

**"The Ground  
is Thirsty"  
and  
Other Works**

**E.W. Bullinger**

The content of this work is in the Public Domain.

The Foreword & About the Author © 2013 by Eternally Blessed. All rights reserved.

While limited grammatical editing has been done to enhance contemporary readability, care has been taken to preserve the integrity of Bullinger's original work.

# Table of contents

Foreword

A New Creation

A Refreshing Study on the Resurrection

Abraham Believed God

By Me Kings Reign

Christ in the Separate Books of the Word

Crucified with Christ

Following Hard

Jehoshaphat: A Lesson for our Times

Praise for Divine Goodness

Right Division

Stablished — Strengthened — Settled

The Christian's Greatest Need

The Christian's Standing, Object, and Hope

The Divine Names and Titles:

    No. 13 "The Son of Man"

The Ground is Thirsty

Questions and Answers — August, 1897

The Marriage of the King's Son

The Names of Jesus

The New Gospel

The Pounds

The Resurrection of the Body

The Talents

They Sang His Praise

    They Soon Forgat His Works

Two Words for "Knowledge"

About the Author

# Foreword

The Word of God may, in one respect, be compared to the earth. All things necessary to life and sustenance may be obtained by scratching the surface of the earth: but there are treasures of beauty and wealth to be obtained by digging deeper into it. So it is with the Bible. “All things necessary to life and godliness” lie upon its surface for the humblest saint; but, beneath that surface are “great spoils” which are found only by those who seek after them as for “hid treasure.”

These words, written November, 1899 by E. W. Bullinger in his unparalleled research volume, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, succinctly describe the priceless rewards discovered by the workman of God’s Word. Over a century later, seekers of truth continue to enjoy the great spoils extracted by one of history’s greatest workmen of the Word. The legacy of Ethelbert William Bullinger’s life of Biblical scholarship has left vast resources for the continued exploration of Godly treasures for generations to come. Yet, while recognized and referenced by many scholars, the full measure of Bullinger’s contribution to Christianity remains unknown or undervalued by most.

Born in Canterbury, Kent, England in 1837, E. W. Bullinger, descendent of noted Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger, lived through an era that witnessed a burgeoning age of skepticism. The battle between so-called science and religion exploded onto the landscape of learning with the publication of Charles Darwin’s, *On the Origin of Species*. The impact of this iconoclastic belief alongside other growing unrest and controversies within the church at large introduced an atmosphere of uncertainty concerning the very foundation of Christian beliefs. A repudiation of the accuracy, authority, and even Divine inspiration of the Holy Bible spread over Christendom. Those attitudes, embodied in the field of “higher criticism” ascended to a position of dominance in universities and seminaries throughout the world.

This apostasy prevailed in 1860 as E. W. Bullinger entered his formal theological training. Nevertheless, King’s College in London, from which he received an associate’s degree the following year, provided Bullinger with a solid foundation for scriptural study and mastery of the primary Biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek. As he labored as a curate in his early parishes, Bullinger employed his exemplary skills in scriptural study to a monumental undertaking. After nine years of exhaustive research, Bullinger published his first major work, *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*. This remarkable addition to the field of Biblical research received widespread praise and earned Bullinger the highest distinction for his scholarship. In recognition of this contribution, on August 31, 1881, the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon the Rev. Mr. Ethelbert William Bullinger by order of the Archbishop of Canterbury and subsequently, officially recognized by Queen Victoria. The auspicious occasion of this invaluable publication also initiated the accomplishment of an astounding deluge of research works. As Juanita S. Carey notes in her biography of Bullinger:

The publication of the *Lexicon and Concordance*, a landmark achievement in its own right, also marked the commencement of the work for which Bullinger would be best remembered in years to come. Thereafter, and with increasing frequency, he wrote

small books and large books—books, pamphlets, poetry, and hymns—until his death thirty-six years later. The underlying principle of his later works was the same as that stated in the preface of the *Lexicon and Concordance*: to open the Bible so that all could study it for themselves.

A total of 171 published works have been verifiably attributed to Dr. Bullinger, including twenty books and twenty-seven pamphlets. His major works: *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*; *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; and *The Companion Bible* are exhaustive reference works indispensably utilized in Biblical research. The widely acclaimed *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* was originally introduced as ten separate parts in Bullinger's monthly research journal, *Things to Come*; and in its entirety, it consists of over 1,000 pages. The complete volume published in the year of 1899 remains to this day a matchless research work identifying and classifying over 200 separate figures of speech used in the Bible. Many of Bullinger's other books are also unique in their field, such as *The Witness of the Stars* and *Numbers in Scripture*.

While E. W. Bullinger's work has been celebrated and acclaimed by many; like all whose enlightenment dares to challenge the dogma of tradition, the unique findings of his research have led others to criticize, and in some cases even revile him. Bullinger was never particularly surprised by the criticism of some. He understood the stagnancy of men's minds, and how tightly they held on to their traditions. As he wrote in his introduction to *How to Enjoy the Bible*:

The majority of mankind think that they think; they acquiesce, and suppose that they argue; they flatter themselves that they are holding their own, when they have actually grown up to manhood, with scarcely a conviction that they can call their own. So it always was, and so it will ever be. The Divine things of the Word are no exception but rather an instance. The more difficult the subject, and the more serious the consequence of error, the more averse the majority are toward what is called "unsettling men's minds"; as if truth could be held on any other tenure than the knight's fee of holding its own against all comers.... But our object is to "Open the Book"; to let it speak; to hear its voice; to study it from within itself; and have regard to other objects and subjects, only from what it teaches about them.... Like Ezra of old, our desire is to "OPEN THE BOOK" and let it speak for itself, with the full conviction that if this can be done it can speak more loudly, and more effectively for itself, that any man can speak on its behalf.

It was not for the critic or the skeptic that Bullinger wrote; it was not the praise or approbation of men that was the aim of his research. As the Scripture found on his tombstone attests to, his purpose was to: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." (II Timothy 2:15). For over forty years, until his death on June 6, 1913, Dr. Bullinger faithfully carried out that command. Nearly 100 years later, his books continue to illuminate the Scriptures, and delight and aid the readers.

The legacy of Bullinger's life extends beyond his published works, though. Throughout his life, E. W. Bullinger did not seek to simply inform students of certain truths; nor did he desire that anyone would accept and believe a point simply because he taught it. Rather, he instructed students in the method of Biblical interpretation that would enable them also to let the Bible speak for itself; and in so doing, they too were equipped to stand approved before God as workmen of His Word. As one who builds a bridge for

the benefit of those who shall come after him, E. W. Bullinger looked to the day when others might surpass the reaches of his own journey.

None are more cognizant of imperfection and failure than ourselves; and, after all we have done, there is still much left for others to do. We do not exhaust the book; and may, after all, have only laid out a road on which others may follow with far greater success. We claim only one thing — an earnest desire to believe God; and to receive what He has said, regardless alike of the praise a man or the fear of man; and quite apart from all traditional beliefs or interpretations.

—E. W. Bullinger

It may surprise some to learn that as highly regarded and widely studied as E. W. Bullinger is today, there was a time when his greatest contributions to Christendom were forgotten by most. By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, he was not remembered for his great contribution to the field of Biblical research, but ironically, he was instead most known for his music—something few today know about him. In the Foreword to Bullinger's book, *Word Studies on the Holy Spirit*, Warren W. Wiersbe wrote the following:

He died in London on June 6, 1913. Most people remember him only for his beautiful tune for Frances Ridley Havergal's hymn, "I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus." Serious students of the Bible remember him as one who dared to search into God's truth and follow it wherever it led him. We may not agree with all that Dr. Bullinger has written, but we must confess that he stimulates us to give our very best to the study of the Word of God.

—September 1979

Many such serious students in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were introduced to E. W. Bullinger by another great workman of God's Word, Victor Paul Wierwille.

Dr. Bullinger revealed remarkable Biblical truths through his utilization of certain keys or principles of Biblical research. He also widely promoted that same method of learning. Bullinger believed that just as different scientists would independently arrive at the identical result if they employed the same methodology, any two Biblical scholars would arrive at the same conclusion regarding a passage of Scripture if they employed the same principles of Biblical research.

This was demonstrated in the life of Dr. Victor Paul Wierwille. Having devoted his life to the study of God's Word, Wierwille reached many of the same conclusions Bullinger had arrived at nearly a century earlier, although initially unfamiliar with Bullinger's work. In fact, it was only as he began to share his findings in his classes that one enthusiastic student, Dr. E. E. Higgins, introduced Wierwille to Bullinger's writings. V. P. Wierwille thrilled at such books as *Figures of Speech*; *The Companion Bible*; and *How to Enjoy the Bible*, and he subsequently incorporated much of the material into his classes.

As a result of V. P. Wierwille's promotion of Bullinger's books, tens of thousands of his students were introduced to his work, which greatly contributed to a renewed interest in E. W. Bullinger in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, the biographical information known and often quoted about Ethelbert William Bullinger is drawn from the well researched biography written by Juanita S. Carey, herself a student of Dr. Wierwille.

While Bullinger's noted works were frequent resources utilized and promoted by Dr. Wierwille, perhaps the greatest legacy of E. W. Bullinger may be illustrated in another aspect of Wierwille's ministry. Against the skepticism of his day, against the widespread

abandonment of the authority of the Scriptures, E. W. Bullinger championed the Divine inspiration of the Bible. He heralded the call to Christians far and wide to return to that touchstone for truth, and he proved through the internal evidence of the Scriptures the inerrant accuracy of God's Word.

In like manner, Dr. V. P. Wierwille through his own noted works, such as *Are the Dead Alive Now?*; *Jesus Christ Our Promised Seed*; and *Jesus Christ Our Passover* exhibited the "great spoils" awaiting those who were willing to seek for hid treasures. Moreover, Wierwille also set before people the great keys to the Word of God's interpretation, so that they also could thrill to God's most wondrous work and join the ranks of men and women approved before God.

As noted earlier, Dr. Bullinger was a prolific writer whose extensive contribution to the field of Biblical research covered a wide array of important topics. While his major reference works continue to be widely studied, however, most people are unfamiliar with the bulk of his publications. In fact, a large number of Bullinger's published writings are no longer in print. This volume is a collection of twenty-four of his little known, shorter Biblical studies. Although brief in length, each of these expositions provide great illumination and inspiration to all those who continue to seek after truth.

# A New Creation

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17).

The Scriptures reveal to us many new things. In Isaiah 42:9, we read: "New things do I declare"; and God goes on to speak of the new song which is to be sung in view of His work for restored Israel. We read in Lamentations 3:22,23, "The Lord's mercies are new every morning." We read in Ezekiel 36:26, of "a new heart and a new spirit."

In the text before us we read of the new creature. We read in Ephesians 2:15, of "the one new man"; in Revelation 21 and 22, of "the new heavens and the new earth," also of "the new Jerusalem," and of a glorious time when it will be said, "Behold, I make all things new." Perhaps the most important of all these wondrous things is that which is spoken of in our text, because without this new creation, none of the other new things can be known or enjoyed. Having this, we have all the others.

## The contrasts, old and new

Let us consider, first of all, the contrasts — Old and New. The Second Epistle to the Corinthians seems to be an Epistle of contrasts; it abounds in them from beginning to end. Led by the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul contrasts, in chapter 1:5, the sufferings which abound in the child of God with the consolations which abound in Christ. At the close of chapter 2, verse 16, we meet with a very solemn contrast, which is seen by the spiritual eye throughout the whole of God's Word. True, the carnal mind objects to, indeed hates, such contrasts between the living and the dead, between the regenerate and the unregenerate; but the Holy Spirit invariably marks these contrasts, and those who are taught by Him see them and love them (see verse 14). Note again, in verse 15, another contrast "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish." It is we, not our testimony. The burden of the Word of the Lord showed the Apostle his insufficiency, while at the same time he knew that his sufficiency was of God.

