor for our plans and objects. No, strength can abide in the presence of God save His own; no plan except His own be honored. His glory,

and His alone, necessarily, must be the sole object which is accredited. But the name, of the God of resurrection adds yet another truth, viz., that all that which attaches to God (as His strength, plan, objects) all, I say, is united to a condescending humiliation on His part, as of Him who raises up from the grave and from death-but, without sin there had been no death. What we see in Jesus is a conduct guided by a perfect intelligence. He knew right well what the will of the Father was-that by His death, first; the vail which had curtained in all the character of God should be rent, in order that the glory of mercy and compassion and grace might be made known; and secondly, in order that the sinner might find his liberty and forgiveness in the blood the Just One slain. for the unjust, and be able by faith to stand in the presence of God: He was content: all that He had to do was to manifest the obedience of a perfect submission; He leaves then all in the hands of God, and lets all take its course. He yields Himself absolutely to the band and will of the Father, and manifested strength- in perfection-the strength of submission to. all the ways, plans, and objects of God. And what did He gain? Surely His reaping is according to His sowing. Leaving the glory divine on high, and being satisfied to be put to death, the death of the cross-therefore, God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name above every name. (Phil. 2). We must needs comprehend what is, for vastness, incomprehensible, if we will comprehend what Christ gained. For the good pleasure of His God and 'Father-His joy in Him in this pleasure-His position of power, and all that connects itself therewith-judgment and salvation are found in the train of this humiliation; and what, to such a One as He, is the satisfaction of being the Vindicator, Revealer, and Protector of the name and honor of Him whom He loved; what the satisfaction in redemption and salvation. God was in all. His thoughts-and that was the explanation of His self-possession.

In Judas we see what is the effect when the flesh nourishes itself with the world in the presence of the light: all tended to the casting of him into the hands of Satan. Making haste to be rich by iniquitous means, while his outward position had the pretension of having left- all to follow his Master, he could not be content with the purse of the Master, but he set Him at a price and lost all, and himself too, by his own mad folly. What is the flesh? It is not the body; Christ had that, but he had not flesh, in the evil sense in which we find it used in the epistles. The flesh, according to Gen. 3, is our own will, when allowed, in our own energy, to seek, in circumstances, our own pleasure apart from God. Its tendency is always to our own glory, and never can it recognize either God, or the God of resurrection. And what did Judas gain either in this world or in that which is to come? Satan is a murderer as well as a liar, and Judas found him to be so.

The chief priests: their blindness, the use they make of a prophecy of God, to put Jesus to death, etc., all shows us, but too plainly, what the religion of the world is. The world is, in principle, presented to us in Gen. 4. Found upon earth a rebel against God and his religion, and a murderer, and a liar, Cain is driven from before God. He asks for protection from God, and he is heard in his request; but he goes forth from that presence and establishes a system or set of circumstances in the which he can be at ease without the presence of God. And if God proposed to Moses a religion for Israel of elements of this world, He knew what the result would be, that His people would take part against Him- as they did, most fully, in slaying the Lord. The fear lest the Romans should come and destroy them, was the avowed reason for putting Jesus to death: in their blindness,-for it was, in point of fact, that death which caused the destruction of Jerusalem; but if man looks for and seeks his own glory, he forgets God, and will lose himself in secondary circumstances.

(4). Pilate, representative of Caesar, should have been just; but the pleasure of the people, and a regard for his own reputation as a friend of Caesar, led this wavering, double-minded man to put to death the Man whom he avowed to be innocent, and whom he feared as King, and as the Son of God. The Jews having renounced every king but Caesar, he who was their king (for Pilate was but a lieutenant), condemned the Messiah to death; and thus also the power of the dynasty of the Gentiles, as found in Daniel, avowed itself to be against God. (5). Poor Peter! He had sowed and reaped; but the center of the whole scene was Jesus; and if God permitted Peter to go to the end of his folly, He yet had grace in view for him at the end. He wills that we be not only the objects of His grace, but that grace be always our object, portion, and joy. Peter is left to manifest himself, in order that he may know that all is of grace, and what the presence of God-of God as the God of resurrection-means and involves; and thus he, Peter, was prepared for the work which God had to do by Him. To be a witness of God against Israel-that they had denied and rejected the Prince of Life, was impossible for such an one as Peter before/his fall. He counted upon his own strength, he had plans and objects of his own; his strength was not as that of his Master, and it must become so. Peter is sifted; but is saved and restored by the hand of Jesus, and by that band placed anew in service; able now to serve and to fulfill his mission without elation; with zeal, but with bowels of mercies and in humility. The sin of the whole scene is so nicely divided among those of the temple, Judas, Pilate, etc., etc., that it is probable enough none of them took it to himself, but that each, like Pilate, thought himself clean, and cast off the burden of the guilt upon others..

(6). The Jews and the soldiers united with the enemies of Christ. The Jews, 18:39, 40; the soldiers, 19:1-3, 23, 24. And thus, head and tail, root and branch, all stood in direct opposition to God. It was but once that men had God Himself as Man upon earth. Man availed himself of the occasion to show out himself, and what he was and is.

Section 27. (19:17-30). Crucifixion. The whole account of this, the most wondrous fact that ever occurred upon earth, is given in fourteen verses, arid almost without details, as without comment. Is it not incontestably evident, that the object was not to set in movement the human feelings of the heart, but rather to present us with that truth, faith in which is salvation. That which saves me, is not the inward movements and sensations in reference to Christ, His beauty, blessedness and sufferings, but a perception, by faith, of what are God's thoughts with regard to those sufferings, and a complete submission to that which the Word of God teaches as to the value of those sufferings. Crucified between two thieves, but distinguished by a superscription (as King of the Jews); His apparel divided, and the lot cast on one part of it by the soldiers who crucified Him; Christ's supreme goodness in giving to His mother another son, whom He had Himself trained, as His substitute to herward; His attention turned to the Word, that nothing might be left unaccomplished; His cry, "It is finished!" such are the details which preceded His bowing the head, and giving up the ghost.

Section 28. (19:31). His burial. The rock, in the midst of the stream, hinders the waters from pursuing their downward course, and produces, by its opposition to the current, both agitation and noise: but the moment it is, as- an obstacle, removed, and has disappeared, the waters resume their course. Thus was it that the death of Jesus yielded to His enemies for a moment an ungodly tranquility in Jerusalem.

There is another thing to remark (as in Joseph and Nicodemus), viz., that personal love to Christ is not enough to put us in the position of discipleship, if we will retain our place in the world and the things of the world, Their hearts were not without a testimony for Jesus, nor without affection; but the world was theirs, and perchance it was the fear of the world, fear caused by their conscious possession of, and pleasure in, wealth. and honor, which hindered the one and the other from breaking with the world. When the world's hatred against Christ was satisfied, both dared to avow their attachment as disciples to a Master who was dead; and they avowed it in a costly manner according to the world. How easily our hearts are deceived! On the other hand, how gracious of God to have allowed them this privilege -to have reserved for them the only service they were prepared to give. The attention of God to the preservation and care of the bodies of those that are His, is quite remarkable; as may be seen here, and in the cases of Joseph, of Moses, and in the doctrine of Job, and also of Paul.

Section 29. (20). The resurrection and manifestation to His people, etc.

This chapter divides into four parts. 1. The discovery to the disciples of the resurrection (1-10). 2. The appearance of the risen Lord to Mary (11-18). 3. The Lord's appearance the same evening among the disciples, when the doors were shut (19-23). 4. His appearance one week later, when Thomas was present.

1. If the heart be right with God, Christ, alive or dead, is the center and end of all our thoughts. The retired, yet patient firmness of the female character found its place, through grace, both at the cross and in the resurrection of Jesus; and that place a most honorable one. Testimony in public is not theirs, nor the responsibility before man of arrangement and service; but the women have their place, their service, their responsibility; and if hidden, yet is it one of the heart's affections, and much connected with serving the person of the Lord and His disciples. Mary was first at the sepulcher; the disciples learned first of her their supposed loss of the body of the Lord. Alarmed by the intelligence, John and Peter haste to the grave; but John is there first, yet to Peter the first entrance is given. How blessedly does the sovereignty of grace distribute in these things among the disciples its privileges. They return, but not so Mary; for,

2. Her heart was all absorbed in her Lord, who, dead or alive, was her Lord-and not another. Her affection, blind as it was, meets its reward; and after conversing unknowingly with her Lord (yet what was His joy in His servant's love the meanwhile?), He reveals Himself to her. " I explain verse 17 by Lev. 23:9-22; viz. that as the corn was not to be eaten till an offering had been presented to the Lord, so Christ would not be His people's in possession, ere He had presented Himself before God and His Father in heaven; so that His zeal that God might have the first fruits, and that all the blessings of His people might be known to flow from God, might be fully shown. And if the least blessing which we have derives its chief sweetness to the Christian from being the gift of God, sure it is that the greatest also, even that of a risen Lord, is not perfect apart from His Heavenly Father's name and love.

3. The Lord's appearance, on the first day of the week, Thomas absent, He hails them with, " Peace be unto you!" calls their attention to His person (verse 20), and then again repeats, " Peace be unto you!" ere He speaks of their mission, or breathes upon them, that they may receive the Spirit and the power of office.

4. Thomas's absence (and alas! avowed unbelief at the declaration, made to him by the disciples, of the Lord's appearance to them) gives occasion to another appearance of the Lord, in the which he restores Thomas, as an individual, in soul (type perhaps of the Jews in the latter day), and adds the remarkable verse: " Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou has seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

After this, with a remark of John's upon the number of miracles of the Lord, and the purport of the record, the book closes.

For chap. 21 seems rather an appendix than an integral part of the book itself-most precious though it be. It begins with " After that " (the *μετα ταυτα* of John, so often found in the Revelation also), and contains the Lord's placing both of Peter and of John for their respective courses, after his restoration, and then closes. Peter, it appears, had announced his purpose to go a fishing, to which the rest made themselves a party: the night's toil was in vain; but Jesus in the morning was on the shore to ask had they aught to eat; their "No," leads Him to bid them cast on the right side. They obey; and the immense draft leads John to say to Peter, "It is the Lord": Peter casts his garment on him and himself into the sea, while the rest come to land him. Coals, and fish, and bread are there all ready for them. Jesus, however, bids them fetch fish, and they dine on bread and fish. After this, the Lord (about to place him in service) challenges Peter as to his love three times, and puts upon him each time the feeding of the flock. Peter's last answer is remarkable: "Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." His conscience was now awake, and instead of boasting of his measure of love to Christ, with his failure in view on the one hand, but with the consciousness that Christ had poured love into his heart, which He could not forget nor overlook, though Peter might be inconsistent, he takes his stand. The Lord promises him not only another opportunity of laying down his life for Him, but that divine power and grace should carry him through the trial, in spite of the shrinking of the flesh. Peter then asks as to John's future course, and gets a rebuke, with the answer which was enigmatical, and, I doubt not, a mystery. The whole then closes with the wondrous words of verse 25: " And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that ever the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."

Ere proceeding to the Epistles, I will give a brief summary of what we have seen. 1. The fullness of the Lord's person, as described by John (Apostle). 2. The preparation before Israel (man on earth) by John's (Baptist's) testimony, first to the Jews, and then more fully when he sees the Lord, as the Lamb, Sin-bearer and Life-giver. After that comes Jesus Himself, in His gracious conduct and welcome of the two disciples; in His wisdom and grace and liberality with Peter, Philip, and Nathanael; next His fellowship with man at the marriage feast, and His zeal for the Lord in the temple, Himself its substitute; then with Nicodemus, His doctrine of what it is in Him which is presented to faith, that a man may have life; with the blessed testimony of John following; next (chap. 4) of worship as the occupation of the life given in chap. 3; in chap. 5 he avails Himself of the visible want of rest to man, to introduce Himself, the True Sabbath; the Sabbath is followed by the showing how, in Him, there is that which satisfies hunger and thirst (chap. 6). Hope, its refreshing power leading into glory (chap. 7). Light and liberty (chap. 8). An outline of His conduct and its effects on faith and unbelief (chaps. 9 & 10). Death and resurrection (11). Then His discriminating love between Mary's love of himself and that of Judas; the Hosannahs of the people, the desire of the Greeks to see Him (12). At the last supper (13) He pictures to the

disciples the desert as (chap. 14) the Father's house; Himself the root of fruitfulness and testimony (chap. 15) and (chap. 16) its power. His communion with the Father (chap. 17). Betrayal with the consequent manifestation of all on earth in its true colors (chap. 18); then His crucifixion and burial. His resurrection, and reappearances to His disciples; and His setting them in blessing, and restoring and replacing what needed it. But all this previous to the descent of the Holy Ghost, and, therefore, to the proper position of being witnesses of the resurrection upon earth. For they were not as yet channels in which, and through which, the eternal life He had to give was deposited and flowed. This was not, could not, according to Divine counsel and wisdom, be before He had taken His place at the right hand of the Father.

## The Epistles

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His life here below, His humiliation, perfect life, and expiatory death and resurrection having taken place, the Lord Jesus tarried a while ere quitting the earth to take His place in heaven at the right hand of the Father. All the scenes of the Gospel were in the desert, upon earth. But He being glorified, as Son of Man, with the glory which, as Son of God, He had with the Father before the world was, the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost, in order to form the church, which was to take his place as witness upon earth.' And what is her means of giving light and of being sanctified? It is the eternal life which she received at the hand of Jesus at the right hand of God. In the epistles Christ Jesus, in whom is eternal life, is always hidden in God; but His church is ever upon earth, and this life is the subject of the Epistles of John; His life, as a river, whose source is in God, which flows from the Lord Jesus at the right hand of God, and which has a history peculiar to itself. It is very important, seeing that Satan is upon earth, and that he can act upon the flesh, by means of the world, to have instructions direct from God Himself, with regard, not only as elsewhere as to the disorders connected with that life, the sicknesses, weaknesses, etc., to which the children of God, as such who walk not well, are exposed, but also of the experiences, according to the Spirit of God, of that life in itself in them. This it is which we find in the ' Epistles of John.