The third chapter is full of contrasts; in verse 1 we have man's commendation and God's commendation; in verse 2 and 3, man's writing and the Spirit's writing; in verse 5, man's insufficiency and God's sufficiency; in verse 6 the letter and the spirit; in verses 7-9, condemnation and righteousness. The fourth chapter contains many wonderful contrasts and paradoxes; in verse 8, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair." One may say, "Ah! that is not I!"; but look at the margin, "But not altogether without help." Can we not say that? Verse 9: "Cast down, but not destroyed." We do fall, but not from grace, being upheld by "a Loving Omnipotent Hand." At the end of the chapter again we see wonderful contrasts; in verse 16, our outward man perishing, but our inward man renewed day by day; in verse 17 our present light affliction, our future weight of glory; in verse 18, temporal things and eternal things: things seen and things unseen.

Each of these leads us to the contemplation of the words of our text. In considering this vast and important subject, note:



## **1. The Connection**

"Therefore" (Verse 17). This is the conclusion of the Spirit's argument, or of the truths He had declared for the instruction, the comfort, and the edification of the saints at Corinth, and through them to the Church of God in all succeeding generations. His conclusion is that all old things, even those of Divine appointment, having served their purpose and waxen old, must pass away for ever, as of no value whatever in comparison with the eternal work of the new creation in Christ Jesus. Note next:

## **2. The Character of those spoken of**

"If any man be in Christ." Observe, [in the King James Version] there are words in italics which may be differently supplied thus: "If any man in Christ be made a new creature," or a new creation; the R.V. margin gives: "there is a new creation." Now creation is a Divine work, and therefore this excludes all means, all modes, all distinctions. Truth by the Holy Ghost is a great leveller. Turn to Galatians 3:28 and 6:15. The new creation does not consist in an acknowledgement of a form of sound words, or delight in a clear creed, or in prizing the outward so-called means of grace. It is ten thousand times more than these. The cross of Christ is God's monument erected over the grave of all carnal ordinances, all sensuous ceremonies, all fleshly sacrifices, all earthly types, all fleeting shadows. The cross of Christ is God's monument over the grave where He has buried all human distinctions, all human modes, all human means in matters pertaining to His creation work.

IN CHRIST. This is a living union by the Spirit of God. It is not a mere profession of religion; it is not in self-condemnation but in Christ, justified and accepted (Ephesians 1:6). It is not in Adam dead, but in Christ alive (I Corinthians 15:22). In Christ by sovereign purpose; in Christ by sacred purchase; in Christ by spiritual power. Next look at:

## **3. The Condition**

"A New Creation." What is it to create? Not to change, not to renovate, not to reform, not to improve, not the old nature adorned and beautified, not the flesh with its corruptions and lusts trimmed and trained; but it is the new and Divine nature imparted, with all its spiritual blessings and holy privileges. It is not the Old Adam made clean or religious, clothed and adorned. No! It is a something altogether NEW. Therefore, in Christ Jesus I am a partaker of the Divine nature; I am a partaker of His Resurrection-life, according to the Father's promise: "Eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2).

Life was promised in Christ for His people before the world began; and in due time it is communicated to them through the ministry of the Word. How this is brought about, the poor child of God very often, knows not, and when questioned about it, he can only say, like the blind man in John 9:25: "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Once I was blind and dead to God's Christ, God's covenant, God's salvation; I was dead to all interest in the precious atoning blood, to justifying righteousness, regenerating grace, and restoring mercy, also to that peace, which passeth all understanding. But now, in living union with Christ, I love to dwell on those glorious verities which are found alone in Him and through Him. I love the company of those who delight in the Father's eternal love, the son's redeeming grace, and the Spirit's regenerating mercy.

A new Divine nature (II Peter 1:4) is not a mere influence, is not a mere passing religious feeling induced by ravishing music or pathetic story, but a real existence in living

union with a crucified, risen, exalted, glorified, coming Lord. What a glorious union! One with the person of a glorified Christ! No words can describe it better than John 17:21-23: "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 Thee, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me" (John 17:22,23).

This is a glorious, marvellous, mysterious Oneness, which can never be understood until we stand perfect and complete in the light of His glory. Then we shall know even as we are known, for His Father is our Father; His righteousness is our righteousness; His nature is our nature; His home is our home; His glory is our glory.

#### **4. The Deliverances Enjoyed**

"Old things are passed away." What are these "old things?" (1). Blessed be God, that old thing, SIN, which before I was in Christ manifested its power and maintained its authority over me, is gone — passed away. Do you ask, How did it pass away? I can answer you only in the words of Isaiah 53:6, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all"; and Hebrews 9:26, "Now once in the end of the world hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

(2). That old thing, THE CURSE OF THE LAW, has passed away. How? Read Galatians 3:13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us. for it is written 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.'" In thus becoming a curse for His people, He became "The end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:4). What expressive words! "The end of the law!" What does it mean? Why it means that He went to the end of all the Law's requirements, which He satisfied by the perfect obedience which He rendered to its precepts; that He went to the end of all the Law's penal threatenings which He silenced by the sufferings which He endured. What is the end of a debt? The payment! And Christ took over and paid every debt owed by His people, and thus ended it. Hence every transgression and even sin over which my chastened Spirit has grieved, is passed away!

(3). That old thing, CONDEMNATION. All that was due to me was borne by my sinless Surety, by Him who said, when they sought and found Him: "If ye seek Me, let these go their way" (John 18:8). Hence: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

(4). That old thing, FEAR OF DEATH, is passed away, for "Jesus Christ... hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel" (II Timothy 1:10). Christ hath abolished death, and brought to light, and procured for us, life and immortality; and "When Christ, who is our Life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Colossians 3:4). Yes, old things have passed away. My old notions of salvation by merit; by co-operation — I doing something and Jesus Christ the rest — all such thoughts have passed away! My old, degrading views of Christ have passed away in the light of His Glorious Gospel, and I see Him "altogether lovely," His salvation perfect, His righteousness complete, His intercession all-prevailing, His glorious coming sure. He is the beginner and the finisher of faith, the performer of all things for me in the presence of His Father and mine.

Look now at:

## **5. The Privileges Possessed**

"Behold all things are become new." Yes, the man in Christ is a new man, with a new life in a new world. "All things are become new." He has life in Christ, he has immortality in Christ. He has life instead of death, salvation instead of sin, justification instead of condemnation, acceptance instead of banishment, peace instead of enmity. We have new affections, fixed upon things above; new hopes, entering within the veil; a new song put in our mouth; and a new heart with which to praise Him for setting our feet on the Rock of Ages, for ordering our goings, for holding our hand, for guiding our feet into the way of peace.

May it be ours to know the blessedness and power of these divinely "new things," and to go on our way rejoicing, while waiting for that great proclamation to go forth — "Behold I make all things new," and walking in newness of life, to the praise and glory of God.

## A Refreshing Study on the Resurrection

Scripture shuts us up to the blessed hope of being reunited in resurrection. That is why the death of believers is so often called "sleep"; and dying is called "falling asleep"; because of the assured hope of awakening in resurrection. Its language is, "David fell on sleep" (Acts 13:36), not David's body, or David's soul. "Stephen...fell asleep" (Acts 7:60). "Lazarus sleepeth" (John 11:11), which is explained, when the Lord afterward speaks "plainly," as meaning "Lazarus is dead" (v. 14).

Now, when the Holy Spirit uses one thing to describe or explain another, He does not choose the opposite word or expression. If He speaks of night, He does not use the word light. If He speaks of daylight, He does not use the word night. He does not put "sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet" (Isa. 5:20). He uses adultery to illustrate Idolatry; He does not use virtue. And so, if He uses the word "sleep" of death, it is because sleep illustrates to us what the condition of death is like. If Tradition be the truth, He ought to have used the word awake, or wakefulness. But the Lord first uses a Figure, and says "Lazarus sleepeth"; and afterwards, when He speaks "plainly" He says "Lazarus is dead." Why? Because sleep expresses and describes the condition of the "unclothed" state. In normal sleep, there is no consciousness. For the Lord, therefore, to have used this word "sleep" to represent the very opposite condition of conscious wakefulness, would have been indeed to mislead us. But all His words are perfect; and are used for the purpose of teaching us, and not for leading us astray.

So effectually has Satan's lie, "thou shalt not surely die," succeeded and accomplished its purpose that, though the Lord Jesus said "I will come again and receive you unto Myself," Christendom says, with one voice, "No! Lord. Thou needest not come for me: I will die and come to Thee." Thus the blessed hope of resurrection and the coming of the Lord have been well nigh blotted out from the belief of the Churches; and the promise of the Lord been made of none effect by the ravages of Tradition.

In Phil. 2:27, we read that Epaphraditus "was sick nigh unto death; but God had mercy on him"...So that it was mercy to preserve Epaphraditus from death. This could hardly be called "mercy" if death were the "gate of glory," according to popular tradition.

In 2 Cor. 1:10-11, it was deliverance of no ordinary kind when Paul himself was "delivered from so great a death" which called for corresponding greatness of thanksgiving for God's answer to their prayers on his behalf. Moreover, he trusted that God would still deliver him. It is clear from 2 Cor. 5:4 that Paul did not wish for death; for he distinctly says "not for that he would be unclothed, but clothed upon (i.e. in resurrection and "change") that mortality might be swallowed up of LIFE"; not of death. This is what he was so "earnestly desiring" (v.2).

Hezekiah also had reason to praise God for delivering him from "the king of terrors." It was "mercy" shown to Epaphraditus; it was "a gift" to Paul; it was "love" to Hezekiah. He says (Isa. 38:17-19): "For the grave (Heb. *sheol*) cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day."

On the other hand the death of Moses was permitted, for it was his punishment; therefore, there was no deliverance for him though he sought it (Deut. 1:37; 3:23, 27; 4:21, 22; 31:2). Surely it could have been no punishment if death is not death; but, as is universally held, the gate of paradise!

In 1 Thes. 4:15, we read: "This we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain shall not precede them which are asleep."

To agree with Tradition this ought to have been written, "shall not precede them which are already with the Lord." But this would have made nonsense; and there is nothing of that in the Word of God.

While we may draw our own inferences from what the Scriptures state, we shall all agree that it is highly important that we should clothe these views in Scriptural terms, and that we should ask and answer how far it is that these popular sayings have practically, at any rate until recent years, blotted out the hope of resurrection, the hope of the Lord's coming again to fulfill His promise, to receive us to Himself. You remember how the apostle speaks to some in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, who say that there is "no resurrection of the dead"; and in writing to Timothy he refers to Hymenaeus & Philetus, who had led some away from the faith by saying that "the resurrection is past already."

The greatest comfort which the greatest Comforter that the world ever knew had to give to a sister who had been bereaved of a beloved brother was, "Thy brother shall rise again." All hope is bound up with this great subject: and, if our Theology has no place in it for this great hope, then the sooner we change it the better; for remember that this subject is one of revelation.

We are expressly enjoined by the Lord Himself: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice" (John 5:28). These are the Lord's own words, and they tell us where His Voice will be heard; and, that is not in heaven, not in Paradise, or in any so-called "intermediate state," but in "the GRAVES." With this agrees Dan. 12:2, which tells us that those who "awake" in resurrection will be those "that sleep in the dust of the earth"; from which man was "taken" (Gen. 2:7; 3:23), and to which he must return (Gen. 3:19; Eccl. 12:7).

Psalms 146:4 declares of man, "His breath goes forth, He returneth to his earth; In that very day his thoughts perish." The passage says nothing about the "body." It is whatever has done the thinking. The "body" does not think. The "body," apart from the spirit, has no thoughts. Whatever has had the "thoughts" has them no more; and this is "man."

There is Eccl. 9:5, which declares that "The living know that they shall die; But the dead know not anything." It does not say dead bodies know not anything, but "the dead," i.e. dead people, who are set in contrast with the "living." As one of these "living," David says, by the Holy Spirit (Psa. 146:2; 104:33): "While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being." There would be no praising the Lord after he had ceased to "have any being." Why? Because "princes" and the "son of man" are helpless (Psa. 146:3,4). They return to their earth; and when they die, their "thoughts perish": and they "know not anything."

This is what God says about death. He explains it to us Himself. We need not therefore ask any man what it is. And if we did, his answer would be valueless, inasmuch as it is absolutely impossible for him to know anything of death, i.e. the death-state, beyond what God has told us in the Scriptures.

# Abraham Believed God

"For what saith the Scripture? 'Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness'" (Romans 4:3).

In these words we have the essence of the Gospel of God, and of His Grace. That Gospel is explained in Romans 1:1 to be the "Gospel of God." God's Good News; and faith cometh by hearing it. This is the Gospel that Abraham believed; he believed God; believed what God said. The patriarch's feet were firmly planted on God's ground; his eyes were fixed on God Himself. He had no shadow of doubt as to his possessing, in due time, all that God had promised. He did not hope it, still less did he doubt it, or go on asking for what God said He had given.

Oh! how few comparatively among the children of God really believe God, and without any reserve take this blessed ground of having died with Christ, of being risen with Christ, of being forgiven all sins, accepted in the Beloved, and sealed by the Holy Spirit! At times they hope it; when all goes smoothly with them they can venture to speak hopefully, but when things go against them, they feel the working of the old nature, and at once they begin to reason about themselves, and to question whether after all they are in reality the children of God. From such reasonings the passage to despondency and despair is an easy one.

All this is destructive to peace, because it is dishonouring to God. It is impossible to make progress in this condition. How can one run a race if he is not sure whether he has started? How can one erect a building if he has not laid the foundation? How can any one grow in grace if he is in doubt whether he has life, or has been "planted"? But some may ask, "How can I be sure about this? How may I know that I am saved?" The answer is, How do you know that you are a sinner and need saving? Is it because you feel you are one? Possibly so, but feeling is not a ground of faith; faith that is based on feeling is not a Divine faith at all. "Faith cometh by hearing." Faith must have respect to a promise not to a feeling. True faith rests on the testimony of God's Word. No doubt it is by the gracious energy of the Holy Spirit that any one can exercise this living faith, but we are speaking now of the true ground of faith, the authority for faith, the basis on which alone it can rest, and that surely is the Word of God, which is able to make wise unto salvation without any human intervention whatsoever.

There is scarcely a point on which Religion is more opposed to Christianity. Religion makes the word of God of none effect by its tradition and its superstition, and is thus in direct hostility to the truth of God. Religion has to do with the flesh; it admits that there is a Divine revelation; but it denies that anyone can understand it save by the interpretation of man; or, in other words, the Word of God is not sufficient without man's authority. God has spoken, but I am told I cannot hear His voice or understand His Word without; human intervention. This is Religion!

Infidelity, on the other hand, boldly denies a Revelation; it does not believe in such a thing. Infidels can write books, they can tell us their mind, but (so they say) God cannot! But where is the difference between denying that God has spoken, and maintaining that He cannot make us understand what He says? Both are alike dishonouring to God. Both

deprive man of the priceless treasure of His Word. Both exalt the creature and blaspheme the Creator. Both alike shut out God, and rob the soul of the foundation of its faith.

This has ever been the device of the enemy, to quench the light of inspiration, to plunge the soul into the darkness of infidelity and superstition, to set aside the authority of the Word of God by any means in his power. He cares not by what agency he gains this end. Witness how he brought about the Fall by casting doubt on the Word of God. "Yea, hath God said?" It is therefore very important for us to seize this great fact which is brought out in our text, "Abraham believed God." Here was Divine faith. It was not a question of feeling or Religion. Indeed, if Abraham had been influenced by his feelings he would have been a doubter instead of a believer. For what had he in himself to build his faith on? "His own body now dead" (verse 19)? A poor ground surely on which to base a faith in the promise of an innumerable posterity. But we are told that "he considered not his own body now dead." What then did he consider? The Word of the living God, and on that he rested. This is faith.

### **Written for our sake**

Mark what the Holy Spirit says of him. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief... therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness" (verses 20-22). Ah, but the anxious one may say, "What has all this to do with my case? I am not Abraham! I cannot expect a special revelation from God. How am I to know that God has spoken to me? How can I possess this precious faith?" Mark the answer to these questions in the Spirit's further words in verse 23. "Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but for us also. if..." If what? If we feel it? If we realise it? If we experience anything in ourselves? Nay! But "if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

Oh! what solid comfort is here, what rich consolation! It assures the anxious one that he has the self-same ground and authority to rest upon that Abraham had, with much more light than Abraham had. For Abraham was called to believe God's Word as to what He promised, whereas we are privileged to believe in a fact which God has accomplished. He was called to look forward to something yet to be done; we look back at something that has been done, even an accomplished redemption attested by the fact of a risen and glorified Saviour, seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

But as to the ground or authority on which this faith is to be based, it is the same in our case as in that of Abraham — the Word of God. So it is written, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." There is no other foundation for faith but this; and the faith that rests on any other foundation is not true faith at all. A faith resting on human tradition, or on the authority of a Church, is not Divine faith; it is a mere superstition, it is a faith which stands in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God (I Corinthians 2:5). It is impossible for us to overstate the value and the importance of this grand principle, the ground of a living faith. This is the Divine antidote to all the errors, evils, and hostile influences of the present day. There is a tremendous shaking going on around us, and it will grow worse. Minds are agitated; disturbing forces are abroad; foundations are being loosened; institutions are tottering; souls which found shelter in them are being dislodged and know not whither to turn. Confusion and judgment is written on all things ecclesiastical and political.

### **What do we need?**

What is the one thing that we need? Simply this. A living faith in the living God! This

is what is needed for all who are disturbed by what they see without, or feel within. Our unfailing resource is this, trust in a living God, and in His Son Jesus Christ, revealed by the Eternal Spirit in the Scriptures of Truth.

Here is the resting-place for faith. Here we solemnly exhort you to stay your whole souls. Here we have authority for all that we need to know, to believe, and to do. Is it a question of anxiety about your safety? Hear the Divine words, "Wherefore also it is contained in the Scriptures: Behold I lay in Zion a Chief Corner Stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded" (I Peter 2:6). What solid comfort is here, what deep, settled repose! God has laid the foundation, and that foundation is nothing less than His own Eternal, co-equal Son. This foundation is sufficient to sustain all the counsels of God, to meet all the needs of the soul. Christ is God's own precious, tried, Chief Corner Stone. That blessed One who went down into death's dark waters; bore the heavy judgment and wrath of God against sin, and robbed death of its sting, and, having done this, was raised from the dead, was received up into Glory, and is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty in the Heavens. Such is God's foundation to which He graciously calls the attention of every one who really feels the need of something divinely solid on which to build, in view of the hollow and shadowy scenes of the world, and in prospect of the stern realities of the future.

### **God has spoken!**

Dear reader, if this is your position, if you have come to this point, be assured that it is for you as positively and as distinctively as though you heard a voice from Heaven speaking to your own very self. In spite of sin in all its forms, and in all its consequences, in spite of Satan's power and Satan's malice, God has spoken! He has caused His voice to be heard in this dark and sinful world, and what has He said? "Behold, I lay in Zion... a foundation!" This is something entirely new! It is as though our blessed, loving and ever-gracious God had said to us, "Here I have begun anew, I have laid a foundation, and I pledge My word that whosoever commits himself to My foundation, whosoever rests in Mine Anointed, i.e., in My Christ, whosoever is satisfied with My precious, tried, Chief Corner Stone, shall never, no never, no never, be confounded, never be put to shame, never be disappointed, never perish, world without end!" Oh, how blessed, how safe, how secure! If there were any question raised, any condition imposed, any barrier erected, you might well hesitate. If it were made a question of feeling, or experience, or of anything else that you could do, feel, be or produce, then you might justly pause, but there is absolutely nothing of the sort. There is the Christ of God, there is the Word of God, and what then? "He that believeth shall not be confounded."

In short, it is no more and no less than believing what God says, because He says it! It is committing your self to the word of Him that cannot lie. It is doing exactly what Abraham did. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." It does not say Abraham understood God, because he did not; nor that Abraham believed something about God, but Abraham believed God, i.e., what He said. Thus he lived in peace with God, and died in the hope of Resurrection, of a Heavenly City, of a Heavenly Home. It is resting on the immovable rock of Holy Scripture, and thus proving the Divine and saving virtue of that which never failed any who trusted to it, never did, and never will, and never can. Oh! the unspeakable blessedness of having such a foundation in a world like this, where death and decay and change are stamped upon all, where friendship's fondest ties are snapped in a moment by death's rude hand, where all that seems (to nature's view) most stable is liable to be swept away in a moment by a popular Revolution, where



there is absolutely nothing on which the heart can lean and say, "Now I have found permanent repose." Oh! what a mercy in such a scene to have a living faith in the living Word and in the written Word of the living God.

The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

**A Sermon on the 60th Anniversary  
of the Queen's Accession.  
August, 1897**

**By Me Kings Reign**

**Proverbs 8:15: "By Me kings reign."**

In few things is it more conspicuously seen that man's thoughts and man's ways are the very opposite of God's than in this.

Man's thought is, that power exists in himself — power for government in temporal things; power for salvation in spiritual things.

Man's "wisdom" culminates here — that the source of all power, and the channel of it too, exists in, and is derived from the people; and that power for salvation exists also in himself.

Now, He who "knows what is in man," has forewarned us of this, and foretold us of it.

When God was about to commit power into the hands of the Gentiles, He took the greatest possible pains (if we may so speak), to impress upon the first recipient of that power (Nebuchadnezzar), and upon us through him, that which Daniel already knew (2:21):—"He changeth the times and the seasons: He removeth kings, and setteth up kings: He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding."

To teach Nebuchadnezzar this, He afflicted him, and humbled him for seven years, until He made him a penitent worshipper and a royal preacher; until his throne was turned into a pulpit, and his state-paper into a sermon; and he was made to acknowledge this great truth. Thus the decree went forth, "And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." And thus it came to pass. "And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever, Whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest Thou?...Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all Whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase" (Dan 4:32,34,35,37).

God would not delegate power in the earth, without making it perfectly clear that He was not parting with it. Therefore, at the very same time He describes this power in its origin, its history, its character, and its end.

And you will notice also that in this Revelation, He shows us that in the case of Power, as with everything else ever entrusted to man, there is a deterioration. Man has ever perverted the best gifts of God!

Man claims indeed that he is ever advancing; political economists and statesmen assure us that progress is everywhere visible, and so it is: but it is a progress ever and everywhere downwards.

This power in the earth began with Gold, but it ends in the mud!

God sees it in its ever-tending, never ceasing, downward course. First, gold; the next stage, silver; the third (which man looks back to as the golden age), brass; and, then came the fourth, iron, — mingled in its later stages with miry clay, until now we have very much more mire than metal.

And as God foretold, so it has been.

Babylon was an absolute monarchy, and as such, God likened it to gold.

Persia was a monarchical government by king and nobles, and God likened it to silver.