1. The first Epistle: 1. (Chapter 1:1-5). Testimony rendered to what John and the apostles had seen, yea, handled of the Word of Life, for faith in that is the only means of having communion with the Father and with the Son. Remark here that the light has been given to us once for all, by the Son, in His humiliation; but it is assured to us, in that he is now upon the throne of God, and God has there expressed his thoughts about Christ's course on earth. Am I in the light of that grace? Have I, for myself, that eternal life? Thereupon I have new wants and needs, and God gives me

2. (Chapter 1:6-10). Instruction with regard to that life, and it 'in me, when I am in the presence of God; in the hidden place, in spirit there, where the stream which passes through each soul unites it to the Fountain -to Christ in God. Having of His grace, not only in Him, but also by the Spirit in myself, eternal life, I walk, through grace, according to the light, in communion and without guilt, by reason of the blood of Christ (ver. 6-7); yet, moreover, I have there a painful lesson to learn. For my body being as yet unrenewed, the light reveals to me and makes me conscious of the state of sin in which God found me, and of the sins which are the fruit thereof. Certainly, if I see what I am in myself when I am in the light of such a life as that which Christ led on earth here below, and gave in atonement ere He took the place on high, where I see Him, I shall necessarily feel the contrast between what He is and what I am; between myself and that in Him which perfectly fitted Him to be both victim and righteousness; between what I am and He is, whose glory is presented to me in Him. If in the presence of God I rejoice in Christ, I also necessarily am humbled on account of what I myself am. Life is assured to me in Him, in Him who was put to death for my sins, in Him, in whom the glory to which I am predestinated is shown to me; but what a painful contrast between what I am in myself and what He is, what I am in Him! Contrast, greater far than that which exists between our respective circumstances. I see it by faith, and I see it in perfect

tranquility of soul, because His glory now, in which my eternal life is secured, and whence it flows, is a' glory consequent upon the death he endured by reason of, in order to free me completely from, the guilt of that which I am. Nevertheless, though this experience be humbling, it is healthful. Such is one point of view. Then we have this life regarded as seen in the various parts and members of the body in which it is found: each division of the family having something special to it.

Thus, 3. Chapter 2:1-11 gives us the marks by which we may recognize the life in another: separation from evil, obedience, and love of the brethren. The old commandment (ver. 7) which had ever existed and been in evidence from the threshold of Eden-lost, downwards, is obedience. For, how can two walk together unless they be agreed. The divine nature never changes; of necessity the poor sinner must yield to God and his ways; but besides this, there is a new commandment, which attaches more immediately to the holiness of discipleship in Christ, viz., brotherly love (ver. 8), This truth could not hold good before that a risen Christ became the One in whom the church was presented before God. But the liberty of the children of God being assured in Christ, before God, and being assured in them also (which is true in Him and in you), brotherly love might be proclaimed as a sine qua non of eternal life.

From the 12th verse to the 28th, he considers the divisions of the family according to age and distinctive peculiarities. The sins of every individual member of that holy family are altogether pardoned; but besides this (which is true in Christ), there are blessings according to the Spirit: one may be a babe, a youth, or a father in Christ; for the family is divided thus into three classes. The fathers rest in Him; the youths have overcome the wicked one; in Him the babes have known the Father. Such is the peculiarity of each class according to the Spirit. First, in principle (ver. 13, 14); secondly, in detail (ver. 14-18). It must be noticed that there are two words, different in sense one from the other, both of which are here rendered "little children." The first is found in verses 1, 12, 28, (τεκνία) offspring, "children of the family," which all are, who are of it, whatsoever be their age. The other (παιδιά) infants, babes, is found in verses 13 and 18. The specialty of one that is such is to inform itself in the doctrine of Christ, even as it already has the Unction by which it knows all things; that of the youths is to make application of this doctrine, and in practice to overcome the world, even as they already in Christ have done; that of the fathers, who, by the blessing and knowledge of the babe, and by means of the faithful conduct of youth in Christ, find themselves on the other side of the world and of the flesh, is to rest and abide there.\* It is worthy of remark that ver. 13 and 14 add nothing to the truth of the fathers; that he exhorts the youth to act in their circumstances according to the victory they already have in Christ; and having assured the babes that they have need of nothing (ver. 20), " You have received the Unction of the Holy One and know all things," yet, he adds, and that very formally, instructions; yet not as teaching, so much as in brotherly love, recalling things well known. In the 28th verse, the name is generic, "offspring," and not the specific one of "babe."

But we are in the desert; and it is there, in us, that the experience of that life of which John speaks, is made. We have then not only relationship with God and Christ in Heaven, and relationships one with the other, and, therefore, as individuals, and according to the Spirit, duties to fulfill, as in setting aside Satan (as the babes by entrance into truth), the world (as the youth), and the flesh (as the fathers); but there is a contrast between the church and the world, where she is-between the family of God and the family of Satan. It is this which follows:-

4. " Every one that doeth righteousness is born of God" (chap. 2:29). Loved of God, unknown to the world, waiting for the Lord of glory, we have to purify ourselves even as he is pure. We have eternal life in Christ; obedience is the natural fruit thereof: sin is the fruit of a state of condemnation and alienation from God. Obedience to God and love toward the brethren are set in contrast with one's own will and hatred. God and the Devil, and the principles which pertain to the two families of these two, are in question. It may be well, perhaps, to state a truth which each child of God knows to be true, but which is found in the comparison of chaps. 3 and 1.

When I find myself in the direct presence of God, as in communion with him, I feel not only that I am eternally pardoned, but that I am also in myself a poor sinner: this is chap. 1; the three truths of which are the spirit of obedience, the enjoyment of gratuitous pardon, and the perception that there is in us sin. But if we turn to the third chapter, I find myself placed in the presence of the world; that is quite another thing. As the light of the sun at mid-day hides the light of a lamp so effectually that naught indeed but the black wick will be seen, so when we find ourselves in the presence of God, that which is of -us will be seen, and the measure of light we give will go for nothing in the presence of the Perfect Light that is there. But-place that lamp in a dark night, and it shows all around it, and the contrast between its light and the darkness all round is palpable. Such is the light which makes manifest the darkness of this world. Being in the world, the church can say, not only " We are of the Father of Jesus; and you are of the father of-this present evil world:" but also, "We are holy, and we do the will of God our Father; and you are sinners, and you do according to your own will." I admit that it is the divine nature-the divine nature which we have received of Christ-which is our blessing in this third chapter, as it is in the first. But in the first, it is the eternal life which makes us sensible of the true character of that which we were, and of that which we are in ourselves, when we find ourselves in communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. In the third chapter, it is the eternal life acting in holiness, and showing (not the weakness of the vessel, which humbling lesson is yet a part of our sanctification, but) the strength of the life to accomplish in us (by means of faith and hope, according to the presence of the Holy Ghost) the will of God, which is put in contrast with the works which those do who are not ours all around us. The position of the family of God, the privileges, hopes, light, love in practical exercise, the separation or contrast with the world, by means of faith and the Spirit, is the substance of the third chapter.

In the last verse he speaks of the Spirit: this leads him to another lesson which he had to give, i.e., as to the difference between true religion and that which is false; between that which is of the Spirit of God and that which is of another Spirit, not of God, be it of the flesh, or of the world, or of Satan, it matters not. We must studiously keep ourselves from all religion which is not of God and by Christ; for, there is but God and Satan, Heaven and the world, the Spirit and the flesh. And the Spirit, Heaven, Christ, and God are on one side, as the flesh, the world, and Satan are on the other: Union with one link of a chain unites you to the chain itself. We must not then (ver. 1) believe every spirit, but try the spirits, whence they are. The Spirit of God (ver. 2) acts according to the example which Christ has left us; they which are not thus are not of God. He gives, it seems to me, the life of Christ here below as a touch-stone of' all the pretensions which we may find of possession of the Spirit; we overcome (ver. 4) them, for they are of the world (ver. 5), and we are of God. Another test is brotherly love, for love is of God (ver. 7, 8); and the death of the Lord Jesus, in order to give us life, is' proof thereof (ver. 9, 10), and leads us to love one another (ver.

11); this will be a testimony of the presence of God in us (ver. 12) that we are in him and that he is in us (ver. 13). It is the Father who sent the Son (ver. 14); to confess him is to show our fellowship with the Father (ver. 15), is to recognize the love of God (ver. 16) which has placed us in Christ, sheltered from judgment (ver. 17); and this takes away fear (ver. 18), fills our hearts With love toward God (ver. 19), and. toward the brethren (ver. 20), which is according to His commandment (ver. 21). Faith in Christ shows that we are the children of God (chap. 5:1).

The fifth chapter gives us additional tests by which to guard against the wiles of Satan. Love towards the brethren and love towards God and holiness must not be separated. Love to God and obedience are but one. This obedience is not painful (chap. 5:2, 3), for our nature, as children of God, is above all that is in the world (ver. 4, 5). But we must hold fast the truth, that Christ, in whom we are more than conquerors, is the same, who is come by water and by blood; and the Spirit is the witness. Victory over all that is in the world is assured to us; for He, in whom we believe, is come by water and by blood; and it is the Spirit, who is truth, who renders the testimony to us. The testimony which God renders to His Son is more valid and worthy than that of men (ver. 9). He that believes has received it; he that believes it not, makes God a liar as to that which he has testified of His Son (ver. 10), that is to say, that eternal life is the portion of him who has the Son (ver. 11, 12) and such is the object of John's testimony.

And therein there is the assurance of having the open ear of God, and of answers to prayer, where our desires contravene not the government of God (ver. 14-17). He who is born of God, sins not: we are of God, and the world is in the wicked one (ver. 19); but the Son has given to us eternal life (ver. 20); may we keep ourselves from idols!

The grand lesson of the second epistle is with regard to the conduct suitable to the faith, in the case of efforts made by a subverter of foundation-truth. Even a female, if she be inside the house, can turn the key against such a one. To be separate, at all costs, from such is the great affair.

The third epistle, on the other hand, guards us in another point. If every one, without reference to others, ought, according to eternal life, to shut the door against him who brings other doctrine than that of Christ, each one is responsible to receive and to uphold the faithful, be we obliged to do so against the current and in spite of the opposition of others. We see, evidently, in these two epistles, that responsibility attaches to each individual both as to doctrine and as to practice-whether there be pastors or not, adversaries or none.

## Revelation

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We see in the epistle of Paul to the Philippians chap. 2, that the position of Lord of all, which has been given to the Son of Man has been given to Him on account of His service rendered. Being in the form of God, equal to God, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. He had eternal life in Himself, He was willing to suffer all that was requisite, in order for Him to be able to show the grace of God towards poor sinners, in such sort that they may have eternal life. He is Lord of all: it is to the glory of God the Father that this be recognized. He cannot be satisfied if everything be not subjected to Jesus. We see in the Revelation how he is the touch-stone of everything.

Without pretending to the possession of perfect understanding of the Revelation, yet it seems to me unquestionable that the idea of judgment is the prevalent thought of the book-judgment from the throne - judgment which issues from glories which pertain to Jesus as Son of God, who became Son of Man in order to die upon the Cross, and thus to make good His privilege of communicating the eternal life and glory which were distinctively His to poor sinners.

The churches come into judgment in chap. 2 and 3. From the throne where he is (chap. 4 and 5) judgment flows, and all that is on earth enters into judgment. We find in the first four seals, four judgments in providence, yet natural. In the fifth seal and in the sixth (chap. 6) and in the 144,000 sealed from among the Jews, and in the multitude whom no man could number out of every tongue, etc. (chap. 7), we have testimonies of judgment. He is worthy to have the 144,000 sealed, and worthy of the blessing given to this second class. It is the testimony given ere the more solemn judgments of God are in question. All that is of earth must be judged; but Jesus, as in heaven, is worthy of a people from among Jews and Gentiles; and He will have them, and have them preserved for Him too.

In the seventh seal (chap. 8) we have a remarkable preparation for the judgments, which being still in the range of providence are to follow. But though they be in the order of providence, their character is far from being on a level with the ordinary acts of providence: it is very much more solemn. The judgment which follows the first trumpet falls on the grass; that of the second is the mountain; the third, the star; the light is obscured in the fourth; the fifth angel (chap. 9) introduces the three woes; subjects of the abyss; the sixth does likewise. In the tenth chapter a mighty angel comes in and thereon (in chap. 11) Jerusalem itself again appears on the stage; and a witness to God is rendered there in spite of the opposition of the adversary. The Lord Jesus has not forgotten His title of King of the Jews, which Pilate, representative of the power of the Gentiles, put forward so openly at the hour of the Lord's extreme humiliation. The nations must own this, and consequently their power must be set aside. After this comes a revelation of a sign in heaven, which seems to teach the public avowal on the part of Christ, that he is for Israel. It is at the time Christ quits the throne of God the Father, that Satan and them that are his are expelled the heavenly places, and that troubles begin upon the earth. They are not necessarily judgments directly from God; but God leaves the wicked to act as they will; and the evil which he will

condemn becomes fully manifest, and the effect of a state of alienation from God become manifest; and that, in so gross a manner that even the conscience of natural man is sufficient to judge it. For God does not forget the conscience of man; and ordinarily, before he judges, evil has been recognized by man, and avowed as a thing to which man is resolutely attached. We see this in chap. 13. As God had in love presented in Jesus all the light of His love and of His eternal life, but men would none of it, so Antichrist will be permitted in His own name to show, in direct contrast to Christ, the perfection of the flesh, of which flesh Satan availed himself by means of worldliness, in order to make the Jews and Gentiles to be the murderers of the Son or Man. Power, civil and ecclesiastical, will declare itself openly against God as such, and for the Man of Sin. And if the world be there to nourish the flesh, it is Satan the God of this world, who, after all, is at the bottom as the spring of the evil, even as the evil will be the visible expression of the character of the power under which man chooses to rest. In chap. 13 we see what is the liberty of the natural man. In contrast with all which, we see in chap. 14-first, the Lamb upon the Mount Zion surrounded with the 144,000; and then, secondly, the announcement, by an angel of the everlasting gospel; thirdly, the announcement that Babylon is fallen; fourthly, a warning to man to keep separate from the Beast, etc.; fifthly, the blessedness of those that die in the Lord (ver. 13); sixthly, the reaping of the earth (ver. 14-16); and, seventhly, the vintage of the grapes of the earth.

Chapter 15. The seven angels having the seven last plagues (ver. 1); the song of the overcomers of the Beast, etc. (ver. 2-4); the angels receive the seven vials of gold full of the wrath of God, which they pour out in chap. 16. First (ver. 2), on the earth; secondly (ver. 3), on the sea; thirdly (ver. 4), on the fresh waters; fourthly (ver. 8, 9), on the sun; fifthly (ver. 10), on the throne of the Beast; sixthly (ver. 12), on Euphrates. The way of the east is prepared (ver. 12); the three impure spirits go out (ver. 13, 14);-the announcement "I come as a thief," etc.; seventhly, an earthquake, the great city divides in three parts, the cities of the nations are judged. Babylon comes into memory; the isles and the hills disappear. A fearful hail elicits blasphemy against God.