Greece was an aristocracy, not of birth, but of intellect, and God likened it to brass.

Rome was at first a democratic Imperialism, and God likened it to iron. In its later stages of to-day, it is divided up into constitutional monarchies, and more republican forms of government, and God likens it to the mire of clay and the brittleness of pottery, which may be mixed up with iron, but can never really combine with it.

And what comes next? Ah! God has not left us in darkness. The next is to be the kingdom of universal power; and, because it is to be the kingdom of Christ, God likens it to a Stone which became a great mountain, and filled all the earth, because it is from the mountain that gold and silver and brass and iron are themselves derived and obtained. He who has "all power committed to Him in heaven and in earth," is presently to take unto Himself His great power and reign, and the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our God, and of His Christ.

All history is but the fulfillment of what Jehovah has foreseen, and provided for, and provided against. Whatever motives may actuate and sway its actors, the counsel of God shall stand. Let us therefore do our duty, but let us never forget that there is a God in history.

"God" (said St. Paul, when he stood in the capital of the Third Empire), "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing He is Lord of heaven and earth...hath made of one blood all the nations of men for to dwell upon the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."

In these words, we are taught that God is the Supreme Ruler and Over-ruler in history, giving to nations, as well as to individuals, their appointed times and bounds.

To the eye of sense, indeed, God's ways are unnoticed and unknown, but to the eye of faith a divine plan is seen running through the history of the past. With all the distracting events passing before him, the man of God, with the Chart of God's Word in his hand, the "more sure word of prophecy" in his heart, and the "law and the testimony" as "a lamp to his feet and a light to his path" — is enabled to estimate at their real value the tumult of sights and sounds by which he is surrounded.

He knows that his salvation is nearer than when he believed. He sees that empires and kingdoms have faded out from the recollection of the people that have come after; that the place of the mightiest dynasties knows them no more. But "in the volume of the book it was written" for peoples then unborn, so that, to the very ends of the earth, it might be

made known that "there is a God in heaven": "He changeth the times and season: He removeth kings and setteth up kings: He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding" (Dan 2:28,21).

As a nation, dear brethren, we pride ourselves on our wisdom and our understanding; but—Are we not ungratefully putting away from us more and more the remembrance, that our forefathers purchased our liberties for us with their blood?

Have you ever really considered the source of our present liberties? Have you ever reflected, that it was the entrance of God's Word which gave us light, enabled us to understand what true liberty is, and finally broke for us the bonds of tyranny and arbitrary power in which so many nations, ignorant of that blessed Word, still groan without any real hope of deliverance.

Everywhere we see discontent. Good government is the one universal want of the world. The fires of socialistic anarchy are ready to break forth in a vain attempt to secure it. But not so were our liberties gained. Our national freedom has gone hand-in-hand with that freedom wherewith Christ makes His people free. Our liberties are identified with the cause of Protestant Evangelical truth.

Many to-day have much to say concerning the growth of our Empire, the extension of our Colonies, the wonderful advances in Arts and Sciences, discoveries and inventions. We have had 60 years of the drama, 60 years of philanthropy, 60 years of literature, 60 years of everything.

But what about 60 years of Protestantism? Are our liberties more secure than they were 60 years ago? How many of our safe-guards have gone? How many of our bulwarks have been bartered away? How many of our defences have been removed?

Mid-way in these 60 years the service for November 5th was abolished out of deference to man, and out of a false charity to our enemies, we ceased to thank God for His merciful deliverances to our Throne and Church and Nation.

I stop not to speak of the increase of Popery in and out of Church, the decrease of true Evangelical truths.

Its influence is seen even in the very service appointed for use on this day.

Unlike the old service which it supersedes for to-day\* there is no reference to enemies, conspiracies and plots. No prayer "for God's protection of the Queen against all her enemies" in which special petitions to "weaken the hands, blast the designs, and defeat the enterprises of all her enemies, that no secret conspiracies, nor open violences, may disquiet her reign."

\* We hope the design to perpetuate the change will be frustrated.

The very service for June 20th has dropped out for some years past, and in very few Prayer-books does it find a place. No wonder the Queen and nation have time after time been subject to secret conspiracies and open violences.

Even in the many proposed new versions of the old National Anthem, whatever may be the merit or demerit of the proposed new verse, all are agreed in omitting the verse which prays:

"Confound their politics,  
Frustrate their knavish tricks."

This is too plain and palpable for the modern false toleration and charity which prevails in our day.\*

\* We are thankful to note that in compliance, as was generally understood, with Her Majesty's own wish the good old habitual text of "God Save the Queen" was faithfully maintained. In sturdily chorus the well-established verse rang out, of those who be our enemies:

"Confound their politics,  
Frustrate their knavish tricks."

(—Daily Telegraph, June 21, 1897)

The voices of the sentimentalists and the counsels of the Jesuits have prevailed.

The observance of these solemn days of thanksgiving was abolished! But is Rome pacified? Is she not as deadly hostile to England and to religious freedom as ever she was?

We may thank God we live to see a revival of the service for the 20th of June — thus publicly acknowledging the truth and teaching of our text. The opening sentence gives it its keynote — (1 Tim 2:1-3), "I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men — for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty: for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."

Thus it is not urged as our duty, but in our own interest; that while we pray for our Sovereign, we at the same time promote the continuance of our liberties.

The command of God to His ancient people is still more explicit (Jer 29:7): "Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." What motive could exist to bind the Jew to a compliance with this command which does not lie with tenfold weight on every subject of our empire?

For in spite of all that there is to deplore, there is much that we may truly praise God for. In offering up to-day our prayers and thanksgivings, we are doing His will, obeying His command as recorded in 1 Timothy 2:1-3 and 1 Peter 2:13-15. And if these exhortations were given when Nero was Emperor, how much more may they be given in our day!

If when Nero was destroyer of the faith, Christians were to submit and pray, how much more when Victoria is defender of the faith!

We have only to reflect on what our position to-day would have been if we had experienced 60 years of Queen Mary instead of Queen Victoria!

This reflection must surely bring even the most exclusive of Christians to his senses, and it exalts our service on to the very highest ground. It ennobles our loyalty to our Sovereign. It lifts it out of mere political partisanship, sentimental feeling, or servile flattery. It bids us to count up our mercies, national mercies and ecclesiastical privileges, which enable us to worship according to our conscience, without let or hindrance, none daring to make us afraid.

In estimating the cause of all our national mercies and greatness, men dwell on physical peculiarities, military and naval prowess, geographical position, natural resources and products.

But other nations have had these, and have passed away as a dream.

No, these are not causes, they are conditions in which cause works.

The cause is God's blessing, and apart from this, all other things are nothing worth. The world may go on as it will, the "strange children" may utter their lies and "speak vanity," and say that national happiness consists in outward prosperity, but we reply, Nay. "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord" (Psa 144).

# Christ in the Separate Books of the Word

In **GENESIS** we shall understand the record of Creation (ch. i.), for we shall see in it the counterpart of our new creation in Christ Jesus (II Cor. v. 17).

In the light which shined out of darkness (Gen. i. 2, 3) we shall see the light which has shone "in our hearts to give the knowledge of the glory of God in the face (or person) of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. iv. 6). No wonder that those who know nothing of this spiritual light of the New Creation know nothing of the light that was created on the first day as revealed in the record of the old creation.<sup>1</sup> The natural man sees only a myth and an old wives' fable in the Creation record, and seems actually to prefer the Babylonian corruption of primitive truth. These "other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph. iv. 17,18). Woe be to those who follow these blind leaders, for "they shall both fall into the ditch" they have prepared for themselves by their fleshly knowledge and worldly wisdom.

In the Creator we shall see Christ (John i. 3. Col. i. 16).

In the first Adam we shall see the last Adam (I Cor. xv. 45. Rom. v. 14). In the first man we shall see "the second man, the Lord, from heaven" (I Cor. xv. 47).

In the "seed of the woman" (Gen. iii. 15) we shall see the coming son of Abraham, the son of David, the Son of man, the Son of God; while those who are in the black darkness of Rome see either a helpless Infant, or a dead man, and a living woman — he Virgin Mary; having corrupted their Authorized Vulgate Version (in Gen. iii. 15),<sup>2</sup> to make it the foundation of this blasphemy.

In Abraham's shield we shall see the Living Word, coming, speaking, and revealing Himself to him (ch. xv. i. John viii. 56).

In Isaac we shall see Christ the true seed of Abraham (Rom. ix. 7. Gal. iii. 16). In the Annunciation to the Mother (Gen. xviii. 10. Luke i. 30-33), the miraculous conception (Gen. xviii. 14. Luke i. 35) and the pre-natal naming (Gen. xvii. 19. Matt. i. 21. Luke i. 31; ii. 21). In the projected death of the one we see the foreshadowing of the other, two thousand years before, and on the same mountain, Moriah; and this Mount, selected not by chance, or for convenience (for it was three days journey), but appointed in the Divine counsels as the site of the future altar of burnt offering (Gen. xxii. 2. I Chron. xxi. 28-xxii. 1. 2 Chron. iii. 1). In the wood laid upon Isaac (Gen. xxii. 6), and not carried by the servants or on the ass, we shall see Him who was led forth bearing His Cross (John xix. 17).

In Joseph, of whom the question was asked, "Shalt thou indeed reign over us?" we see Him of whom His brethren afterwards said, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke xix. 14). But we see the sufferings of the one followed by the glory, as we shall surely see the glory of the true Joseph following His sufferings in the fulness of time (1 Pet. i. 11), of which glory we shall be the witnesses, and partakers (1 Pet. iv. 13; v. 1).

We must not pursue this great subject or principle in its further details, though we have but touched the fringe of it, even in the book of Genesis. As the Lord Jesus began at Moses so have we only made a beginning, and must leave our readers to follow where we have pointed out the way.

It may be well, however, for us to indicate one or two of the leading points of the other books of the Old Testament.

**EXODUS** tells of the sufferings and the glory of Moses, as Genesis does of Joseph, and in both we see a type of the sufferings and glory of Christ.

Joseph's sufferings began with his rejection, his own brethren asking, "Shalt thou indeed reign over us? Or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us?" (Gen. xxxvii. 8). Moses' sufferings began with his rejection and the question of "two men of the Hebrews," — "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?" (Exod. ii. 14). In all this we see the rejection of Christ by a similar question, the thought of their hearts being put into their lips, in the parable, where "his citizens hated Him and sent a message after Him saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us'" (Luke xix. 11).

But the issue in all three cases is the same. Of each it is true, as it is said of Moses, "This Moses whom they refused, saying, 'Who made thee a ruler and a deliverer?' The same did God send to be a ruler and a judge by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush (Acts vii. 35).

Even so will God surely "send Jesus Christ whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts iii. 20, 21).

Thus early, in Genesis and Exodus, we have the great subject of the sufferings and the glory of Christ more than foreshadowed (1 Pet. i. 11; iv. 13; v. 1. Luke xxiv. 26).

Exodus tells us also of Christ as the true Paschal Lamb (I Cor. v. 7, 8); as the true Priest (Exod. xxx. 10. Heb. v. 4, 5); and the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not men (Heb. ix).

**LEVITICUS** gives us, in the offerings, a fourfold view of the Death of Christ (the Sin and Trespass Offerings being reckoned as one), as the Gospels give us a fourfold view of His life.

**NUMBERS** foreshadows the Son of Man come to be lifted up" (ch. xxi. 9. John iii. 14, 15); the Rock (ch. xx. 11. I Cor. x. 4); the Manna that fed them (ch. xi. 7-9. Deut. viii. 2, 3. John vi. 57, 58); and the future Star that should arise "out of Jacob" (ch. xxiv. 17. Luke i. 78. II Pet. i. 19. Rev. ii. 28; xxii. 16).

**DEUTERONOMY** reveals the coining Prophet "like unto Moses" (ch. xviii. 15. Acts vii. 23-26); the Rock and Refuge of His people (chs. xxxii. 4; xxxiii. 27).

**JOSHUA** tells of "the Captain of the Lord's host" (ch. v. 13-15. Heb. ii. 10; xii. 2) who shall triumph over all His foes; while Rahab's scarlet cord (ch. ii. 12-20) tells of His sufferings and precious blood which will shelter and preserve His people in the coming day of His war.

**JUDGES** tells of the Covenant Angel whose name is "Secret," i.e. "Wonderful" (ch. xiii. 18, margin; compare Isa. ix. 6, where the word is the same).

**RUTH** reveals the type of our Kinsman-Redeemer, the true Boaz; and the question of ch. ii. 10 is answered in Prov. xi. 15.



**SAMUEL** reveals the "sufferings" and rejection of David, who became a "Saviour" and a "Captain" of his followers (I Sam. xxii. 1, 2), foreshadowing David's Son and David's Lord, "the Root and the Offspring of David" (Rev. xxii. 16).

**KINGS** shows us the "glory which should follow," and the "greater than Solomon" (Matt. xii. 42); the "greater than the Temple" (Matt. xii. 6), where everything speaks of His glory (Ps. xxix. 9 and margin).

**CHRONICLES** reveals Christ as "the King's Son," rescued "from among the dead," hidden in the House of God, to be manifested in due time, "as Jehovah hath said" (II Chron. xxii. 10–xxiii. 3).

**EZRA** speaks of "a nail in a sure place" (ch. ix. 8), which according to Isa. xxii. 23 is used of Eliakim, who typifies Christ.

**NEHEMIAH** tells of the "bread from Heaven" and "water out of the Rock" (ch. ix. 15, 20), which are elsewhere used as typical of Christ (John vi. 57, 58. I Cor. x. 4).

**ESTHER** sees the seed preserved which should in the fulness of time be born into the world. His name is there, though concealed,<sup>3</sup> but His will and power is manifested in defeating all enemies in spite of the unalterable law of the Medes and Persians.

**JOB** reveals Him as his "Daysman" or "Mediator" (ch. ix. 33); and as his "Redeemer" coming again to the earth (ch. xix. 25-27).

**THE PSALMS** are full of Christ. We see His humiliation and sufferings and death (Ps. xxii.), His Resurrection (Ps. xvi.), His anointing as Prophet with grace-filled lips (Ps. xlv. Luke iv. 22); as Priest after the order of Melchisedec (Ps. ex. Heb. v. 6; vi. 20; vii. 17, 21); as King enthroned over all (Ps. ii.), and His kingdom established in the earth (Ps. ciii.; cxlv., & c.).

**PROVERBS** reveals Christ as the "Wisdom of God" (ch. viii. I Cor. i. 24); the "Path" and "Light" of His People (ch. iv. 18); the "Surety" who smarted for His people while strangers (ch. xi. 15. Rom. v. 8-10. Eph. ii. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 11); the "strong tower" into which the righteous run and are safe (ch. xviii. 10); the friend who loveth at all times, and the brother born for adversity (ch. xvii. 17).

**ECCLESIASTES** tells of the "one among a thousand in the midst of all that is vanity and vexation of spirit" (ch. vii. 28).

**THE SONG OF SONGS** reveals Him as the true and faithful Shepherd, Lover, and Bridegroom of the Bride, who remained constant to Him in spite of all the royal grandeur and coarser blandishments of Solomon.

**ISAIAH** is full of the sufferings and glories of Christ. He is the "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (ch. liii. 5); wounded for our transgressions, oppressed, afflicted, and brought as a lamb to the slaughter; cut off out of the land of the living (ch. liii. 2–9). Yet the glory shall follow. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied" (ch. liii. 11). He will be His people's "Light" (ch. lx. 1, 2. Matt. iv. 16); "The Mighty God" (ch. ix. 6. Matt. xxviii. 18); Salvation's Well (ch. xii. 3); the King who shall "reign in righteousness" (ch. xxxii. 1, 2); Jehovah's Branch, beautiful and glorious (ch. iv. 2).

**JEREMIAH** tells of "the Righteous Branch," and "Jehovah our Righteousness" (ch. xxiii. 5, 6); of the "Righteous Branch" and King who shall reign and prosper (ch. xxxiii. 15).

**EZEKIEL** reveals Him as the true Shepherd (ch. xxxiv. 23), and as "the Prince" (ch. xxxvii. 25); the "Plant of Renown" (ch. xxxiv. 29), and "Jehovah Shammah" (ch. xlviii. 35).

**DANIEL** reveals Him as the "Stone" become the Head of the corner (ch. ii. 34. Ps. cxviii. 22. Isa. viii. 14. xxviii. 16. Matt. xxi. 42, 44. Acts iv. It. I Pet. ii. 4, 6). Also as the Son of Man (ch. vii. 13, 16); and "Messiah the Prince" (ch. ix. 24).

He is **HOSEA'S** true David (iii. 5), the Son out of Egypt (xi. 1);

**JOEL'S** "God dwelling in Zion" (ch. iii. 17);

**AMOS'S** Raiser of David's Tabernacle (ch. ix. 11; Acts xv. 16, 17);

**OBADIAH'S** "Deliverer on Mount Zion" (v. 17);

**JONAH'S** "Salvation" (ch. ii. 9); the "Sign" of Christ's resurrection (Matt. xii. 39-41);

**MICAH'S** "Breaker," "King" and "Lord" (ch. ii. 13; v. 2,5);

**NAHUM'S** "Stronghold in Trouble" (ch. i. 7);

**HABAKKUK'S** "Joy" and "Confidence" (ch. iii. 17, 18);

**ZEPHANIAH'S** "Mighty God in the midst of Zion" (ch. iii. 17);

**HAGGAI'S** "Desire of all nations" (ch. ii. 7);

**ZECHARIAH'S** Smitten Shepherd; The Man, Jehovah's Fellow (ch. xiii. 7); Jehovah's "Servant — the Branch" (ch. iii. 8); "the Man whose name is the Branch" (ch. vi. 12);

**MALACHI'S** "Messenger of the Covenant" (ch. iii. 1); the Refiner of the Sons of Levi (ch. iii. 3); "The Sun of Righteousness" (ch. iv. 2).

Thus, the "Word" of God has one great subject.

That one great all-pervading subject is Christ; and all else stands in relation to Him. He is "the beginning and the ending" of Scripture, as of all beside.

Hence, the Word of God, at its ending, shows how the beginning all works out; and how, that to which we are introduced in Genesis is completed in Revelation.

Satan's first rebellion is implied between the first and second verses of the first chapter of Genesis, and his final rebellion is seen in Rev. xx. 7-9. His doom is pronounced in Gen. iii. 15, and is accomplished in Rev. xx. 10.

We have the primal Creation, "the world that then was," in Gen. i. 1 (II Pet. iii. 6). "The Heavens and the Earth which are now" in Gen. i. 2, etc. (2 Pet. iii. 7). And "The New Heavens and the New Earth" in Rev. xxi. 1 (2 Pet. iii. 13).

We have "night" in Gen. i. 1; and see "no night there" in Rev. xxii. 5.

We have the "sea" in Gen. i. 10; and "no more sea" in Rev. xxi. 1.

We have the "sun and moon" in Gen. i. 16, 17; and "no need of the sun or the moon" in Rev. xxi. 23; xxii. 5.

We have the entrance of sorrow and suffering and death in Gen. iii. 16, 17; and "no more death, neither sorrow nor crying" in Rev. xxi. 4.

We have the "curse" pronounced in Gen. iii. 17; and "no more curse" in Rev. xxii. 3.

We have banishment from Paradise and the Tree of Life in Gen. iii. 22-24; and the welcome back and "right to it" in Rev. xxii. 2.

This will be sufficient <sup>4</sup> to show the unity of the "Word" as a whole; and to stimulate Bible students to a further study of it on the line of this great fundamental principle.

1. Though the recent discovery of Radium is beginning to open our eyes and show how light can exist without the sun.
2. Where the Hebrew masculine is misrepresented as feminine, and is thus made, as Dr. Pusey has said, the foundation of Mariolatry, and the basis of the Immaculate Conception.
3. See The Name of Jehovah in the Book of Esther, in Four Acrostics, by the same author.
4. More instances will be found in The Apocalypse, or, the Day of the Lord, republished as Commentary on Revelation, by Kregel Publications, pp. 58, 59.

## Crucified with Christ

"I am crucified with Christ, 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." (Galatians 2:20).

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Galatians 6:14,15).

These last words the Apostle Paul sums up his important letter to the churches of Galatia, and he emphasizes the great sum and substance, the essence and marrow of the Gospel of Christ, and of true Christianity. This is utterly and entirely opposed to the world and to the world's religion. The world is that which is opposed to the Father (I John 2:16). The world has always been willing to support religion, and even Christianity, provided it has been allowed to alter it, and adapt it, and put its own marks upon it. And in all ages Christians have been willing to comply with this condition, and have allowed its sacred deposits to be tampered with.

To such St. Paul says, "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ" (Galatians 6:12). It was the fear of the world that constrained Christians to submit to circumcision. They allowed themselves to be made bad Jews lest they should be persecuted for being good Christians. "Marvel not," said Christ, "if the world hate you"; but His followers grew weary of being despised and hated, and so they listened to the world's overtures of peace, and accepted the world's terms to gain for themselves the world's security and luxury. But the world has ever broken its promise, and will yet break it more and more! "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." We cannot purchase peace with the world without losing peace with God. Its last work will be to strip and destroy that church, which has purchased peace at the cost of disobedience to the Lord and by compliance with the requirements of man!

St. Paul's counsel here is, that mere religion without Christ is nothing, is useless, is worthless. Circumcision is useless without Christ, and uncircumcision is useless without Christ, i.e., the old nature in any shape is nothing. Man's thought ever is that it is something, that something can be made of it. Hence no effort has been spared. In one age restraint has been tried, in another, liberty. In one age discipline cuts it down, in another, indulgence lets it grow. One school advises, and tries monasticism, another believes in the development of man, but no modification of the natural man will suffice; it must be a "new creation" (II Corinthians 5:17, R.V., margin).

Man must be made over again, made anew. This is the great point on which the Apostle lays such stress here. He says, "From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Galatians 6:17). There is a double reference in his words, when translated more closely, "Administer not to me your cuts." I need them not, I am crucified with Christ. It is not marks nor brands made by man upon the flesh that we want, but it is the brands of the Lord Jesus. He was crucified for us, "wounded for our

iniquities," and those who are crucified with Christ have His marks on them, and to such can be said, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit (verse 18). This is the cry from Heaven to all who are crucified with Christ, this "grace" in them and with them is the "mark" and "brand" which the world will never countenance and approve.

The world threatens with loss all who are thus marked as the Lord's. But what says He to such? "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." "God shall supply all your need." We need not fear about not pleasing the world; Christ takes all excuses away. "Take no thought, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'what shall we drink' or 'wherewithal shall we be clothed?'... Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself" (Matthew 6:31, 34). This is godliness, and godliness has the promise of this life as well as of that which is to come.

Thus we see that the Apostle's argument is based on the declaration of our Lord. We see that the only thing we can really glory in is the Cross of Christ, by which we are crucified to the world, because we are crucified with Christ, and this may mean perils and hardships. But there is a very important point connected with this matter — and it is, that it is a very personal and individual concern. The Apostle says, "I and Me." "I am crucified with Christ... He gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2. 20). This is the glory of the Gospel. The world talks about "man," and would deify "man "; but God, while he has condemned "man," saves "men." Men lose themselves in masses, and attempt to hide themselves in the multitude; but so soon as God speaks He separates one from the other, and deals with individual souls.