Chaps. 17 and 18. The judgment of the Great Whore. The two names of the city and the whore, should be noticed; because they present two phases which are found not only here in that which is evil, but a little further on in that which is good. In that which is evil, the city is first presented to us (chap. 16); and after that the woman, but the judgment has respect to the woman as such (chap. 17), before reference to the city as such (chap. 18). In that which is good the order is changed. Things exterior have precedence in the one, things interior in the other.

Chap. 19 presents us with the burst of praise on account of the judgments, and the reception of the bride of Christ; the descent of Christ, and the destruction of the beast and of the false prophet. In chap. 20 Satan is bound (ver. 1-3). The thrones-the first resurrection-Satan loosed-Gog and Magog-Satan taken-the great white throne-the general resurrection. Chapter 21. The renewal of the heaven and earth (ver. 1-8), -the state of the bride-the city during the thousand years. Then follows the application of the return of the Lord to the servant (22:6-9); to men as such (ver. 10-16), and to the hearts which wait for Him (ver. 17-21) instinct with the Spirit and blessed with the position of the Bride. The description of the glory in chaps. 21 and 22, is rather that of its state during the thousand years than that which is eternal. If this manifestation is to take place before the heavens and the earth are changed, it is only so much the more evident that the object of the book is to present us, in a manner addressed to men, just as we are, what is the manifestation of the eternal life (found in Christ) which is suitable, its proper expression according to humanity-to

man found on earth. That the new heavens and the new earth are connected with those which now exist is evident: first, by the connection between those which now exist, and those which preceded them, the change of which is presented to us as having a correspondence with that which is to come (2 Pet. chap. 3); and also because the manifestation of the glory in the heavens not changed is, in itself, the eternal glory. if God had passed over in silence (so to speak) the millennial glory, and had only given us some intimation about it while speaking to us of the eternal glory, we might have felt that this globe was not worthy to receive the glory of the Lamb: which indeed is true; but inasmuch as the glory is based upon grace, and that redemption glory is but grace seen in the presence of God and fully sustained there by Him He has been pleased to act in another manner. For He wills to make known the victory of Christ as well as His glory. He presents us then with the glory in its earlier manifestation, wherein it has all the traits of victory upon it and there fully explains it. The Son of Man, He who has alone been faithful to God, ought to be, and must be manifested in glory, and therein sustain all the responsibilities which man has failed under, and display in the midst thereof the glory which pertains to Him as Son of man. The Revelation shows this: and it seems to me, as I have said, to be the presentation of the effects, according to God, of the various consequences (always the just expression of the divine mind), of the manifestations which divine grace has made among men, of the eternal life and glories connected therewith of the Lord Jesus.

I commend my subject to my readers' best attention, and my small success in elucidating it, to the God of all grace who delights in Christ Jesus, and in those who, through the Spirit, interest themselves in what pertains to Him.

## Notes on the Songs of Praise in the Old Testament

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There are found in the Old Testament seven songs which may be studied for the profit and comfort of our souls,

Ex. 15 is a song of triumph. 1. " Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea."

Our souls, in the position in which we stand as one with Christ, ought to know the full meaning of this song. We ought to triumph like Israel at the -Red Sea; our enemies dead, all conquered by Jesus; ourselves brought out of Egypt; and though still we have conflict, yet we ought to realize that we have victory in Christ; we are dead and risen in Him; the Cross has vanquished all our enemies.

God brought Israel into this place in the wilderness, and there were no murmurings then. We are brought into the wilderness to glorify God. Each may have sorrows and trials, and why is this? That God may meet us in every circumstance, and that we may triumph in God. Remember these things, "are written for our admonition on whom the ends of the world are come." If God gave Israel such a redemption as we find in the close of chap. 14:29, 30. What cannot we do? We can do all things; the Cross shows this. Expect all help from God in every varied circumstance, and there will be no depression of soul then. If in affliction, trial, poverty, sickness, etc., the heart turns away from God, we fail; and then real sorrow comes in; but if God is there, we have no trouble, for He triumphs over all our enemies.

We find the second song in Num. 21:16,17, " And from thence they went to Beer; that is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water. Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well, sing ye unto it."

Our well is Jesus, " in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3).

The Lord spake to Moses of this well, and he gathered the people together; they counted on the water bubbling up, and they sang. Israel needed another song in the wilderness, and a well in a land of drought; it springs up and draws out praise. The Lord tries the heart; is it Jesus who is looked to, or are you trusting to anything else? This is a most simple song. Let each ask, am I gathering to the well? a well of living water springing up to everlasting life! As you sing praises, it will bubble up.

The third song is in Deut. 32, Moses spake this song to all the congregation of Israel, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O-earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain," etc., and why? "Because I will publish the name of the Lord." Here we have a song of triumph, on the ground of what GOD is, and not on what we are (vers. 1-4). " He is the rock" and " His work is perfect;" but then see ver. 5, " They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of His children," etc. Man is corrupt, but in God we triumph.

The fourth song is seen in Judg. 5, Deborah's song of praise to the Lord for avenging Israel.

Vers. 1, 2, present victory. We ought to be present victors; we each have our enemies; and we ought to come together as victors over them. The Lord hath avenged us. But do we do so? Alas! we often fall before them; the flesh, the world, Satan, are not under our feet. Can we say with Deborah, in ver. 21, "O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength?" We ought practically to feel this constant struggle and constant triumph; that the flesh has been subdued, the world overcome, and Satan trampled under our feet. So many mouths are shut because there is no conquest in God's strength.

The fifth song is found in 1 Sam. 2. Hannah's triumph in God because He brought life out of death-resurrection. In the first chapter she is mourning over her barrenness-God gave her a child-life out of death-" The barren hath borne seven"- " The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich-He bringeth low and lifteth up-He raiseth up the poor out of the dust to set them among princes" (vers. 5-8). The song in Ex. 15 places us in the wilderness-here we are lifted into resurrection-taken from the wilderness, " to make them inherit the throne of glory."

Each song brings out a new character of praise. May you thus rejoice and get near to God each for yourselves. This is a day of abounding evil; each must live with God, and walk in integrity of heart bearing fruit to His glory.

The sixth song is in 2 Sam. 22, David's closing scene. He had sinned, but he had gone back to God. His deep affliction was the result of his sin, and not merely on account of Saul. God delivered him from all his enemies. Have you declined from God? He is a God of grace-go back to Him, and He will give you victory over all your enemies. This song connects with the latter days-a song of hope. This is a song for us.

The seventh song is emphatically called " the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's." This is the most precious of all, because it speaks of nothing but love; the others of judgment, deliverance, victory, and triumph; but here it is pure perfect love; and it is not merely the beauty of the Bridegroom that is seen, but also of His Bride, He looks on her with eyes of love, all fair, no spot.

If we took God's estimate of the church, as seen in His Son and one with Him, would not that make the heart rejoice? If we could only see His delight in us, then we should be able to go forth in the spirit of this song.

E.F.

Church of God.! as faithful watchmen.

Let our beacons broadly blaze;

Sure of conquest with, our Captain,

On our foes we'll fearless gaze.

Present victors-present victors!

Shouts of triumph let us raise.

O may we, as faithful brethren,

Mourn the wide-spread ruin round;  
Sigh o'er all our sad condition,  
While we still maintain our ground.  
Present victors-present victors!  
Ever in our Conqueror found.  
O may we, a faithful priesthood,  
Love and truth together blend-  
With "fresh oil" each day anointed,  
For our " holy faith" contend-  
Present victors-present victors!  
Strong in our Almighty Friend.  
O may we, the bride -of Jesus,  
Spotless, lovely, sanctified-  
For His joyful advent waiting,  
In His power and love "abide"-  
Present victors-present victors!  
We shall soon be glorified'  
Written in reference to the foregoing songs.

## Stephen's Sight of the Glory

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We may observe, to the comfort of our souls, how fully as at home both Paul and Stephen found themselves to be when brought into the presence of the glory; though, as we may remember, that glory had always been proving itself too powerful and overwhelming for the stoutest of saints in the flesh.

When the vision of the glory appeared to Isaiah, he was like a man that had taken the sentence of death into himself. He cried out that he was undone; and a coal from the altar was needed to touch his lips and restore his soul (Isa. 6).

So, as we may also recollect, Ezekiel and Daniel. The sight of the glory which each of them had (in different forms it is true, but that is no matter), overpowered them. They could not stand it. They fell on their face, and the Lord had to speak to them in words of restoring confidence and grace (Ezek. 1, Dan. 10).

Jacob, in still earlier days, in his way and measure, experienced this likewise. At Bethel, he had a vision of the glory in a certain form, though not so dazzling, and he is conscious that he is in the house of God, and at the gate of heaven. But still, there is something in the scene too weighty for his spirit; and he says, "How dreadful is this place.." It is not, I know, that he was altogether like Isaiah or Daniel; but still, he is not fully at ease in the place of the vision (Gen. 28).

And this was like Peter, James, and John on the holy hill. Like Jacob at Bethel, they tasted the sweetness of the place. They said, " It is good for us to be here;" but still, like Jacob again, their spirits are not fully prepared for the glory; and "they feared" as Moses and Elias enter the cloud with Jesus-yea, they fall on their face, and are sore afraid (Matt. 17).

All these cases tell us, that the stoutest saints, so to call them, the most favored in the flesh, find something in the presence of the glory more or less too much for them. Yea, John in Patmos found this, though, as we remember, he had lain on the bosom of his divine Lord (Rev. 1).

But, in beautiful and happy contrast with all this, neither Stephen in Acts 7, nor Paul in 2 Cor. 12, find the glory in any wise too much for them. And why is this? The answer is full of comfort to us, beloved. Stephen at that moment was, in principle or spirit, a child of resurrection. His face was then shining like that of an angel; so that when he looked up, and saw heaven opened and the glory of God there, there was in his spirit no mixture of fear or amazement, but all was delightful to him, and he could gaze at the open heaven and the glory with desire, though such ones as Isaiah or John, as Ezekiel or Jacob, when in the flesh, must own it to be too much for them.

So St. Paul. He was taken up to the "third heavens." But he was there, seeing and hearing, with powers and affections of soul all deeply, calmly, satisfied. He so speaks of that moment, as to give us reason to know, that it was unmixed enjoyment to him. It was only too much for him to communicate to others, and not at all too much for him to enjoy himself. But all this was so, because on that wondrous occasion Paul was out of the body-or, which is the same thing, whether

in it or out of it he knew not. He was as one that was out of it; for, at the least, it was neither any use to him or hindrance to him.

What comfort there is in all this! It entitles us and enables us to know, that as soon as the body is laid aside, as soon as we are delivered from the flesh, there will be in us a capacity to converse with the glory in all calm satisfaction, as those who are at home in the presence of it—a capacity in the feeblest beyond all that Jacob, or Isaiah, or Ezekiel, or Daniel, or Peter, or John, or the most favored of the saints, while in the flesh, are equal to.

May we have hearts to long for that moment! It may come to us in the way of death, or by the translation or resurrection of "them that are Christ's." We ought to have a welcome for it in either way. "To depart and be with Christ, which is far better." The Lord lead our foolish sluggish hearts along that path of desire; for it is little some of us know of it. To be with Him, to be like Him, to lose the heart in wonder and love, to be satisfied, and all this in unmixed enjoyment and conscious capacity!

"Death shall unveil that world above,  
Where the dear children of Thy love,  
Attemp'ed all to heavenly day,  
Bear and reflect the immediate ray."

We should think of heaven, and seek to walk more personally near the Lord in spirit, so that heaven may be more a reality to us. Did we but draw nearer to Himself in the exercise of our souls, so that His presence now were more true and real to us, the desire to be with Him would be enlarged in us. Be it so, Lord, for thy name's sake! Amen.

## True Position Is Power - Departure From It Is Weakness

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In grace, where alone, as lost and ruined, we could stand, we learn that all our blessings are accomplished by Christ and vested in Him. To possess and to enjoy remain with us. Simple as this truth appears, none is practically so embarrassing to our legal and self-dependent spirits. To possess and to enjoy God's gifts, we must first value them as gifts; and here is our difficulty. Our pride blunts our sense of need, but the earnest soul counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord. The surrender of nature proves the appreciation of grace, but it does not obtain it; though it opens the door to possession and to enjoyment. Grace is laid up for me; as I value it, I enjoy it. There is none newly provided or prepared for me; for it is already provided and laid up in Christ; and I enjoy it when I am in a position to enjoy it. We see this in the apostle's prayers in Ephesians. In the first, that the saints might know the power which wrought in Christ, and what He has accomplished for them; and in the second, that they might know Christ Himself-that they might be filled with all the fullness of God. As the soul enters on the position in which grace sets it, it knows the power which wrought in Christ. Truly, power must first work in me to raise me to that position, and for this is the prayer; but being in the position, I not only know the power but the fruition of it, and while I keep it I enjoy power efficiently. I do not gain the position. Through grace it is mine, and I take it. There is power in the taking of it, and still greater, evidently, in keeping it; because it is its effect. It is possible for a man to assume a position in name, of which he, in reality, knows nothing; but this will soon test him. If a man assume the position of being "heavenly" without knowing the power which wrought in Christ-the only question is, Is he "heavenly"? If through grace he be, he is so in spirit and act, and by gift, even as Christ is. If he be this only by assumption, there is an effort to prove it rather than enjoyment in the possession of it. In the one case you labor to convince others; in the other, to magnify your possession.

I am bound to take every position in which the grace of Christ has set me; and my weakness is because I do not. The position is the verification of Christ's power; and in taking it and maintaining it, I am acknowledging Him, even though thereby my own infirmities are more openly disclosed. While to hold the position proves that I have possession and enjoyment in it, though I should fail to prove to others my title or fitness for such a position. Thus the position of itself affords me strength to value and to keep it. If I know that my position is "heavenly," is it not power to be heavenly, to take the position of being so? I am entitled to it through grace; and I own my title,(it being a true one), and my soul adopting heavenliness as its right, and in a way I could not expect if I were only looking for such a position. When once we are impressed with the copiousness of Christ's work, and what grace is, we take up the position, as we have light, and we are taught instinctively that it is a moral error to surrender it; as undoubtedly it is a return to nature. We are, however, constantly allowing the question of fitness to mar our enjoyment; but it is grace that puts us there, and while we own Christ and His work we enjoy the effect of it. Our eye rests on the goodness of the giver, and not on the unworthiness of the receiver; and our labor is not to make ourselves fit for that expression of grace, but to walk worthy of the vocation. Let a soul refuse to acknowledge the vocation as his, and his action, however sincere, must, at least, be legal and coerced. Another

hindrance is, the tendency to measure ourselves with the difficulties in the, path, and not to look at Him who puts us there:- a sure evidence of want of true energy, " There is a lion in the streets I" For difficulties in the way always occur to those who have no heart to encounter them. Thus Israel lost Canaan; and the giants, and the cities walled up to heaven, shut out the goodness and majesty of God. But what was the language of one who would hold his position? " The land which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey." Caleb held the position, and he had the power of it; and when years afterward he laid low the giants and cities, he had the full fruition of it.