The Gospel does not deal with the masses as such; it takes out from the masses "a people for His Name." The Cross stands out in relation to all who are crucified with Christ. It is not that you have been born in a land where the Cross is honoured; it is not I that you have relations with a church that holds forth the Cross; it is not that you wear a cross, but that you are in living vital union with the crucified, so that you may say, "I have been crucified with Christ." Oh, what a wonderful expression! What a mysterious truth, when a lost sinner comes into the vital experience of it! Then for him these 1,800 years are blotted out, and he counts himself as being on Calvary in Christ.

So real is this great truth that the very crucifixion scene becomes part of our experience. In God's sight, in the Divine view, the saved sinner is identified with Christ. Everything he gets from God is in Christ. He is "chosen in Christ," accepted in Christ, redeemed in Christ, and represented by Christ. Not only is this great fact and truth for every saved sinner, but in measure and in part the very experiences of Christ are ours. There is a sense in which they become true in our experience.

Take, first, His rejection. He was "rejected of men," not rejected of the Father! No. We must make the distinction which the Scripture of truth makes. Not as is commonly said that the Father hid His face from the Son, but it was God against man. "Awake, O sword, against... the man that is My fellow" (Zechariah 13:7) — "against the man," not against "My Son." "The Son of Man" was "rejected of men," and the penitent soul, the sin-convicted sinner, has this experience. The first thought of such an one is, "I am accursed before God." Never before has the sinner known the terrible weight of Divine rejection till the Holy Law of the Holy God is written by the Holy Spirit on the fleshy tables of his heart. He that has been crucified with Christ enters into the real positions and in measure and in part into the experience of the darkness which overspread the heavens when Christ as man hung upon the cross, being made a curse for us. The death due by the law is realized

by such an one; conscience is now for the first time awakened; sin now for the first time is seen as that which separates from God; and the sinner loathes himself, as he thus enters into the first experience of what it is to be crucified with Christ.

But, secondly, there is, thank God, another experience. There is another view of the Cross of Christ, a Divine view, that of acceptance. If at His baptism and transfiguration the testimony of heaven was, "My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," surely it was so here when that Beloved One was accepted; for the holiness of God was then vindicated, the law of God was then honoured, the majesty of God was then magnified, and the same words are pronounced over every sinner who can say, "I have been crucified with Christ." The Father in heaven declares of Him and of every such an one, "My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased," and this, just because he is "accepted in the Beloved." Oh what a mighty reality there is in this great truth! How great the merits of this Saviour who has thus stood in the sinner's place, that the sinner might stand in His! No wonder that of all such the Holy Spirit has written, "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." What a perfect satisfaction do we present! Who can measure the glorious answer to the law, the vindication of God's holiness, which the man (who a little while ago was a poor forlorn outcast sinner) brings before God, as soon as by grace he is enabled to say, "I have been crucified with Christ." Ah, this is light that will dissipate our darkness: all our bondage and fear would be instantly gone if we could only realize what it means to be "crucified with Christ."

But more than this is contained in the truth: not only Christ's acts and position are ours, but His words and utterances become in part ours. We know what it is to cry, "My God, my God, why has Thou forsaken me?" It is our cry of felt helplessness; it says, if God should cast us out for ever, "just and true is He." No reason can we find in ourselves, no ground for our acceptance can we find in our past living or present feelings. If saved at all, it must be by grace. and grace alone; and it shews that even this cry is the result of life which has been given; for though we cry, we say "My — my God." This is the beginning of the end, all else is assured when we can say my God. But the full measure of our absolute unworthiness is never experienced by us until this life and light has been imparted. It was when God said, "Let there be light," that ruin and desolation was seen at its worst, and so it is with the sinner. Talk not about repentance or contrition as a preparation for coming to Christ, for if we "have been crucified with Christ," we will surely experience the horror of this great darkness, but it will be coupled with hope. "My God."

Then another cry, "It is finished." What a blessed confession is this for Christ and for us! He who is crucified with Christ may take it upon his lips, and claim it as his own. His salvation is finished, the work is complete and perfect, nothing can be put to it nothing can be taken from it. Of course, if we mean to be saved by our own merits it will never be finished, and if we hesitate to say this, it is a proof that we are trusting to our own merits. If we are seeking to be saved by anything we can produce, our rest will always be unrest. But if saved by Christ, in Christ, with Christ, "for Christ's sake," then it is presumption if we do not admit to their fullest extent such statements as these, "He that believeth hath everlasting life," "is passed from death unto life," "shall not come into condemnation." It is not presumption to claim these words, but it is presumption, and unbelief too, if we hesitate as saved sinners to confess them. Come, all ye that are going about to establish your own righteousness, all ye that are seeking some other way to the glory of God, listen to this joyful sound of a finished salvation for all who have been crucified with Christ.

We cannot follow all the other thoughts which gather round "Christ Crucified," but there are two other facts that we must not omit. The Apostle says, "By whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world" (Galatians 6:14).

What is the relation of the world to the crucified? Ah, it wore a very solemn aspect as the Crucified looked upon it, and he who is crucified with Christ sees it in the same way (in part and in measure). This is more than a figure. What did Paul mean when he said, "If ye be dead with Christ" — and "Ye are dead"? Not that we are actually dead, but judicially dead in God's sight, and therefore we are so to reckon ourselves. "If ye be dead with Christ," says the Apostle. "If ye then be risen with Christ, set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 2:20; 3:1-3). What does this language imply? We are to be blind and deaf and indifferent to the world, as was Christ upon the cross. We are in the world, indeed, but rejected by it, not of it. All the hum and distracting noises fell upon unheeding ears, as they rose from Jerusalem and were wafted by the winds towards Calvary! If we are crucified with Christ we shall know something of this experience; only remember always that it is the effect and not the cause of being thus crucified. We cannot crucify our selves, we cannot make ourselves dead. How did the Lord Jesus pray? "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil" (John 17:15). "Let me see life," says the man of the world, and he plunges into sin. "Let me see life," says the saved sinner, and he separates himself from sin. He only lives who is crucified and risen with Christ.

Those who are crucified with Christ know something of His sustaining joy. We are not left to imagine what this was, but we know that "For the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame" (Hebrews 12:2). Great were His sufferings, but greater still His joy. So it will be with us. This alone will support those who have been crucified with Christ. We shall never know the measure of His sorrow, but we shall know something of His joy. For a joy is set before us, and it will enable us to despise the shame and endure the suffering, and confess that "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18). "Our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Corinthians 4:17). Only those who have been crucified with Christ can truly say, "I live" (Galatians 2. 20), and I have the blessed hope of everlasting life. Can we say this? If we cannot, "What is our life?" Your life which you are living for yourselves? Let us not call this life. Let us not call our sinful pleasures joy. For what is our experience? Is it not a consciousness of a disappointed present, and a future without hope? Is it not a heart unsatisfied with earthly objects? Is it not a will at cross purposes with God's will? Do we call this life? Nay, call it what it is, death. Not dead with Christ, not dead to sin, but dead in sins.

May this testimony for the Crucified One quicken us together with Christ, that we may be able to say, "I have been crucified with Christ, 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 loveth me, and gave Himself for me (Galatians 2:20).

# Following Hard

"My soul followeth hard after Thee; Thy right hand upholdeth me" (Psalm 63:8).

The title of this Psalm ("A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah" — KJV) tells us that even in Canaan, though a fruitful country, there were wildernesses. But though David was in a desert, there was no desert in him; for he thirsted for the living God. The whole Psalm is one of the most beautiful in the Psalter. It has been said of it by Donne, that "as the whole book of Psalms is as ointment poured forth upon all sorts of sores — a cerecloth that supple all bruises — a balm that searches all wounds — so there are some certain Psalms that are imperial, Psalms which command all affections — universal Psalms that apply to all necessities... The spirit and soul of the whole book of Psalms is concentrated into this one."

Truly we do find described many of the exercises, the trials and the changes to which the living children of God are subject. David found that the path of his earthly pilgrimage was one of tribulation; but in the midst of all his darkness, difficulties and doubts, he found a secret something cheering his heart, and keeping him from despair. Though the dark shade of his manifold transgressions hung heavily upon his spirit, and the lowering cloud of perplexing providences wrung many a bitter cry from his heart, yet hope, sweet hope, sought in the gloom for one ray, however faint, of heavenly satisfaction in his God.

This Psalm is divided into two parts:

Those who seek after God (verses 1-8);

Those who seek the soul of God's Servant (verses 9-11).

The first eight verses are divided into 7 members (alternated). Four showing God's goodness and a consequent resolve, alternating with three, of which the writer himself is the subject. Our text is part of the last of these four — Goodness and Resolve.

I. Thou art my God,  
Early will I seek Thee;

II. Thy lovingkindness is better than life  
My lips shall praise Thee.

III. God satisfying with marrow and fatness;  
My mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips.

IV. God helping and upholding,  
My soul rejoicing and following.

May this gracious God be our Teacher, and warm our cold hearts with His love, and cheer us with Heavenly light, while we consider the beauties of these verses.

We have four subjects, each of which we may describe by a word beginning with "D". David's Darkness, Desire, Determination, and Delight.

## David's Darkness

Oh! what a mine of experimental truth. How well it agrees with those Scriptures which



describe the heartfelt trials of God's children! Often in their feelings they are at a distance, and question whether God has really anything to do with them or not. But the very cry, the very anxiety, is the strongest proof we can have that this felt distance would not trouble us except God Himself had come near to us in His Grace. It is a glorious fact that no trial, no tribulation, no temptation, however fierce, no way, no work, no warfare, however desperate, can make us feel that we have nothing to do with God. We often wonder how God can have anything to do with such unworthy sinners, but we also realize that we must have to do with God.

The heart charged with its bitterness heaves the heavenward sigh, and desires, and cries after the only object that can truly satisfy it. Now David's experience in verse 1 springs from this fact. He sought for God because no refreshment could be found. The land was barren, the clouds were dark. Hence his resolve — "Early will I seek Thee." In Hebrew these five words are expressed by one word, *shah-char*, which means to break, cleave, break through. Hence the noun means the dawn, the breaking forth of light, and the verb gets an additional idea of breaking forth, hence to seek carefully or earnestly. In our text the two thoughts are united. Similar is the teaching (though not the same word) in Psalm 46:5 (marg.), "God shall help her, and that right early." What volumes do these words contain for Israel and Jerusalem in the future, and for all anxious waiting souls now!

In the dark and dreary nights of trial which we are called to pass through, we wait and watch for the day's return. "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning" (Psalm 130:6). As surely as God's children experience the darkness of the Wilderness, so surely will God help, defend, and comfort them with the morning of His appearing. Yes! God's deliverances are "early". Look at Exodus 14:24-27. The children of Israel are in straits. They know not what to do. The enemy is in hot pursuit, but "in the morning-watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of the fire and the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians." The Lord looks destruction on His enemies; but He looks mercy and deliverance to His own. Israel's enemies are dismayed and destroyed, while the Redeemed of the Lord break forth with songs of deliverance, and joy, and gladness.

So with Hezekiah, when Sennacherib, King of Assyria, sent his blasphemous letter. Hezekiah made no stir, marshalled no forces, but went up to the house of the Lord. What was the result? "When they arose early in the morning they were all dead corpses" (Isaiah 37:36). Ah! it is blessed (and it will ere long be blessed for Israel), after a long night of darkness and sorrow, to behold the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings" (Malachi 4:2).