It is possible to have enjoyed our position (and this was power, for it is of grace), and yet to have lost it. We have not walked worthy of it; that is, we have not in spirit kept the position; and the effect is a craving, if I may so speak, for enjoyment and deliverance which were once known. Alas! how many things, and in how many forms, are in this state offered to compensate us for our loss! Attention to forms, good works, acts of obedience, and the like, are freely proposed and adopted; but if we had kept our position we should not only have known the power which wrought in Christ, but the reaching forward, according to the second prayer in Ephesians, would be unto Christ Himself and all the fullness of God. The going on to perfection, is alone the progress of the soul; and this has to do with Christ in glory. Skilful in the word of righteousness, confirmed in the results of His work, the soul learns its proper and true place with God, and has power accordingly. How can we have power when we do not know our title to it nor own the grace which confers it? The Epistle to the Hebrews is entirely occupied with this. It teaches us in detail that "we are partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Surely holding anything does not entitle us to be made partakers of Christ; hut holding the position in which grace sets us, we know our fellowship with Him who is the Source of it. It is only as the soul is sustained by faith that it can own the greatness of the place conferred on us. Faith practically results from an acquaintance with God, which He, who declares the Father, imparts to us. We thus know Him, and as we know Him, we freely take the place His love assigns to us; and as we maintain and assure ourselves of our right to that place, do we realize the power of the grace which has called us to it. We could have no genuine power to act in any position if we doubted our title to it. Wherever there is a shallow and imperfect sense of acceptance, there is always a shallow and partial admission of all the other gifts through grace. If the soul be not established on the broad basis of full justification without works before God, its power to progress will be always deficient and uncertain. But, on the contrary, if I have learned distinctly the real value of Christ for me, before God, though I may make many mistakes, and slowly shake off old religious prejudices, yet the light gradually breaks in on my understanding, and I advance in acquaintance with the power which wrought in Christ. Paul is an example of this.

Many were the deep-rooted and once true religious prejudices he had to break through; and slowly enough he escaped from them-yet he advanced; and why? simply because he never let go the grand doctrine of justification by faith without works. The great landing-place where grace had set him he would not surrender; and hence his power, not only to carry him onward through his religious prejudices, but also where others slipped from their places in grace to hold it still for them and for the church. As he maintained the true position before Peter, can we not see that his soul was animated with the power of it? Though Peter be confronted and Barnabas be turned aside, yet

he enjoys the power of the position he maintains; and he loses sight of man while he shows forth the virtues of Him who hath called him out of darkness into His marvelous light. If Barnabas rejoined him again (as from 1 Cor. we may suppose), did he not rejoice that Paul had so faithfully maintained the truth of God? And must he not have felt his own departure as weakness? And of this weakness we have an evidence on another occasion; so true is it, that we have imperfectly apprehended the doctrine of grace, when we are unable to walk worthy of our vocation. Paul would not consent to take Mark, who had previously returned from Pamphylia and went not with them to the work; and though now repentant, Paul thought it not good to take him, for he had departed from the position he once assumed. But Barnabas, the son of consolation, the man' who went to Tarsus seeking for Saul, does not see this. He takes Mark with him and sails to his native country, Cyprus, in nature and unto nature! Such is the man that can be turned aside from the full liberty of the Gospel. Paul maintains the right position, and he has power to go on in it; and well was it for the Church and well was it for Barnabas and Mark that he did so.. Any position we are led to by God's grace, let us never Surrender. "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned." It is to call in question the excellence of the position when we surrender it; for how then could we prove our appreciation of it as God's calling? Now this applies to every truth we learn, for we do not merit -we only apprehend. We see, own, and enjoy, what grace has done for us. If I surrender it, it is not an acquisition of my own I surrender; but it is God's gift, which He calls on me to own, and which to surrender is plainly equal to a refusal to own that it was of grace; or at least it is an evidence that I did not know that it was of grace. If a believer acts unlike a child of God, is he restored the sooner and the better by surrendering the fact that he is a child of God-or by maintaining that he is one---and consequently that he ought to be humbled and self-emptied, and cast upon the grace which has given him so high and so undeserved a calling? In the one case he escapes censure, for he denies responsibility; but in the other, he learns from the censure (for he owns and rejoices in the responsibility), though he is thereby afflicted. This desire to escape censure by denying responsibility is a great evil, and arises from a low state of communion, because the soul has been imperceptibly filled with other things, and the sense of grace has become faint. Trial, or more deadness follows.

When Israel gave up its position as able to go up and possess the land, judicially they forfeited the power to do so. They doubted their power before they tried, and in their hearts they turned back into Egypt. Their proper position they surrendered. The weakness which thus declared itself might have been of long growth, yet as long as they held the position of being able they progressed. They surrendered, and they were humbled and debarred from the place of blessing. So was Mark, to whom reference has been made. They immediately; but not so Mark. They were under law. Mark was under grace. Their attempt to recover their position was presumption. Mark, though disciplined for his secession, and perhaps separated from (see Col. 4:10), was profitable and forthcoming for service, when many others were declining. This shews that if in weakness we have surrendered a place which grace called us to, it or a higher one remains open to us: for it is not by merit, but by grace I am saved. True if I surrender, I shall, and ought to be, judged and disciplined, and for a time unfit for the position I surrendered, which was my weakness. Caleb and Joshua never surrendered the position of being able to possess the land, though many years passed over before they were allowed to prove their power to do so. It is always important to own and abide in what God calls me to, and as He calls me; for it is His grace to me, and by His grace I can alone keep it. I might essay to keep my position, but in a careless way; but this would not be power and

would lead to judgment. This happens when there is more of imitating others than learning for myself. The position to be of power must be in spirit and energy according to God, or it is merely human, which is worthless. Eli is an example. Rightly a priest-but with neither the discernment, nor the energy suited for such a place. Both the house of God and his own house gave evidence of his indolence and imbecility. The man that is not true to God is true nowhere. Eli might have had heart, but he had no soul for God: and being overcome by the judgments which his carelessness had expedited, he died as powerless as he lived. But this was not because he took a true position, but because he was negligent in it; and cursed be he who doeth the work of the Lord negligently. Of course every position is not open to me. It is not a true one unless I have a divine warrant for it. But having a divine warrant for it, though I cannot enjoy the fruition of it, yet it is strength to maintain it, even though the opportunity for declaring it be long deferred. It was so with Caleb and Joshua, and so with Daniel. It was so with Paul, though his eye only by degrees opened to the grandeur of the position. to which he was called. Yet faithfulness to the position that he saw, gave him power to go on. " To him that hath more shall be given." It has been said "I ought not to take position without power." Now what ought to be the answer to this? Is it not the inquiry whether the position I am called to be of grace or not? If it be and I take it, I know the power in the act that made it mine; for it is faith that leads me to do so-and that is Christ in me. Let us not excuse ourselves from a position to escape the responsibilities of it. There are inalienable ever-existing rights and privileges to the Church, of which by failure it may lose the enjoyment-still repentance always puts us at the open door to possession. Sorrow does not this, though repentance be thus produced, for godly sorrow produces it; but it is not the sorrow, but the fruit of it rather, which restores the Church to the enjoyment of her unalterable position with Christ. Repentance is a change of sentiment from conviction. To the errant and faithless this always ensures recovery, because it proves the value of the ways of God instead of one's own. The church has never lost its right to the affections of Christ, or the privilege of His Lordship. It has failed to maintain these blessings; and thereby has forfeited power and commission to maintain subordinate glories. The moment it occupies a true position, be its state ever so low, it is in the power suited to it. The church at Corinth was low enough-their condition one of disorder and defilement-yet the word to them is, to come together in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. Taking their proper position, though weak and defiled as they had been, they are empowered to abide therein and get rid of whatever offended. I do not allude to this for the purpose of arguing that we may reckon on the same kind of power if we take the same position; but I do so to show that the needed power follows or flows from taking our true position. I think the position cannot cease, for it is secured in Christ, but there might be, and there is, a different order of power required at different times. All that I desire to insist on is, that my taking my proper position irrespective of former failure is the place of power. We see, in every revelation of God to man, that there are relations established between them which no weakness or infidelity can disannul; though during the season of weakness or infidelity, they are not, or they could not be, enjoyed. But restoration when that was sincere, was always marked by a return to these unchangeable relations, and an acknowledgment of them. When Abram returns from Egypt, he builds an altar where he built one at the first. If his restoration be a perfect one, it reinstates him with God, and more, because it is grace restores. God never restores without engaging us more intimately with Himself. Jacob added to his trials even in Canaan, because of his tardiness and forgetfulness to go back to Bethel and there to revive his soul in the grace which visited him on the

first night of his exile. Shalem and the altar there, El-elohe-Israel, is the halting-place of the slothful soul, one who will not roast that which he took in hunting: eager to obtain, but with energy expiring when results were to be enjoyed. It was thus with Jacob; it is thus with many a one; but there is no power in such a condition, for it is not the place of grace, and so, after deep and sore trial and disappointment, Jacob is taught that, though he may have done much in the interval unworthy of the blessing revealed at Bethel, yet it is with God, as he had revealed Himself, he has to do, and not with his own fitness, and therefore Bethel is his ground; and being there it was not merely Bethel engrossed his soul, but El-Bethel the god of Bethel, which was the power of his position. If we turn to the book of Judges what do we find? Though Gilgal be Bochim, each deliverer's power is that Israel was God's people; and hence Deborah could praise for the avenging of Israel, and sing praises to the Lord God of Israel. She saw God in all His terrible greatness and majesty as the God of Israel, as if Israel had never departed from the vigorous devotedness at Gilgal. The earth trembled-the heavens dropped-the mountains melted before the Lord-even that Sinai from before the Lord God of Israel. To see what God is to His people, and to own it, is the secret of power. Barak could not receive the instructions of Deborah according to their nature and tenor; for doubtless he looked more at the people and their deserts and their condition, than at God as the God of Israel. And here is the clog to us all. Gideon's mind had to be cleared of misgivings on this point before he is in efficient service; but when confirmed in it how great was his power. Perhaps no thought so invigorates the soul in reading the book of Judges, as the ease with which each deliverer counts on God's favor towards His rebellious and fallen people. Though vanquished and enslaved, the deliverer's power always lay in his regarding God as their King. Appearances were against it on every side; but faith counted on it and took that place, and there was power accordingly. David gets rid of Michal when he brings back the ark-the effect of true position. Could the soul do a worse thing than seek a lower place than the one assigned it by God? Certainly not. And it is not humility.

See Ezra and Nehemiah-how eagerly and unhesitatingly they, not only in their hearts but in practice, return to the position to which God had called their nation True, they had to endure a long and a painful captivity; for God is not unrighteous, though He be very gracious; and if we rightly know Him, we shall receive the punishment of our iniquity and submit. to His righteous hand, but never forget His grace nor where His honor dwelleth. True also they returned to Jerusalem shorn judicially of the physical power with which they were once honored. But though conscious of all this (yea, calmly submitting to it), yet they confidently resume their old position with God, and though there be many enemies, yet as long as they retain it they have power and blessing. Let them say (see Haggai), "The time is not come;"-Let them refuse to take the position, and what is their power and blessing? It was, "you looked for much and it came to little; and when ye brought it home I did blow upon it." But when they were admonished and resumed, it is, "from this day I will bless you." Now we learn here what has been a sore evil to the people even in this day, namely, that because they are not able to present as great and as powerful a front to the world as they once were permitted to do, or were endowed with, that consequently they have no light, that the time is not come for them, as they revive or are restored from Babylonish thralldom to resume the place with God to which He originally called them, and thence all their weakness, I am persuaded. We want to learn from the foundation all that God has called us to; nothing short of His vocation will satisfy Him nor bless us. May our souls indeed learn that if we would have power to serve Him we must own the place, and take the place, His grace sets us in. To go back to a lower position or

to tarry in one, is to have the Lord to "blow on what we bring home." The church can never cease to be the body of Christ; bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh; and now nourished and cherished by Him, and the Holy Ghost ever present to reveal Him. As it owns and takes this position, it proves its confidence in Him-realizes the blessing of it-and is thus confirmed in it. The church may have lost her ornaments, but not the affections nor nurture of her Lord, nor His Spirit that waits on her. She may be feeble and faltering, but she is loved in spite of it all; and she but Crowns her sin when she owns it not. In like manner each believer should own and abide in the place where Christ's full work has set him. There cannot be power in the soul if it be not so. The less we own Christ's supremacy over all power, the less power practically can we expect, and the less deliverance from under Satan's power can we enjoy. If we have conflict with wicked spirits in heavenly places, it is because we are in heavenly places; and fellowship with Christ's victory over all the power of evil, can alone give us ease and dignity in passing through the world that lieth in the wicked one. The true soul always wants the sense of this victory; and as long as it owns the full service of Christ and where His grace sets it, it is satisfied and progresses with energy. But if it lose its place, as in this dreary journey we are apt to do, though it retains the sense of former relief, it will become occupied with expressing its own victory or giving proofs of it more than with Christ's. The end of this always is that such attempts are found unsatisfying, and so powerless that there is an insensible but decided return to worldliness once renounced. Nothing but true position is power, for naught else is grace; and may we praise our God for it, and evermore rejoice in His love in and by our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## Want of Sympathy in Believers Towards the Lord Jesus Christ

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If I am not deceived in my judgment, and if I have not mistaken the statements of the Divine Word, there is such a thing, and there ought to be, as sympathy between the members of the body of Christ and Christ Himself, who is the Head of His body, the church.

But that there is a great deficiency of that sympathy on the part of the children of God, I am compelled to believe; and on that subject I now write. I speak plainly, and I speak from conviction, when I say, that there is a sad lack of sympathy, not of Christ towards His people, who are the members of His body, but of His people, who ought to be here in everything the servants of His glory, towards Christ Himself. The affections of His heart, and the thoughts of His mind, do not rise as they ought, through Him to God, from hearts and minds that are satisfied with. His abundant grace, though the wilderness be still their present path.

What I demand, then, on behalf of the Lord Jesus, is, that those who are His, take an interest in all that is His! His love is worthy of it; and of all our various privileges, that is the most precious which makes it an impossible thing for us to separate between ourselves-worthless as we are-and Him the Heir and Lord of every glory. For we cannot, and we know we cannot, divorce ourselves from association with Him in His honor, His affections, and all the deep and gracious thoughts of His heart.

Hence it is, that all which does not honor Him, is an affliction to those that love Him; and all that honors Him is a joy to their hearts. For, being the members of His body, that which sets aside His word is against their testimony; and all that grieves His Holy Spirit tries and afflicts them. Yes, if we love Him who first loved us, if we are members of His body-and He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit with Him-may God vouchsafe grace to give proof of our love to Him, and of our oneness in life with Him!

There are three things which are sometimes blessedly united together; but which, in the present case, must be distinguished. 1. There is in Christ Jesus the testimony of the grace of God towards poor sinners; 2. There is in Him the blessedness which belongs to us who believe in His name; 3. There are the experiences which, as being already saved, we have here below in the wilderness.

1. How blessed a thing it is for us that the work, by which God has made the light of His nature to dawn in our hearts, and by which His compassion and His mercy become so known to the poor sinner, that he not only may, but is bound to, draw near to God, is finished! That Christ, being risen from the dead and sat down at the right hand of God, all the light of the beauty of the character of God shines down upon the world And if indeed the darkness comprehends it not, still the light which shines in darkness is always the light of the glory of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God (2 Cor. 4:4), the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (ver. 6, and Heb. 2:9). In spite of all the darkness, in the midst of which the light shines here below, it is still the light of life, which the love of God has caused to shine, and is the answer to every question and to every need of the poor sinner who seeks God. In it God finds His rest; Christ is satisfied

with the same; and the Spirit of God gives us to find there the true foundation for eternity for our souls. It is the answer, perfect and satisfactory, to all that Satan, or the world, or the flesh, can object against us; because it has met the requirements of an ever holy God, and is the fitting basis of His mercy, and foundation of His throne as the Throne of Grace.

That a poor sinner, who is a child of wrath, and under the power of the prince of darkness, should take an interest in God is clearly impossible; and if he thinks to do anything for God, the thought can proceed only from pride of heart; for, until he has received Christ Jesus and salvation by Him he has no knowledge of the true God. The God of his imagination is... I will not say what; but the word of God tells us, " This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3); and this is enough to set aside the thought. Not having found the door (John 10), the proper business of the poor sinner is to seek and to find it; and not to pretend to do anything which is an expression of gratitude toward one whom he despises even by being ignorant of Him. From such a one sympathy cannot be required nor received.

2. But it is quite another thing as to those who have received the word of which Peter speaks (1 Peter 1:23 and 25), who are " born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever..... But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." They walk in the way, and they find not only a most entire deliverance from all that was against them; whether in God or in themselves, or in their circumstances; but, walking in the way, they find in it incomprehensible riches. They are Christ's and the God that gave them to His Son, chose them in Him before the foundation of the world; and though they feel their own weakness, they see also that they are accepted of God in the Beloved; and that He is their beauty and their robe of righteousness before God. Born of God, they are partakers of the divine nature; they are children of God and sealed with His Spirit of promise, as the earnest of the inheritance which they are waiting for in hope. Moreover, the blessing with which they are blessed is not according to what they were, nor according to what they are in themselves; it is Christ, the faithful servant of God, by whom and for whom they are, and their blessing is according to the exigency of the love of God, who will have His Son, as Son of Man, honored in the heavenly places. Therefore He has given Him a glorious bride; for all God's counsels revolve around Christ; and all are for the glory of that Christ who is our all. We read, in the

Ephesians, what is the fruit of Christ's love to the church: " Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-.27).

What, then, is the blessing which we have in Christ? Who can answer? Yet, blessed be God! it is not now, because we see nothing in Him that we would fain be silent. No; it is rather because there is so much in Him, and because we see so much in Him; so much that tells His perfect beauty and entire preciousness, that we sometimes feel the expressiveness of silence. It is a kind of homage, at least, rendered to the unbounded fullness and immeasurableness of His love. Who can measure the majesty of the position of Christ? Who can scan the boundless future of glory prepared for Him? But, if that were possible, it would not suffice; for it is neither that which surrounds Him now, nor that which will hereafter surround Him, that can fully express what He is in

His person, and what is the joy which God the Father finds in Him; nor what that is, which, in His infinite grace, He sees, to His pleasure, to exist for Him in the church. No; it is impossible to fully fathom what the blessing is which is ours as the just and perfect expression of His love to the church of His God. But let us pause a moment upon this sympathy of the church towards Christ. However defective in practice, it is in principle most sure, and of all her privileges the most precious, to love Him for His own sake who first loved her. And if one cannot, by reason of the infinitude of His love, speak of our love to Him; because it is so feeble in comparison that it is hardly worthy of the name of love when seen in the presence of His; yet we know we love Him. It may indeed be, that around us are multiplied proofs of our having walked in the flesh and not in the spirit, yet can we, through grace, appeal to Him as Peter did, and say, " Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee." Most surely this is true; because it is He himself who has shed abroad in our hearts that love of God, which is the distinctive privilege which the betrothed one seeks in looking forward to her position of wife. Is it the fortune, or the domains, or houses of her Lord? Is it the being better lodged, and better clothed, that she would think of, as that which is to distinguish her from the servants? Never! She is to be the wife: there is to be the tenderest of relationships between her and her husband; and it is Himself she loves and not His possessions. She is a help-mate for Him, His pride, His joy. And out of this position, which alone belongs to her, out of this relationship which is hers alone, flows a life peculiarly her own. How frequently is this seen, even in this world of sin and misery, both among the rich and the poor. The person, honor, and interests of her husband (cost her what it may), find their defender in the wife. But such affection is but a feeble picture of what the church ought to be and may be here below towards Christ.

3. In what, then, do we fail as to that sympathy towards' Christ? Alas! does not the very question produce a singular and painful feeling in our bosoms that are so little warmed by His love; and in our souls that are so little occupied with the beauty and glory which are in Him? It would be a great deal more easy to enumerate all the inconsistencies in the life of Abraham than in the life of Lot. The very brightness of the light that shone around him; the pilgrim-strangership, the daily walk of him who looked for a city, throw out into relief all his inconsistencies. Abraham's ordinary life made evident his occasional failures; but the normal state of Lot was so sadly in habitual conformity with the world, that it is not a particular action, rarely, if at all, repeated, nor even a particular habit, which was slow of correction, that strikes the mind, in the review of his history; but after a careful study of his life, one is rather astonished to find that amidst such a heap of worldliness the eye of God, which cannot err, found in him, however smothered, a faith which identified itself with God. Sad business to be thus obliged to look for the proofs of the existence of faith. It is greatly to be feared that those (if there be such) who may stand in need of an answer to the question-"In what have we failed?" will receive with hesitation the reply. But be it so, I will yet speak out freely my thoughts without fear.

I suppose, then, that we greatly fail in having the same thoughts and feelings as our Lord Jesus, as to testimony which has to be rendered to Him, in these last days, and as to the gospel. I speak not of that love for the souls of poor sinners who lie perishing all around us, which might well induce us to sacrifice everything if, peradventure, they might be saved. The value of the soul-of one's own-of that of a human being, is worth more than we can sacrifice; but I speak not as weighing its worth, I speak of the sentiment of love for Him who is the light of eternal life, and of

that interest in all the thoughts of God with respect to Him which is enough to make us feel, that-" the name and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ ought to be proclaimed, whether unto the condemnation of those that reject, or to the salvation of those that receive it," as St Paul expresses in 2 Cor. 2:14-17: " Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."

Do I speak thoughts which are peculiar to myself? or do I not rather utter what every disciple recognizes to be suitable in itself and according to the will of God? Is not such honoring of Christ due from the love which each disciple bears to Him? I speak not as feeling in my own heart the zeal and fervency of love for that blessed name which I would; but I do appreciate it; and I am at least ashamed, and confess my want of zeal and fervency, and seek, notwithstanding, to do what I can. " She hath done what she could!" was a blessed word of praise from the lips of Christ to a poor feeble one. If little in ourselves, may the like praise be ours! But is it not astounding, that the poor sinner, who possesses the knowledge of such a panacea as the gospel is, should forget not only its worthiness to be proclaimed, and the needs of those around Him; but also the privilege of announcing it, that is put within his power.

Much the same is it, if we consider the testimony which God has placed in the hands of the disciples of Christ who are on earth; a testimony which has always to be rendered to the grace of God; but which, in measure, changes its form according to the epoch in which we live. It is always (or, alas I must we not rather say it ought always to be) a testimony to the person and glory of the Son of God, as to the position in which He is, and as to what pertains to Him in that position, or in that which He is about to take, when He leaves His Father's throne, to take His own. Moreover, there are all the spiritual blessings in heavenly places which pertain to us as being His, and the responsibility flowing from thence. The responsibility is inseparable from the blessing, if God, who will not give His glory to another, does nothing except for His own honor. God will not, cannot, nourish our love of self. We are not, and we cannot be, the object and the end of the counsels of God. It is CHRIST ALONE who can be that. All, therefore, in us which comes from God, and which is the expression of the goodness of God, tends to the glory of Christ, and has this alone as its natural object of research. That which does not strengthen us in our service and devotedness to Christ, our Lord, is not a blessing but a snare.

The declension and failure upon earth of the church has greatly changed the effect of many a truth upon the heart of the child of God. Truth which, when first revealed, was but a subject of pure and unmixed joy now necessarily awakens in the heart that has understanding another sentiment than joy, a feeling inseparable from humiliation.

If I take the history of the churches of God, of Christianity in its manifestation upon earth;-it has now continued 1800 years;-at first salvation by grace; the value of the word; the presence of the Spirit, were well-known truths. But where can we find the presence or the effectual power of these things, between the 12th and the 16th centuries? No; salvation of free grace, through faith, had been exchanged in the professing world, for salvation by the deeds of the law; human

traditions-many of them of the most senseless kind-had superseded the Word of God; and an ecclesiastical head had usurped, not only the place which belonged to the Holy Ghost, but he had also, by usurping the power of the kings of the earth, declared in opposition to Christ, that His kingdom was of this world; and thus utterly changing the character of the kingdom of Christ.

In the early days of the Church's history, there can be no doubt as to the place which the heavenly calling, the mystery of the union of Christ and the church, and the doctrine of His return as Bridegroom held. These were the doctrines, recognized as of all-absorbing interest. But how difficult is it to trace their existence between those first days and these, the last! Here and there, perhaps, one finds a rare and curious statement, which shows that they were not altogether forgotten through the whole interval; and, alas! how feeble is our faith in them now! If salvation of free grace, the blessedness of having the Bible as the open book of God's word, the presence of the Spirit, the heavenly calling, the-mystery, and the coming of Christ, are, to those that have light, subjects of joy and thanksgiving, can we forget the fact, that all these precious truths have been lost on earth to those who should have held them fast? Can we forget the dishonor thus put upon our Lord? Can we forget the actually existing state of things in this respect of those around us who are our brethren in the Lord, and whose hearts have not yet received, to their blessing, these things? If the taste of these truths in the mouth is that of the sweetest honey, nevertheless in the inward parts, when it comes there, it is bitterness. In the discovery to us of these most precious truths, there is a blessed token of the faithfulness of God and our Savior, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; a token in itself as precious as the truth it reveals. But it is the faithfulness of God to Himself, and to the glory of His Son, in spite of the sin of His people upon earth. We taste the grace of God in its height and in its depth; for it is grace which gives us to taste that truth which the people with whom we are in fellowship upon earth have forgotten and lost: and in this, for those at least who love God, there is certainly a subject of the deepest humiliation. I would, that that mixture of the bitter with the sweet, which these truths produce, especially when we think of who it is to whom they are discovered almost as a fresh revelation, may exist in us, and exist in a very unmistakable form.

The actual effect of the law upon the Jews, is a very grief to think of. The law was in itself a rule of life, to show to those, to whom it was given, what their state really was. Their walk was not according to the law: it condemned them, at every step, their acts, their lives, and their ways. Nothing in them was according to its holy requirements. The effect of such a law ought to have been anguish to all who were under it. For they were condemned and hopeless through it.

As to a part, a very small part who had conscience, it was so: but not to the nation as a whole. They were quite satisfied with, and proud of,.... what? Being condemned? They thought not at all about that; for that would have supposed a recognition of rightful subjection to God, holy and present. The Jews gave Him not that honor: but, seeking their own glory and desiring to turn everything to it, they forgot all in the law which was against them, and thought only of the distinctive peculiarity of having received a law from God. Of this privilege they boasted, and availed themselves of it as a means of judging and condemning others. Alas! it was like the madness of a prisoner, who, when arraigned and condemned to death, instead of recognizing his own forfeiture of life, should please himself with the honor done him by the judge in addressing him so -peculiarly before the whole court; and should, find in his own sentence a mere clue to the judgment of others.

But such is flesh! The effect of the law upon Christ was very different. The law was against every man except Himself-but so far from its being against Him it did Him 'honor. It was, to a certain extent, a description of Himself; for, having no sin in His flesh, he could obey the law, and He found it a path for His feet, and walked in it perfectly all His lifetime here below. But what was the effect of the law upon Christ? The light which was in Him, to which, in its measure, the law did homage, showed Him also man's state of rebellion and his coming judgment; and this was sorrow to his heart. Instead, therefore, of its being to him a pleasure to judge others, his heart was full of sorrow on their account; and He gave Himself for them.

May the children of God judge themselves in this also; whether the effect of the light of the ruin, and apostasy, has been to them the means of self-exaltation, or of profound humiliation, for the dishonor done to God and to Christ (in which we have our full part), and for the state of ruin amidst which the objects of divine affection are found. Are the histories of the church fables? Or, however defective, are they the writings of sober men? And are we to learn a lesson from them? Has there been a need, felt, owned, acted upon, for the reformation, in order to bring afresh into due prominency the foundations of the faith. Is it true that there are churches many and opposed to each other, and yet, amidst the wide choice, there seems to be none which, in the world's dotage, will suffice for either rationalist or religious? If I speak these things as a man, according to man's range of thought, there is enough to condemn and humble. But if I see in scripture predictions of such a state of things and of God's judgment upon it, I ought, I admit, to be thankful for the light of His precious word, but I ought to be humbled on account of it. It is a privilege, no doubt, to have the light by which I know these things beforehand, but what can I say of the sin itself all around me; sin which God has predicted, which He is about to judge-sin which I cannot remedy-sin of the body of which I find, myself a part? I ought to humble myself: I do humble myself before God, and with so much the more of liberty of spirit and heart, because He has given me grace to see that He is for me, spite of all. But can I stop there? No, I must announce it to the children of God. But if I announce it, it is not, certainly, as a glory, nor as a distinctive privilege. There may be some that have ears to hear, though there are many who deny and reject this truth. But can one be content, can one boast over the ignorance of those who will not regard it? No. That would not be like Christ nor like His Spirit. Christ has no pleasure in such things; nor can His Spirit in him who, while he feels the privilege of truth possessed, lose sight of the fact of individual fellowship with the system about to be judged. If I am of the church, as a body on earth which has failed, my distinctive privilege, in regard to the sad truth of ruin all around, consists in readiness, while vindicating God and condemning man, to humble myself for all, to confess the sin of those who cannot see it, and to bewail their loss and the dishonor done to Christ by their state.