And why did David long to see God's power? (verse 2). Because his own fancied strength was gone! The collect for the second Sunday in Lent exactly expresses David's mind. "Almighty God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves, keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord." David knew that his own strength was perfect in weakness. He, like Paul, gloried in his infirmity, that the power of Christ might rest upon him.

And why did David long to see God's glory? Because God had stained all his pride, marred all his beauty, divested him of all boasting and self-glorying. Because the lovingkindness of God was better to him than life, David would praise Him with joyful lips. These were David's experiences, expressed, not only here, but in Psalm 119:25, where

he says, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken Thou me according to Thy word." With so firm a foundation as Jehovah's word, he could look up and say, "Thou, which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth" (Psalm 71:20). David's faith was for the night as well as for the day, for the storm as well as for the calm. That is a faith which is worth having, a faith to live in, and a faith to die in.

### **David's Desire**

"Thee" — "after Thee"; nothing else could satisfy David's heart but David's God. He had a heart for God, and Oh! wondrous mercy, he had God for his heart, though he did not realize it as he would. This is the essence of true faith; it is all in a Person. This is the essence of the Gospel. The Gospel of God is concerning His Son — "A Saviour, Christ the Lord." "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me." This, I repeat, is the work of grace. All short of this is only religion, and you see it at every step. What is man (unregenerate man in search of? Pleasure, Fame, Reputation, Power, Riches, a name in the world. Man will have anything, everything, without God. So also with the religious man! He will have his creed, his sect, his belief, his responsibility, his zeal and his earnestness, but if he have not Christ he will be lost though he have all the appliances and all the forms and ceremonies of religion. What are these things to nay heart, without a knowledge of God in Christ as my God? Nothing but deception and delusion.

So with the true Christian. The temptation is ever to add something to Christ, as if He were not enough, or to substitute something for Christ as if He were not necessary, instead of being All in all. We are told to seek "the blessing." But blessings without Christ are so many burdens which our poor, proud nature cannot carry. No! If Christ is our one object, then we have the Blessor with us, with all His Blessings with Him, making them to abound in us for our good and for His glory. We are told to rest upon the many "exceeding great and precious promises"; but promises without the Faithful Promiser to make them good in our experience, are but so many words — meaningless words to make our hearts ache with an unsatisfied longing. "That I may know Him" was the prayer of the Apostle. "That I may know Him" will be the desire and prayer of every Spirit-taught child of God. Yes, Spirit-taught; for look at the first verse of the Psalm, "My soul thirsteth for Thee." Now compare this with Psalm 65:9, "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it"; but see the rendering in the margin, "After thou hadst made it to desire rain." This brings us to...

### **David's Determination**

"My soul followeth hard after Thee." The original word is *dah-vak*, which means literally to stick to, cleave to (as with glue). "My bones cleave to my skin" (Psalm 102:5). "My soul cleaveth to the dust" (Psalm 119:25). "I have stuck unto Thy testimonies" (Psalm 119:31). "The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth unto the roof of his mouth for thirst" (Lamentations 4:4). But here it is with the preposition "after," and therefore "followeth hard after," suitably supplies the ellipsis and exactly expresses the meaning. Boaz says, "Abide here fast by my maidens" (Ruth 2:8). The word *dai-vak* occurs in Proverbs 18:24, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." David means, therefore, that he followed after the Lord, not at a distance, but having overtaken Him, he abode fast by Him.

There is everything to make the child of God do this: a world at enmity with Him; the devil at constant war with Him; a deceitful heart that cannot believe in Him; a cowardly self that will not acknowledge Him. Truly my soul followeth hard after Him; we long to breathe our desires to Him; but the flesh is weak, and language is lame, and ability is

wanting. We would live a life of praise to the God of all our mercies, but we cannot do the thing that we would. We desire that love should burn more fervently, but the flames break not forth as we would have them. It is a following hard after God; it is our determination. It is our "toiling in rowing," but Jesus Christ is on the mount of intercession, and soon He will come and bless His toiling ones with His own presence, with the full enjoyment of the peace and quietness which He now deals to them only in measure. Lastly, we come to...

### **David's Delight**

"Thy right hand upholdeth me." This is closely connected with the other experience, for why do we cleave to the Lord? Because the Lord cleaves to us, and holds us. We have the same word in Genesis 2:24. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife." The comment of the Holy Spirit on this is in Ephesians 5:32. "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." It is not, then, we who cleave to Christ, but it is Christ who cleaves to us. "Thy right hand upholdeth me." This is the secret of David's determination to cleave unto the Lord. Were it not for the unseen hand of Jehovah, there would be no following hard.

Now it is all explained. David's desire is now understood. The world does not understand these blessed spiritual realities. The world represents the poor seeker who would follow after and find God, as a weak woman struggling in the water, and trying to get hold of a cold lifeless rock, and in danger of being washed away by the very next wave. The Holy Spirit of God here represents her as a poor, weak vessel indeed, but held fast in the loving embrace of the living God Himself! Oh what a distance between man's imagination and God's revelation! This is David's delight here. Not Satan's subtlety, nor Saul's cruelty, nor his own infirmities, nor all of them together are of sufficient force to cut asunder this anion with Christ! The cleaving of David's spirit was the work of the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, it was the cleaving of the Heavenly One Himself. A union of the Lord's making is altogether incapable of the devil's breaking.

But there's more in this "right hand of the Lord." It is a beautiful figure. "The right hand of the Lord is exalted... doeth valiantly" (Psalm 118:16). This is the Lord who, having saved His people from their sins, now lives ever lives to make intercession for them, and at God's right hand is pledged to deliver them from all trial, tribulation, and temptation. David knew this. Hence his prayer, "That Thy beloved may be delivered, save with Thy right hand, and hear me" (Psalm 60:5). As salvation was accomplished by the Lord Jesus, so it is applied by the Holy Spirit; and what a mercy it is to know that all our wants, all our joys, are in the right hand of our risen and exalted Saviour! Blessed with the knowledge of this, the redeemed of the Lord can say, "O sing unto the Lord a new song, for He hath done marvellous things. His right hand and His holy arm hath gotten Him the victory" (Psalm 98:1).

He who triumphed over all our foes will protect and defend us from them until our life's end. But he will teach us to bless and praise Him for His grace, His goodness, and His gentleness, as did the sweet singers of Israel: "Thou hast also given me the shield of Thy salvation, and Thy right hand hath holden me up, and Thy gentleness hath made me great" (Psalm 18:35). Well may we, poor doubting, fearing, trembling ones, whose daily cry is, "Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe" (Psalm 119:117), apply and feed on this precious promise for our spiritual comfort and refreshment. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10).

# **Jehoshaphat: A Lesson for our Times**

The history of Jehoshaphat is written not only in the Book of Chronicles, but in the Book of Kings: and it is well to be quite clear as to the difference between those two books; or at least between Samuel and Kings on the one hand and Chronicles on the other. It is the same history, about the same people, mostly the same events; and yet there are differences between the two — not discrepancies, but differences. The natural man can only see something to stumble at in this: but when once we see the difference between the two books, we shall not only see nothing to stumble at, but we shall see the beauty and accuracy of the Word of God.

In the Books of Samuel and Kings we have the history viewed from MAN'S STANDPOINT — we have what the outward eye would see: but in Chronicles we have the same events from the DIVINE STANDPOINT — we are taken behind the scenes, and shown the secret reasons for the history. That is the difference. One example will be better than a great number of words.

In Samuel we read of Saul's death; and from all that we read there, it was the Philistines who slew him: but when we turn to the record of the very same event in the First Book of Chronicles and the 10th chapter, we see very little reference to how Saul died, but in the 13th and 14th verses we are told why: "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; And enquired not of the LORD: therefore He slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse." In i Sam. xxxi. it says that the Philistines slew Saul; but in Chronicles it says the Lord slew him. God had a double purpose to perform: He had to punish in Saul his great and grievous sin; and He had to accomplish His purpose of setting David upon the throne of Israel. So we see the simple event in one book, and the secret reasons for it in the other. Another example is seen in Hezekiah. His reign was divided into two great parts—his military exploits, and the reformation which he made in the Temple, and in the worship of God. In the Second Book of Kings (chap. xviii. 4-6) we have three verses about his Reformation, and in the Second Book of Chronicles three chapters (xxix. to xxxi.): and with regard to his military affairs it is just the reverse.

This will be the key whenever a difficulty arises in reading these books. This is why more than one history was necessary. We have the human and the Divine standpoint; that which was the outward appearance is given in Samuel and Kings: while that which had to do with "the heart," and the secret reason for it all, is given in Chronicles.

With this explanation we turn to the 19th chapter of the Second Book of Chronicles. There is not a word about this chapter in Kings. Why? Because it contains the whole secret of Jehoshaphat's life; and enables us to understand all that we read afterwards.

Now the opening words of any book, any history, or a part, of the Word of God are always important. The first words are everything; the first occurrence of any word, the first occurrence of any expression, is always valuable, giving the key to all that follows

afterwards. Look at the first words of the Lord Jesus. He must have spoken from the time that all children speak: but not a word that He uttered is recorded until He was twelve years of age. When God the Holy Spirit singled out for preservation the first words the Lord Jesus, there was a good reason. What are the words? Only these: "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" What wonderful words these are when we look at them in connection with the 40th Psalm, and the 10th of Hebrews, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." It was the "Father's business" that He had come to "about." Now put this utterance beside His last words, "IS FINISHED!" What was "finished"? The Father's business which the Lord Jesus came to "be about." To see the importance and beauty of this great principle, it will be well for us to follow that rule in what we say and write: for we have a saying about "first impression being very important."

Now the first impression that the Holy Spirit has given us about Jehoshaphat is this,— "And he strengthened himself against Israel" (2 Chron. xvii. i). These words are a key to all his history: and to understand it we must remember that when Jeroboam, King of Israel, set up the calves at Bethel and Dan, the idolaters' backs were turned again to the Temple of God. Jehoshaphat "strengthened himself against" idolaters and idolatry. We are to read this in all the Old Testament histories, in order to find what is pleasing to God. He leaves us in no doubt.

We further read that Jehoshaphat "placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah;" and in the third verse it says, "The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim." In those few words we have the key which will enable us to understand all that we read afterward. Jehoshaphat began his reign by strengthening himself against idolatry; and, in mentioning this, the Holy Spirit would have us bear in mind that every word of God is of importance in reading the Scriptures. Not only are the words perfect in themselves, but they are perfect also in their order, as well as in their truth.

Now turn to the next chapter, and we see in the first verse, "Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab." Are we not struck with this? He first "strengthened himself against Israel," and here he "joined affinity with Ahab." If we had not read those opening words before, we might think there was not much in these: but in the 19th chapter we are taken behind the scenes; and hence, when we read about his joining affinity with Ahab, we are startled. He had left off strengthening himself against Israel, and joined affinity with Ahab! This affinity means that he married his son Jehoram to Ahab's daughter, Athaliah. What an awful change, is it not? He began by strengthening himself against Ahab, and now he marries his son to Ahab's daughter. The Holy Spirit has recorded these words in order that we may note, and connect, and weigh the two facts, and see the consequence of his thus joining affinity with Ahab.

"And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance" (2 Chron. xviii. 2). If he had not joined affinity with Ahab, he would not have gone to partake of Ahab's hospitality; and we see at once that Ahab's daughter, and Ahab's sheep and oxen, accomplished what all Ahab's men of war could never have done: because the Lord was with him when he strengthened himself against Ahab, but, when he joined affinity with Ahab, the Lord was no longer with him, although His eye was upon him.