I would that the experience of Jeremiah were now ours; and I freely confess, that I fear God does not see the state of soul suitable to the light He has given us in His word. God forbid, that any of us should find in that sad truth of the ruin, a subject of self-exaltation, as if we were not livingly interested in, and forming part of, what is ruined, and as if the honor of Christ and the blessedness of His people were not involved. That the revivals of late in Europe have always been connected with such humiliation of spirit, and that they stop when the sense of blessing given has led, in any place, to forgetfulness of that state of humiliation,-a sense of which, first brought with it the blessing,-is a fact of large deduction.

Again, that the truth of the Lord's return should be recognized as the only true hope of the church, and that the man of God should find therein his joy and consolation is good and altogether according to the will of God. Also, that a child of God should taste the love of God in the fact, that, in a day like the present, this hope should be his own portion to enjoy, is easily understood; but that this truth should produce in us nothing but joy, is not true. This truth casts its light upon a dark world in rebellion against Christ, which has grieved and vexed His Holy Spirit, and is lying under the power of the wicked one. Its light reveals many a sad cell of darkness in the world's church; and if one contrasts the days of its infant joyfulness with those of its old age, what a force and energy in the one, what folly and decrepitude are now visible in the other! Is it the same body? Alas! it is the same body which was set in witness, -in the responsibility of witness, -on the day of Pentecost; but, taken possession of by an adversary, it can scarcely be recognized for the same. It was the place of the manifested presence of God, heavenly, full of love, apart from the world, a constant judge of the flesh and of all the devices of Satan. Are these the features which we trace now? I see not how the soul which loves Christ which loves the members of His body to whom His honor is dear, can avoid, in the light of the hope of His return, feeling that there is much to humble, all around, though that hope will bring with it the position of the highest individual blessedness.

To individualize that hope down to the measure of one's own future joy, and to forget to enjoy it in sympathy with the heart of Christ, which takes in God and all that is dear to Him, is not a proof of manhood in any.

We are Christ's, and, as so blessed of God, we have to own responsibility to His name on the earth; and, as led by the Spirit of Christ, have to feel for His honor and name, and not merely to seek our own individual joy and comfort.

As God has bowed down in grace and mercy to us, they that are in the Spirit find it easy and natural to themselves to bow down in humiliation before Him and for one another. For self is abased in the presence of grace. The flesh, however, will skew itself in another way, and either not feel the need of humiliation or, admitting it, be occupied in demanding humiliation from others, rather than interpose itself to bear the burden. To deny the suitability of humiliation, and not to feel that which produces it, is one and the same thing as forgetfulness of that supreme fullness of grace which has found us, notwithstanding the misery of the fallen state of all around. It shows a want of sympathy with the heart of Christ, in respect of that which is to Him such dishonoring ruin. On the other hand, to be occupied with pressing that others should humble themselves, is not a proper expression of the sense of our own failure, nor of our own state of weakness. For if all have need to confess, and if we are in a low estate, who am I, to take a position of strength and to demand of others humiliation, instead of humbling myself before God, and for them if need be. No: I can, in very humbleness, and in the sense of ruin and weakness, humble myself for my own part in the evil, and for the sins of others, and then rest counting upon God to do what still remains to be done. Whereunto we have already attained, let us mind the same thing, let us walk by the same rule; and if in any matter, a man be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto him.

## Zechariah

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Zechariah is more occupied with the Gentile kingdoms, under whose yoke the Jews were placed, and with the establishment in its perfection of the glorious system that was to accompany the presence of the Messiah; and on the other hand, with the rejection of that Messiah, by the remnant who had returned from captivity; with the state of misery and unbelief in which the people would be left, and by which they would at length be openly characterized; and finally, with the last attacks of the enemies of the Lord upon Israel, and especially those directed against Jerusalem. He announces the destruction of these enemies by the judgment of God, and the glory and holiness of the people after their deliverance by the arm of the Lord; who should thenceforth reign and be glorified in all the earth. It is the complete history of Israel, and of the Gentiles in their relationship with Israel, from the captivity to the end, so far as connected with Jerusalem; the restoration of which especially occupies the prophet. For if the house was the primary object in Haggai, Jerusalem is the central point in Zechariah. Although in the course of the prophecy, the temple, and still more the Messiah, have the most prominent place in the scene.

The date of Zechariah's prophecy, is nearly the same as that of the prophecies of Haggai. There are two in Zechariah, besides that of the introduction; in Haggai, four. The first date in Zechariah, is only a month or two before the two last in Haggai, which were given on the same day. At the date of the second prophecy in Zechariah (chap. vii.), the temple was not finished as a whole, but sufficiently so to serve as a place of worship, although the dedication had not yet been celebrated.

Chapter 1 The Spirit of God begins with an exhortation, founded on the proofs that the history of the people supplied of the manner in which the word of the prophets had taken hold of them. The Lord's displeasure of which these prophets had not failed to warn the people, had borne its fruit: but God was now taking knowledge of the conduct of the Gentiles, to whom He had committed the place of power, and who, being at ease themselves, did not care for the misery and ruin of God's people.

But the Lord cares for it. He is sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease, and greatly jealous for Jerusalem. He is returned to Jerusalem with mercies; and prosperity and abundance shall be the portion of His people. We may remark here, that the judgment of Babylon, already accomplished, was, in principle, the judgment executed on the oppressor among the Gentiles, the head of the empire-of the image; and that the promise of, blessing extends to that which shall be the portion of Jerusalem, when the oppressor shall be finally judged.

Three empires were existing, in the eye of the Spirit. And the world was at peace under the authority of the second of the four, the first of these three. A horse is usually the symbol of imperial authority in its career of energy. In this chapter, there are three besides the one that stands among the myrtle trees. But they appear to me to have the character of the providentially administering spirits of these empires, rather than that of the empires themselves. The first of the three horses, is of the same color as that of the man who stood among the myrtles. Perhaps, because Cyrus and the Persians had delivered and favored the people of God, as the Lord Jesus Himself will do in the

greatness of His power.

Such then is the import of the first part of this prophecy-the judgment already accomplished displaying the virtue of the Lord's word-God returning to Jerusalem with mercies and consolation, moved with jealousy for her, and sorely displeased with the nations that were at ease while she was in ruins.

The vision controlled the whole action of the empires of the nations, and showed that everything was subject to the providential government of God, who inquired into all for His people's sake; and who, looking on the end of these times of the Gentiles, announced that He was occupied with the prosperity and blessing of His chosen city.

The vision at the end of the chapter embraces all the empires who shall have been in relation with Judah and Jerusalem, and have oppressed them, until their final deliverance. The horns appear to symbolize powers; and the carpenters, the instruments employed by God to break them to pieces. We observe that Israel is included in ver. 19, as a part of the whole, it appears to me, without entering into detail. Nineveh having come under the yoke of Babylon, and Israel being subject, as it was, to the empires, all is put together.

From chap. 2 to the end of chap. 6, the Spirit presents the circumstances, the principles, and the result, of the re-establishment of Jerusalem and of the house; and also, the judgment of that which was wicked and corrupt. Each chapter has a distinct subject-a vision detached from the others, while forming a portion of the whole. The present responsibility, on which the blessing depended, and the sovereign grace that would assuredly accomplish all, are both set before us; each in its place.

The restoration of Jerusalem is described in chap. ii. in a very remarkable manner, which throws much light on the connection, already spoken of, between the return from the Babylonish captivity, wrought by Cyrus, the servant, the righteous man from the east, and the deliverance granted by the manifestation of the Messiah. First of all, the full and entire restoration of Jerusalem is announced, the Lord Himself being her safe-guard, and securing prosperity and peace to her inhabitants, Himself, her glory, dwelling in the midst of her.

The Lord calls to the people, and bids them come forth from the land of the north, an expression used for Chaldea, for they had been scattered to the four winds. The Babylonish captivity was the real sentence of Lo-Ammi, as the return thence (Babylon being judged), was the earnest of a better deliverance from that which, in the last days, will represent Babylon. Zion is delivered from her captivity in Babylon. But if, up to a certain point, this took place by means of Cyrus, it was by no means the full accomplishment of God's purposes. The Jews will again be in subjection to that which bears the character of Babylon, and will be delivered from it, but it will be in those days when the Lord shall manifest Himself, in a glory that will admit of no resistance to His will. After the glory, He will send to the nations that have spoiled Israel. The glory of the Lord shall appear, and the enemies of His people shall be judged; for he who touches Israel, the beloved of the Lord, shall bring judgment upon himself in that which is most dear and precious to him. The judgment of the nations shall justify the word of God to His people Israel.

The daughter of Zion should sing with joy, for the Lord would dwell in the midst of her. Many nations should come and join themselves to the Lord in that day, and should be His people; and

He would dwell in the midst of Israel. And then, the word of prophecy, the accomplishment of which had been so long suspended, that it appeared like a dream of the night, should be justified to Israel by its entire fulfillment. The Lord should inherit Judah as. His portion in the holy land, and should again choose Jerusalem. Solemn period! let all flesh then be silent; for the Lord has risen up from His holy habitation, to accomplish all the good pleasure of His will.

We see that, however great might be the encouragement for the Jews in that day, the mind of the Spirit goes on to the end of the age, and to the manifestation of the glory of the Lord, and the blessing of Jerusalem, and of the whole earth. The return from Babylon, already accomplished historically, was still future as the true deliverance of Zion.. All flesh should acknowledge the coming of the Lord. These were judgments which should take place after the glory.

But in order that Jerusalem (the center of God's dealings in Israel) should be thus re-established in blessing, something more than the mere exercise of God's power was necessary. The people were guilty and polluted. How could they be brought into the presence of God, and clothed with glory, in such a condition? Nevertheless, they must be there in order to be blessed. Moreover, this is the history of every sinner. It is this question, so important, so essential, that is solved in chap. 3. Joshua, the high priest, who represents people (it is not a question here of interceding, but of answering for them), stands before the presence of the Lord-before "the angel of His presence," that is to say, before God as He manifested Himself in Israel, since the departure from Horeb. Satan, the adversary to the blessing of God's people, stands there to resist him. How is this to be answered? Joshua could not do it. It is the Lord Himself who, unknown to them, undertakes the cause of His people (as He did in the case of Balaam), and employs divine authority against their adversary. The Lord had chosen Jerusalem, had plucked the people as a brand out of the fire; and Satan desired to cast them into it again. The will of the Lord was to save them, all guilty and polluted as they were. Nevertheless, the defilement existed, and was unbearable to God. But God was acting in grace; and thus acting, He must needs put away the sin from before His eyes (for this very reason, that it is unbearable to Him), and not the sinner, He makes sin to cease from before Him. He takes it away, and clothing Joshua with new garments, wrought of God and according to His perfection, makes him a priest before Him. This will be the position of Israel in righteousness, and in service before God. A nation of priests, clothed in the righteousness which their God has given them.

The seventh verse puts Joshua, as the representative of the people, under responsibility for the time being. If faithful, he should have a place in the presence of the Lord of Hosts. The eighth verse treats him as a type of Christ, having the nation of priests associated with Himself in the blessing that shall be accomplished in the last days. The foundation-stone that was laid before the eyes of Joshua was but a feeble image of that true stone, the immovable foundation of all the blessing of Israel, of all the government of God in the earth. The Lord Himself stamps it with its true character. It should represent the thoughts of the Lord Himself in His government. It should have, or rather it should be, the signet of God; and the iniquity of the earth should be definitively taken away by the absolute, efficacious, and positive act of God. In this stone shall be seen also the perfect intelligency of God. The seven eyes shall be there.

I would add a few words on this expression. In 2 Chron. 16 we find the eyes of the Lord represented as running to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in behalf of

those whose heart is perfect towards Him. This is the faithfulness of God in taking cognizance of all things in His ways of government. In Zechariah, the eyes are found upon the stone that is laid in Zion. It is there that the seat of that government is placed, which sees everything and everywhere. In the tenth verse of the next chapter, these eyes which behold all things, which run through the whole earth, are said to rejoice when they see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, that is to say, the house of the Lord's habitation entirely finished. In this case, they are not presented as established in the seat of government upon earth, but in their character of universal and active oversight, and in this providential activity, never resting until the Lord's counsels of grace towards Jerusalem are accomplished; and then they shall rejoice. The active intelligence of Providence finds its full delight there in the unchangeable purpose of the will of God.

Finally, these eyes are again seen in Rev. 5, in the Lamb exalted to the right hand of God, who is about to take possession of His inheritance of the earth. Here, it is the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth; for the government is in the hands of the Lamb, although He has not yet exercised it in the earth, of which He is about to be put in possession.

I return to our chapter. When the seat of the Lord's perfect government shall be set up in Jerusalem, and the iniquity of the land of Israel shall be taken away, then peace shall be fully established, and each one shall rejoice in the peace of his neighbor, and each one be neighbor in heart to all. It is the Prince of Peace who reigns there.

All this hangs upon the introduction of Christ the Branch. Here, He is not presented as king. It is His person which is introduced, and the effect of His intervention. Observe that the Word does not say that iniquity is taken away, until the effect of the work of Christ is applied by faith in Him, a faith which, with respect to Israel, depends on sight. Their hearts will have been previously drawn to the Lord, as were the remnant by the preaching of John the Baptist; but the peace that flows from iniquity being taken away, and the joy of complete deliverance, come after. They will then sing, "Unto us a son is born."

After this, Zechariah is, as it were, awakened by God, to see all the perfect order of that which He was going to establish. Here also the present grace furnishes the occasion for the revelation of the ulterior purposes of God. The prophet sees the vessel of the light of God on earth, ordained in all its perfection. The candlestick was one, but it had seven branches. It was unity in the perfection of spiritual co-ordination..Perfect unity, perfect development in that unity. Each thing was in its place as a means, and the two sources of spiritual grace which fed the light, were placed one on each side, to sustain the light that shone before the Lord. These are, as it appears to me, the royalty and the priesthood of Christ, which maintain, by power and spiritual grace, the perfect light of divine order among the Jews. The work was divine-the pipes were of gold. The thing ministered was the grace of the Spirit, the oil which fed the testimony maintained in this perfect order. But the Spirit first places Israel, at the moment of the prophecy, in a very definite position. It was not yet the time for the exercise of outward power, or for the Lord to put forth His might, and establish His glory and His worship. among His people. It was His Spirit acting in the remnant of Israel, if they would hearken, to bring them into relationship with God morally, and in a worship that He would accept, if-imperfect as it must needs be, since the nation was not re-established by the power of God, but remained still in bondage-this worship was rendered to God in spirit and in truth, according to that which He bestowed on the people. And at the same time, outward providence was exercised to

accomplish all that was necessary for the maintenance of those relationships with God, and that His grace had established for Israel, after their fall, and their deliverance from Babylon by the providential interposition of God. The seven eyes which ran to and fro throughout the earth, should see with joy the house in which the restored remnant would be in relationship with God, completed by the hands of Zerubbabel.

This clearly defines the position of the people, and the two orders of things set before us in this prophecy. The present condition was that of relationships with God, established in sovereignty by His Spirit, through which He could accept their worship, His Spirit being in the midst of the restored remnant; and providential power being in exercise to secure blessing, but no immediate government on God's part. Government was left in the hands of the Gentiles.

That which was prophetically in view was the perfect order established in Jerusalem, as the vessel of divine light on earth, maintained by the ministry of the two sons of oil-the royalty and the priesthood-which stood before the God of the whole earth. The God of Israel had had His throne at Jerusalem. The God of heaven had bestowed the dominion of the whole earth on the Head of the Gentiles. Now the God of the whole earth would establish earthly order, according to His will, at Jerusalem; and would there maintain divine light by a royal priesthood in His presence.

Chapter 5 shows us the other side of the picture, that is to say, the judgment of the wicked in Israel, in the last days. The prophet sees an immense roll, filled with a curse for the wicked, for those that sin against their neighbor and against the name of the Lord, to cut off both them and their houses.

The people, as a whole, are then put in their true position. That which called itself Jerusalem, and Israel, and the people of God, belonged in fact to Babylon. God, by His mighty providence, takes them up and sets them on their true base; and their house is built in the land of Shinar. Its Babylonish character is fully evidenced by its position.

In chap. 6 we are shown the four monarchies, but neither as the expression of immediate government, nor merely that of human government. We have seen that power had been committed to man, in the person of Nebuchadnezzar, and that he had failed therein. But it was not the will of God immediately to resume the reins of government in the earth, neither to leave the earth to the wickedness and the will of man without any providential bridle, without any government. He controls them, not by acting directly, so as to maintain the testimony of His character and His ways, but by means of instruments whom He employs, the result of whose activity is according to His will. The only wise God can do this, for He knows all things, and directs all things to the accomplishment of His purposes. This is the reason that we see all sorts of things morally in disagreement with His ways in government, which yet succeed: a chaos as to the present, but the issue of which will furnish a clue that will make manifest a wisdom even more profound and admirable than that which was displayed in His own immediate government in Israel, perfect as that was in its place. It is that universal providence, which, in its results, satisfies the moral exigencies of the nature of God.

This mediate power, exercised by means of instruments proceeding from the presence of the most High God, is employed in connection with His rights over the whole earth. This is the character of God in the prophecy of Zechariah. It is the character also of His government for the time being,

i.e., during the four empires. When Christ shall reign, the government will again be immediate in His person.

I think that the judgment executed upon Babylon answers to that which is said in ver. 8. We know that Chaldea was always the north country to Israel. The spirits employed by God have accomplished the will of God there. The seventh verse appears to indicate the Roman empire, comprising everything from its first establishment to the present time, and its historical character at all times. The white horses would be the representatives of that which God has done by means of the Greek empire. The grised and bay appear to indicate a mixture of Greek and Roman power; at least these horses have a double character, which becomes afterward two distinct classes; the last only having the character of universality, which goes to and fro throughout all the earth. I doubt not that all these proud instruments of His government will be found again as spheres of judgment in the last days, when God begins to assert His rights as the God of the whole earth: unless Babylon, geographically, may be an exception, in virtue of what is said in the eighth verse.

The full result is given in verses 9-15, in which the Branch is looked at as born and growing up in the place of His earthly glory-building the temple of the Lord-bearing the glory-ruling upon His throne, a priest upon His throne-the true Melchizedek, maintaining the enjoyment of perfect peace for the earth-the "counsel of peace" with the Lord. This counsel of peace is maintained between the Lord and the Branch. Compare Psa. 85 and 87. Therefore should they come from far, to build in the temple of the Lord; and the testimony of prophecy should be made good by its fulfillment.

Again we see the two elements which link the events and the dealings of God in that day, with the glorious circumstances of the last days. First, the overthrow of

Babylon has already executed the judgment on the first oppressors of Jerusalem, who led her captive. The whole system is thus judged in principle. As in the New Testament it is said of the adversary, "Now is the prince of this world judged." And then, the fulfillment of the promise is attached to the obedience of the remnant, ver. 15. This continues with respect to Israel unto the end. See Acts 3, and even Heb. 3 and 4. But meantime, the fullness of the Gentiles must come in, independently of this, on other grounds. At the end, Israel, obedient, that is, in fact, the remnant-no longer united to the order of the Church, but connected with the promises to Israel in the earth-will enjoy the fulfillment of these promises.

We may remark, that in Zechariah (Babylon being already judged), we have neither man invested with the government, nor the moral character of the empires presented under the form of an image, or that of beasts; but the government of God, hidden, providential, but real, in connection with these empires. This is an element of much importance, if we would understand the whole system existing from the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and the return from captivity, until the end, when Christ shall reign in righteousness.

The prophecy from chap. 7 to the end of the book, has for its special object, the introduction of the Messiah in Israel, with the consequences of His rejection. The same principles of responsibility and blessing, which we have already seen established with respect to the remnant on their return from Babylon, are found again here. The prophecy begins by calling to mind the insincerity of their lamentations and humiliation during the seventy years' captivity, and the example set them by the hardness of the people's heart, before that sorrowful period, which led to their dispersion among

all the nations, the pleasant land being made desolate. But now, the Lord's love for Zion, His chosen city, excited His jealousy, and His wrath against those who oppressed her. He was returned unto Zion, and she should be blessed as a city of truth, and the mountain of the Lord should be His holy mountain. Jerusalem should be abundantly blessed, her streets full of inhabitants, and her old men full of days. God would bring back His people from all the countries in which they had been scattered and captive. From the day in which His people had turned to Him, and laid the foundation of the temple, blessing should flow as a river, even as misery and judgment had done before. The Jews who had returned from Babylon, were placed under conditions of truth and uprightness, for the enjoyment of these blessings (ver. 16, 17).

Besides this, the Lord declares unconditionally, that their fast days should be joyful feasts, and that men should come from all nations to worship the Lord at Jerusalem, and should take hold of the skirt of a Jew, knowing that God was with that people. Here are then the moral consequences of disobedience, already accomplished; insincerity and hardness of heart pointed out; present blessing introduced by grace, and bestowed on the people under the condition of a godly walk, such fullness of blessing as the presence of the Lord in their midst would involve; and finally, the purposes of God in grace, which, depending on Himself, should be never-failing.

But this last thought introduces many consequences and important events. The two first consequences are, that Israel should be put in possession of the whole territory which God had given them. Enemies from without would come, but the Lord Himself would defend His house; and the result of this direct intervention would be, that no oppressor should pass through them any more. The Lord Himself had already looked into this matter.

It was a day in which the eyes of all mankind should be turned towards the Lord, as well as those of the tribes of Israel. Compare this part of chap. 9 with Isa. 17.

Now this immediate intervention of the Lord who encamps about His house (it is the defense of the city against the last attack of the Assyrians, which we have found more than once in the prophets), necessarily introduces the Messiah, in view of the events of the last days. Verse 9 speaks of this. It presents the Messiah in His personal character as King, Messiah, but in a twofold aspect. And this is the reason why, in the New Testament, that portion only is quoted which relates to the Lord's first coming. The King of Zion cometh unto her. He is just, and brings, in Himself, power and salvation. This is the general idea, that which Zion needed, and which shall be accomplished in the last days. The Holy Ghost adds to this, the personal character of the Lord, the spirit in which He presented Himself to Israel, lowly and riding upon an ass. We all know the fulfillment of this at His first coming.

The Messiah Himself having been thus presented, the definitive effect of His presence is announced in that which follows, as the continuation of ver. 8, remembering who has been introduced. He will put an end to war in Israel, will establish peace among the nations, and His dominion shall be unto the ends of the earth; the land of Israel being the center of His power. The Lord having delivered the people—that is, the believing remnant, who shall become the nation-by the blood of the covenant, will restore them double for all their affliction, and use them to establish His power over the isles of the Gentiles. The might of the Lord should accompany and save them, as the flock of His people. He would pour out blessing upon the land, at the prayer of the remnant of His people, who had been wandering in a flock without a shepherd, and had sought help in vain

from their idols. But the Lord had now visited His flock, the house of Judah, and out of them strength should go forth. Judah should be as His goodly horse in the battle. He would strengthen Judah and save Ephraim. The Lord would gather them in such numbers that there would be no place for them. He would dry up the sea and the river to make a way for them, and the pride of their enemies should be brought down. They should be strong in the Lord their God, and walk up and down in His name.

To the end of chap. 10, it is the general proclamation of the blessing that should crown Judah and Ephraim, when by the favor of Jehovah, they were restored to their land.

Chapter 11 In connection with the judgments that should attend it, the Spirit enters into more detail with respect to the rejection of the Messiah; and the particular circumstances of the last days, in consequence of this rejection. It is the history of Israel, in connection with Christ.

I think that the beginning of chap. 11 speaks of the invasion of Israel by the Gentiles. The three first verses give a picture of the general condition of the land. In ver. 4, the Lord takes up the case of his devastated flock. Their Gentile possessors only made a spoil of them. Their own shepherds pitied them not. The Lord, while giving up the nation to the fruit of their iniquity, was moved with compassion for the poor of the flock, and cares for the oppressed. It is the life of Christ in Israel.

The two staves represent His authority, as uniting all the nations under him, and binding Judah and Israel together. The double effect of the presence of Christ. But the shepherds of Israel are cut off, and Christ-grieved with the wicked and corrupt people, Himself abhorred by them-leaves them to themselves, and to the consequences of their behavior. As the result of this, He renounces, for that time, the inheritance of the nations, since it is in Israel that He is to take possession of it. But the poor of the flock have recognized in His ways the fulfillment of the word of prophecy; they have not waited for the manifestation of the Messiah's public glory in Israel, but have attached themselves to Him personally, in consequence of the proofs He gave of His mission from God. It appears to me that this comprises the apostolic work in Israel, as well as the life of Christ. The prophecy only speaks of the fact itself. Verses 12 and 13 relate the price at which the nation estimated their King and their Savior. The fulfillment of this is known to all. The profit here performs the thing prophetically, marking that so it was to be, according to the counsels of God. We see also that Christ appears here as the Lord Himself. The connection between vers. 6 and 9, brings out the same truth. The thoughts of the Lord with respect to that which He will do, find their accomplishment in the person of Jesus. The union between Judah and Israel, of which Christ should be the bond, is also deferred. In vers. 15, 16, 17, the prophet is seen assuming the features of the Antichrist, to represent him in type (as previously, the actions of Judas), in order to announce that foolish shepherd, who should be raised up in judgment from God, and who should himself suffer the judgment he deserved. Christ came in the name of the Father-He was not received. Another should come in his own name, and him the people would receive.

The introduction of Antichrist, a shepherd in Israel, brings in also the events that crowd around Jerusalem in the last days. All the nations should be gathered round Jerusalem, but only to find it a burthensome stone that should crush them. God would judge the power of man, but would raise up His people in sovereign grace. He would destroy the nations that had come up against Jerusalem. The deliverance of the people by the power of the Lord comes first. This is sovereign grace to the chief of sinners, the feeble but beloved Judah, who had added to all her rebellion

against God, the despisal and rejection of her King and Savior.

The grace of God takes the lead, over all the resources of man. The audacity of the enemies of God's people, stirs up His affection which never diminishes; and thus, by compelling God to act, this very audacity becomes the means of proving the faithfulness of his love. Judah, guilty yet beloved Judah, is delivered,-that is to say, the remnant, to whom the affliction of Israel had been a burden; but the question of her conduct towards her God still remained. Nevertheless, the grace shown in her deliverance had wrought upon her heart. The law was written in it. To be loved by a God against whom one has so deeply revolted, melts the heart. Grace then goes farther, and presents to the people the Messiah whom they had pierced. It is now no longer merely the cry of distress, that has no refuge but the Lord. Israel, more strictly Judah, no longer a prey to the terrible anxiety which her distress occasioned, is entirely occupied with her sin, felt in the presence of a crucified Savior. It is no longer a common grief, that of a nation crushed and trodden down in its most cherished sentiments. It is now, hearts melted by the sense of what they have been, towards One who had given Himself up for them. Each family, isolated by its personal convictions, confesses apart the depths of its sin; while no fear of judgment or punishment comes in, to impair the character and the truth of their sorrow. Their souls are restored according to the efficacy of the work of Christ. It is this which definitively brings the people into relationship with God. We have seen the same moral order in the typical history of David; the Ark on Mount Zion; and then the threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite.

In chap. 13 all is cleansed; the fountain is open to the house of David, whose sin had ruined the people, without abrogating the rights, or weakening the grace of God; and also to the people of Jerusalem, who were more than partners in the sins of their rulers. Here, it is practical cleansing, with water. Faith in Him whom. they had pierced, was already in their hearts. The idols and the false prophets, the two chief sources of the misery of the Jews, should be entirely taken away. No one, not even the very parents of the guilty, would tolerate these abominations and deceits. Christ is the pattern, and all shall be judged of by it. Everything takes its moral character according to the relationship of the redeemed with Him. This gives occasion to a full historical development of that which has happened unto Him..How He has been pierced, and its consequences, are detailed with respect to Jerusalem, Israel, and the world.

In ver. 5, read,-" I am no prophet, but a husbandman; for man [Adam] has acquired me as a slave from my youth." That is to say, Christ takes the humble position of one subject to the circumstances into which Adam was brought by sin; i.e., with respect to his position as a man living in this world. Ver. 6 directs our attention to that which befell Him among the Jews, where He was wounded and treated as a malefactor. The true character of His person and of his sufferings is then revealed in ver. 7. It is the sword of the Lord, which awakes against the Man who is His companion, His equal. This verse requires no comment. It is most interesting to see that when Christ is looked at in His humiliation as man, He

is treated by the Spirit as the equal of the Lord in His rights; and when (Psa. 45:7), He is seen upon His throne of divine glory, and addressed as God, those that are His, are acknowledged as His companions in glory, sharing His position.

The result-for this event is here considered in connection with the history of Israel-is the scattering of the sheep who had been gathered around the true Shepherd. Nevertheless God stretches out

His hand over the little ones. The result for Judah, when the current of their history shall be resumed in the last days, is that two-thirds shall be cut off in all the land (compare Ezek. 20:34-38, with respect to Israel); and the third that is left, shall pass through the fire, shall call upon the name of the Lord, and shall be heard. The Lord will abolish the name of Lo-ammi, not my people, by saying, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God. This is the definitive result of His dealings with His people; and here especially with Judah, of whom he had said Lo-ammi, and the remnant of whom He acknowledges as His people.

Chapter 14 announces the final events that shall bring in this result; as chap. xiii. had especially detailed that which regarded Christ. The two subjects of chap. xii. are thus resumed in detail.

We may remark here, that the effect of the staff being broken which united Judah and Israel is here realized. The prophet speaks only of Judah, of the people who in the land were guilty of rejecting the Messiah; and who will suffer the consequences of so doing in the land during the last days, the mass of them at that time joining themselves to Anti-Christ. Jerusalem, as we have said, forms the center of the prophecy. No prophet could perish outside her borders. What a terrible thing to be outwardly near God when one is not so inwardly! and when the heart invests itself with the name of God, as with a cloak of pride; as a buckler, so that his arrows no longer reach the conscience.

Nevertheless, in spite of her pride and her confederacy with evil, Jerusalem shall be taken in the last days. We have seen, when studying the other prophets, that this will be the case; and then, afterward when again besieged, the Lord will intervene for the destruction of these enemies. This is very distinctly announced here. The nations shall be assembled by the Lord; the city shall be taken and the houses rifled, and half the people led captive. The Lord will then come forth against those nations, as we read in chap. 12. (comp. Isa. 66 and Mic. 4) He comes in the person of Christ to the Mount of Olives, whence He ascended. The Mount of Olives cleaves in the midst, forming a great valley, spreading terror among the people who are there. But if the Lord identifies Himself, so to speak, with the meek and lowly Jesus formerly on the earth, in order that the identity of the Savior and the Lord. should be clearly acknowledged, it is not the less true that He comes from heaven in all His glory, as He Himself predicted, as well as the prophets, beginning with Enoch. The heavenly saints will accompany Him in His public manifestation to the eyes of an astonished world. Marvelous glory for those that are His, with whom He will manifest Himself before all the wicked! For here it is the Lord's public coming to the earth, as the righteous Judge, making war upon all that rebel against Him.

I do not see that this last mentioned event follows that which precedes it in the chapter... There is a division in the middle of verse 5. "The Lord thy God shall come," begins a fresh subject, introduces a grand distinct event, which affects the whole earth in a manner that characterizes its future existence; The presence of the Lord upon the Mount of Olives, renews, we may say, His visible relationship with Judah. This part of the subject closes with the words " Uzziah, king of Judah." That which follows is intimately connected with the return of Christ to the Jews, in the very spot from which He left this earth; but it looks at it from a higher point of view, and takes up the subject of the relationship of Jehovah with the whole earth, when He comes from heaven with the saints. This is another part of the subject, and a very important one.

The meaning of the rather difficult passage that follows, has, I think, been given, as to its general sense, by Martin, in his French translation. It shall not be a day of mingled light and darkness, but a day appointed by the Lord, a day characterized by His intervention and His mighty presence, and that could not be characterized by the ordinary vicissitudes of night and day; but, at the moment when the total darkness of night might be expected, there should be light. Living water should flow from Jerusalem towards the east and towards the west, into the Dead Sea and into the Great Sea. The heat of summer should not dry up their source.

The Lord shall be God over all the earth, there shall be but one Lord, and His name one. It shall be truly one universal religion, the dominion of the one Lord, the God of the Jews, over all the earth. The land round Jerusalem shall be entirely peopled, and Jerusalem lifted up and securely inhabited in her place. There shall be no more any destruction of the city which the Lord has chosen. A deadly plague shall smite all those that have fought against her. They shall mutually destroy each other. Judah shall also fight against them, and their riches shall be her prey. The remnant that are spared among the nations, shall come up to Jerusalem, to the feast in which the entrance of God's people into their rest is celebrated; and all shall be holiness; everything in Jerusalem shall be consecrated to the Lord.

## Zephaniah

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Zephaniah sets before us the judgment of the Spirit of God, with respect to the condition of the testimony rendered to the name of God in this world, at a moment when there was some outward restoration by means of a king who feared God.

God has granted this favor more than once to His people, even as He has endured with long-suffering their rebellion and revolt; and in both cases He would have us see the true moral condition of that which bore His name-the judgment which a spiritual heart would form, which His Spirit formed, with respect to that condition. A judgment which should be authorized by that which God would execute upon His people and upon the Gentiles, when long-suffering should no longer be of any avail.

These constitute the two principal divisions of the prophecy. The announcement of God's purposes with respect to the judgment that He would execute, and the display of that condition which led to the judgment. This is always accompanied by the revelation of His counsels in grace, and of the coming of the Messiah, in order to encourage and sustain the faith of the believing remnant of His people.

Israel having been appointed the witness for God, when the nations had given themselves up to iniquity and idolatry, the general judgment of the world could be delayed, so long as that testimony being maintained, the true character of God was presented: for God is slow to anger. Accordingly, He raised up prophets, beginning with Samuel, to remedy the wanderings and unfaithfulness of His people, when they themselves had failed. So long as this extraordinary testimony of grace; and the warnings and chastenings that accompanied it, served to maintain some glimmerings of truth and righteousness on the earth, the Lord withheld His hand, ready to destroy that which dishonored God and oppressed man. We have seen elsewhere, in the transfer of sovereignty to the empire of the Gentiles, the introduction of a new system.' as we find in the New Testament the establishment of the church. I do not dwell upon it here. As to the government of the world, in view of the testimony rendered to the name of the Lord; when Israel-who maintained this testimony amid the nations that were apostate and rebellious against God-had so failed that there was no more remedy, then those nations also had to undergo the judgment they had long deserved. They will bring this judgment upon themselves by filling up the measure of their iniquity and rebellion against God, and by manifesting hatred to God's people in the joy with which they came forward to accomplish the chastisements which that people had deserved. For God is long-suffering unto them also. He has even sent the gospel -whether that of full grace, which we enjoy, or the announcement of His coming judgments-in order that all who have ears to hear, may escape these judgments. But, in principle, the definitive failure of Israel's testimony left the nations exposed to the judgment their sinful state deserved: this judgment having been suspended, because a true testimony was rendered to God. This is the reason why we have constantly found in the prophets the, definitive judgment of the nations connected with the judgment of Israel. The establishment of the Gentile empire, represented by the image, and the beasts-the introduction of Christianity-the

apostasy which broke out in its bosom-bring in other objects of the judgment of God, but do not alter the judgment to be executed upon the nations apart from these objects.

The judgment of the apostasy, and of the Gentile empire, comes immediately from heaven, whence flowed the authority of that empire, and the blessing of those who are become apostate, and against which they are in rebellion. The judgment of the nations has Zion for its starting point. Zion, now under the judgment, but then delivered through the judgment executed upon the beast that oppressed her (see Psa. 110). The events spoken of in Daniel, the New Testament prophecies, and, in part, Zechariah, are omitted by those of the prophets who have for their subject the proper relations of the earthly people with God in Zion; and the judgment of Jerusalem and the Jews is connected in their prophecies with that of the nations-the judgment of the latter being involved in that of the people, who no longer rendered any testimony to the Lord, but caused His name to be blasphemed. This judgment commenced, in regard to the Jews, with Nebuchadnezzar himself. Afterward, on the decline of his empire at the end of the age, the nations, resuming their strength, use it against Israel, then connected with and subject to the apostate empire. A yet more terrible judgment. Thus all the nations will be gathered against Jerusalem, and, filling up both the judgment of the people and their own iniquity, will occasion the intervention of the God of mercy in favor of His people, according to His promises and purposes of grace. The deliverance of Israel being accomplished in the judgment executed upon those who come up against them, and who, in coming against them, are against the Lord and His Christ also. This will be the judgment that shall go forth from Zion, while the beast shall have been destroyed by Him who came forth out of heaven.

The dates attached to the books of the prophets are connected with the different characters of this series of events. Isaiah and Micah, as well as Hosea and Amos (although the two latter less directly), are occupied. with the revelation of the Son of David, the Deliverer and Defender of His people in Jerusalem. Hezekiah, raised up after the miserable reign of Ahaz' gave occasion for these revelations, which taught the faithful (while unveiling the iniquity and the real condition of the people), that they must look forward, and rest only in God's thoughts, who had raised up this pious king for the temporary restoration of His people, and who would grant them a complete and eternal deliverance by the true Emanuel. Isaiah, in the first three, as well as in the last chapter of his prophecy, dwells on the connection, of which we have spoken, between the judgment of Israel and that of the nations.

Josiah did not present in the same manner the coming Redeemer. Spared the sight of the ruin of Jerusalem on account of his piety, he falls himself by the hand of strangers. The glory and peace, the hope of Jerusalem for the time being, disappear with him, and its judgment succeeds.

Zephaniah prophesied under his reign. The prophet takes no notice of the temporary piety of the people, who (see Jer. 3), at heart were not changed. He takes the general ground of Israel's condition and consequent judgment, in connection with its effect on the nations. We have seen that Nebuchadnezzar is the first who executes this judgment; although both the judgment, and the prophecy that speaks of it, go much farther.

The prophet begins by declaring that the earth should be reduced to complete desolation. Afterward, that Judah, Jerusalem, their false gods and their priests, should be smitten by the hand of the Lord. The idolaters, those who mingled the name of the Lord with that of other gods, those

who had turned back from the Lord, those who had not sought him, each one is called to hold his peace at the presence of the Lord God; for the day of the Lord was at hand. He had prepared his sacrifice, he had invited his guests; and in the day of His sacrifice, the king, the princes, and the king's children, should be visited by His hand. Violence and deceit should receive their just reward.

The day of the Lord should cause a cry to be heard from the gates of Jerusalem. He would search Jerusalem as with candles, and make manifest the folly of those who denied His intervention either for good or for evil. The prophet then declares, in general but most forcible terms, the terrors of that day of the Lord. The whole land should be devoured by the fire of His jealousy. We have here the whole land-Jerusalem and Judah-judged in the great day of God. This division of the prophecy ends here.

Chapter 2 while revealing the character of the nation, addresses itself to her, in order that all those at least who fear the Lord may be hidden in the day of His anger. They are called to gather themselves together, and to seek the Lord, before the decree of judgment should have brought forth, and His fierce anger should overtake them. Thus the remnant are distinguished; the meek who have wrought righteousness are called on to seek meekness and righteousness, in order that they may be hidden, although the testimony is addressed to the whole nation. For, after all, God remembered the counsels of His grace. His dealings in this respect, are developed in a remarkable manner in the rest of the prophecy. The judgment should be upon the whole territory of Israel, occupied in many parts by strangers hostile to the people.

The effect of the consequent desolation should be (for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance), to leave the whole land free for the possession of Israel. For the Lord would visit them, and would bring again His captives; and the remnant of His people should possess it. The Lord would judge and famish all the gods of the earth; and all men should worship Him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the nations.

Ethiopia, Nineveh, all the mighty ones of the nations, should fall and be made desolate.

This is the judgment of the nations, of which we have spoken, of which. Nebuchadnezzar was the first instrument, but which is here introduced in view of the last days, when the power established by God shall be in its last rebellion against Him.

Amid this judgment of the nations, Jerusalem holds the chief place. In chap. 3, the Spirit of God, while laying open the iniquity which occasioned it, turns towards the remnant, and exhorts them to wait upon the Lord, since all hope was gone. He enlightens them with respect to His dealings, and reveals to them in what manner these will result in blessing to Israel.

God had been in the midst of the holy city, now polluted, but she would not draw near to Him nor obey Him. Her princes were the violent of the earth, her judges were rapacious, her prophets vain and treacherous, her priests polluted the sanctuary. The Lord was there, to show them their sins and His judgment; but the wicked were shameless in their iniquity. Doubtless the Lord had cut off the nations and made them desolate; but surely Israel, however chastised, would receive instruction-the Lord would not be compelled to cut them off. But they had diligently corrupted all their doings. Because they would not hearken to the Lord, who had shown them such loving-kindness, who had been so near unto them, Israel, unnamed, sinks to the level of the nations, who are the objects of the just judgment of God, and the remnant is called (ver. 8) to wait

upon the Lord alone, who is about to execute this judgment, to await the moment (since nothing touched the hardened hearts of the people) when the Lord should rise up to the prey. Until that moment nothing could be done. Israel would not hearken. Judgment did not belong to the remnant. And this judgment alone could put an end to their distress. God would assemble all the nations to pour His fierce anger upon them: the solemn and universal testimony of the prophets. But then would He turn to them a pure language, that they should call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent. He would also gather together all the dispersed of Israel from the most distant lands. Jerusalem should no longer remember her shame; her transgressions should be entirely blotted out. The proud should be taken away from among her; a humble and despised people should be in the midst of her, whose refuge should be the Lord alone; the little remnant should do no iniquity, neither should they speak

lies. They should feed and lie down in, safety; none should make them afraid. Ver. 14-17 contain a song of praise, which the Spirit indites and teaches to Zion, whom He calls on to sing it with thanksgivings to the Lord-who has put away her condemnation forever-who is in the midst of her-who rejoices in His love towards her. All those who had grieved for the reproach of Zion, and who had sighed for her solemn assemblies, should be gathered together; her enemies should be destroyed, and her children should have praise and fame in every place where they had been despised and reproached. Israel should be a subject of praise among all the nations of the earth.

It will be observed that the prophecy of Zephaniah relates to the nations, and not to the Gentile empire, of which it says nothing at all. And that the relations of Israel, of which it speaks, are with the Lord; their conduct towards the Messiah is not in view. It is Israel, Jerusalem, and the Lord. Christ is only seen in this character. The special ways of God in the Gentile empire, in the mission of His Son, and in the state of the Jews, consequent upon His rejection, are quite left out, in order to dwell only on the judgment of Israel on account of her relationship with the Lord her God. Christ appears only in a very general manner, and as the Lord (chap. 3:16).

The judgment of all the nations and its moral effect; the absolute necessity of this judgment, since Israel, among whom God dwelt, would not hearken, are most plainly declared; and their object and their practical effect are pointed out with more precision than perhaps in any other prophecy.

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