The next fact put before us, as the result of this visit, was that Ahab "persuaded him to go up to Ramoth-gilead" (v. 2) which was one of the Cities of Refuge. This city had fallen into the hands of the Syrians, and Ahab wanted to regain it, but he felt he could not do so

without Jehoshaphat's aid; so he said (v. 3), "Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead?" And Jehoshaphat answered him, "I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war."

Now there may have been some godly people in Judah who said, "We do not quite like this; we do not like Jehoshaphat joining in an enterprise with that wicked idolater Ahab": and there may have been some who answered, "Oh, but see what a good man he is; he would not do it if it were wrong; and see what a good work he is doing! It is one of our 'Cities of Refuge.' Ought we not to reclaim Ramoth-gilead which God gave it to us?" Whether that was ever said or not, I do not know, but we do know that it is exactly what people say to-day. "I am sure such a good man would not do such and such a thing if it were wrong." But we have to find out what God thinks of it. We have to ask what is "good" work. Do not take man's definition of a "good work" God has defined it in Eph. ii. 10 (marg.): where He speaks of "good works" as being works "which God hath prepared for us to walk in." Only those are good works; no other. They may be great works, but not "good." Had He "prepared" this work for Jehoshaphat? We may be perfectly certain from what follows that He had not.

Jehoshaphat not only pledged himself, but his people; and he was very uneasy. Look at the next verse: "And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to-day."

But this was too late, after he had said, "We will be with thee in the war." It is just like people today; they settle what they intend to do, and then "enquire of the Lord." Surely we have got beyond that. Surely we do not want the Lord to help us in anything unless it is His work, unless it is what He prepared for us to do. Surely we are far in advance of those who content themselves with being merely willing to do God's will. If we knew how infinitely wiser God's will is than our own, we should say, "Wilt Thou, Lord, order EVERYTHING for me?" and we should not be found settling what we will do, and then asking God to guide us or to help us in the doing of it. We can see that Jehoshaphat was uneasy; because, although he had made the agreement without God, he wanted to "enquire of the LORD" in the hope that the Lord would approve of what he had agreed to do. Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand" (v. 5). But they were "false prophets," the prophets of Baal, and Jehoshaphat knew it; and yet he had to sit there and hear what those men said. This must have made him still more uneasy; for the next verse says: "But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?" This shows that he was very troubled in his mind: for Ahab said, "There is yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him." Yes, that is always the case: if we are faithful spokesmen for the Lord, we shall be hated by the world; and if we are not hated by the enemy, it shows that we are not very faithful in our testimony. It is a very bad sign for us if the enemy can afford to treat us as a negligible quantity. If we are faithful to God, we are sure to be hated. "All that are determined to live godly in this present evil world will suffer persecution" (2 Tim. iii. 12). It is perfect true: and so, here, Ahab says: "There is yet one man, but hate him." Let us count it all joy if we are called to prove the truth of the Lord's words: "Marvel not that the world hateth you; ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." If we seek the friendship of the world, it will despise us well as hate us. If we are to be hated, let us, at least, be respected. We know the subsequent history of Jehoshaphat and how that Micaiah, the prophet of the Lord, intimated that Israel would lose their King as

the result of this expedition: "I saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains, sheep that have no shepherd."

But now look at Jehoshaphat. In what a pitiable position he finds himself. He had to sit there and see the faithful witness for God smitten, bound, and led away prison. He knew he was "a prophet of the LORD," and he did not lift up his voice on Micaiah's behalf. Oh, difficulties we get into when once we leave the straight path of faithfulness to God. And now the battle is coming on; but, before it begins, the Holy Spirit takes us aside into the camp of Israel to Jehosaphat, and lets us hear what the king of Israel says; He then He takes us into the camp of Syria, and lets us hear what the king of Syria says to his captains.

We all of us have more than one name; and each name bespeaks the special relationship in which we stand to the person who uses it. We have all a name by which we are known to strangers; another by which we are known to friends; and, in our own household, we have a name by which we are known only to the inner circle there. Each name tells us what the relationship is. And so with the Divine names. The Lord our God has many names by which He is known; and each name bespeaks a particular relationship. He is known as GOD! What is the relationship? Creator! How do we know that? What did we say above just now about the first occurrences being the key? Where is the first occurrence of the word "God" In Gen. i.i. There we have it thus: "In the beginning GOD created the heaven and the earth." Hence, wherever we have the word "God," we have the thought of the Creator "In the beginning God created" and you will see this all through the Scriptures.

Then in Gen. ii. you have JEHOVAH, or LORD, in small capital letters. He had created man, and He is now dealing with him on covenant ground. This word, therefore, expresses the covenant relationship between Himself and His People. Now we are in a position to understand what follows.

In the 20th verse we read: "And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes." We are then taken over into the camp of the Syrians, and hear the king of Syria, command "the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel." (v. 30). And with these two wonderful keys we can see and understand what is going to happen. Those two verses tell us the whole matter in a very few words. When the Syrians came into the battle, and saw Jehoshaphat in his royal robes, they thought he was the king of Israel. Oh, what a solemn thing it was to be mistaken for the war of Israel's kings! That was the position into which he step by step brought himself. What a mercy for him th God did not take him at his word when he said to Ahab, "I am as thou art."

In the 31st verse we read: "And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight, but Jehoshaphat cried out, and THE LORD helped HIM; and GOD moved THEM to depart from him. Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD, Jehovah, his Covenant God, helped him; and God the Creator moved them to depart from him. God stood only in the relation of Creator to those Syrians; but to Jehoshaphat He stood in His covenant relation, as LORD, and therefore He helped him. We do not know with what Almighty power the Create moved the Syrians, his creatures, to depart; but is not this verse wonderful? Does it not show us something of the perfection of the Divine Word? One would naturally think the different names were used to avoid tautology; but it was nothing of the kind.

Then we know the sequel. "And a certain man drew bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariot man, "Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host for I am wounded.'" The Syrians did not know Ahab, although they thought they saw him; but God guided the arrow to a little opening in his armour, and Ahab was killed. Jehoshaphat was not as Ahab; for Jehovah saw him as one of His own people.

And now we study this Scripture, which is "written for our learning," in order to discover what the Lord thought of all this. He had been pleased with Jehoshaphat when he "strengthened himself against Israel"; but what was His judgment when Jehoshaphat "joined affinity with Ahab"? The next chapter tells us. Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet Jehoshaphat, and said, — "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD."

Do we desire to please the LORD? Here is a lesson for us: Do not let us mix ourselves up with idolaters! Let us not "join affinity with them in any way whatever." If Romanists are not idolaters, then there never have been any idolaters. Romanists and Ritualists say they do not worship the actual bread, but Christ in it: but, if that is not idolatry, there is no idolatry in the world. Romish idolatry is far worse than any other. Romanists and Ritualists are not only idolaters, but they degrade their God by eating Him. We learn from this history that we must not have anything to do with idolaters if we wish to please God. "Whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning" it was written to teach us. The Word of God is not only as a light for our eyes, but a lamp for our feet, to show us where to place them in passing through the quagmire of this evil world. But, notwithstanding all that Jehoshaphat had gone through, we are told (chap. xix. i) that "he returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem." Note the contrast of this with Ahab's return. He did not return in peace. This is just a picture of how "the God of all grace" deals with us; He is our covenant God. The God of Jacob means practically the God "of all grace." The God of Jacob means the God that Jacob had to do with when he deserved nothing but wrath. God met him, and gave him unmerited grace and favour! He gave him everything, although he deserved nothing: therefore it is written: "Happy is he that hath the God Jacob for his help" (Ps, cxlvi. 5).

We should have thought that Jehoshaphat had now learn his lesson thoroughly: but look at the 35th verse of the 2nd. chapter. We are coming to the end of his reign, and must notice the beauty and perfection of the words, and the fulness of the truth that is in them. And after this terrible mistake, and the great trouble he got into after the wonderful grace of God that delivered him, after solemn warning he had received Jehoshaphat king of Judah JOINED HIMSELF with Ahaziah king of Israel." We might think, perhaps, that Ahaziah was a better man than his father; but no — it adds, "who did very wickedly." JOINED HIMSELF to "make ships to go to Tarshish." This was a commercial alliance. First we have a matrimonial alliance; then we have a military alliance; and, lastly, have a commercial alliance, and then we read, "Eliezer son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast JOINED THYSELF to Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works." That is the sum of it. Three times the Holy Spirit repeats these words "joined thyself" in order to show us the true secret of the evil: but from the Book of Kings (i Kings xxii. 48) we have this additional fact: — When the ships were broken, the enemy did not let him go without another assault. True, the ships which they were building were broken, but there were others, and Ahaz said, "Let my servants go with thy servants in the ship" but "Jehoshaphat would not." Thank God! He had learnt his lesson at last. Oh, that we may have grace to learn And now, there are two great lessons for our times.



(i) It is a remarkable thing that in England we have gone through this same experience in our national history. Our Jehoshaphat was James I. It is through him that we have our Authorised Version; he was a good but weak man.

James I., like Jehoshaphat, married his son Charles to an idolatress, Henrietta, the daughter of Henry, King of France. Of course we know he should not have done it; and, if he had read this narrative, he would have saved the country a vast amount of misery. It led to just the same trouble as it did in the case of Jehoshaphat; it led to national disaster. Jehoshaphat's sin made Jerusalem run with blood. Jehoram made a beginning by killing all his brethren (2 Chron. xxi); and then the Arabians came, and killed all his sons except one (Ahaziah, 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17; xxii. i); and then Athaliah slew all Ahaziah's sons, with the exception of Joash (2 Chron. xxii. 10-12). It was nothing but a scene of bloodshed and murder: and it was the same in England. James married his son Charles to this idolatress, and she came to England in great state. A writer of that period said: "If the people of London had known what troubles were coming with that woman, they would have put on mourning instead of their holiday attire." England was at war on behalf of the Protestant cause, and was engaged in the siege of Rochelle. As fast as the King and Council resolved to do certain things, it went through the Confessional, and all their plans were frustrated. Things went so far that Parliament actually sent a remonstrance to the King. It led to trouble; it ended in civil war. The whole country ran with blood. Charles lost his head, and James II lost his throne, all through this "joining affinity" with idolaters. The people who had gone through that sea of trouble were determined that England should never again pass through such an experience; and they set up great bulwarks, so as to prevent the throne of England ever be: occupied by a Papist, again. But for the last fifty years have been allowing these bulwarks to be destroyed. We have now little left beyond the King's Declaration, and the enemy is doing his utmost to take that away; and he will so if we are foolish enough to allow it. The cause of all the trouble was alliance with idolaters. Let us therefore learn this lesson in our private life, and in our public life; for it the root of all the evil.

(2) But there is another lesson. The former was politic. This is religious, and is connected with Christian work.

In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was formed in London. The late Mr. John Radley (a member of its committee tells us, in a pamphlet published in defence of that Society that one of the earliest letters on record was from a Roman Catholic Priest in Swabia, asking the Committee to circulate Roman Catholic Versions of the Latin Vulgate. But the founders of the Society would on no account join themselves thus with idolaters and their works. The request was repeated, but the answer was a final refusal and a grant of Protestant Versions.

Some time after this, one of the Society's agents abroad expended the sum of £200 in the purchase of these corrupts Versions; but the Committee of that day paid the whole sum out of their own pockets, "rather than involve the Society in a transaction, the propriety of which might be questioned." While these assaults were being made on the Society the enemy of God's Truth, and apparently without success a more insidious attempt to undermine its work was undertaken.

Where Ahab's men of war failed, Ahab's daughter succeeded. From the first, the aid of Socinians and Arians was invited; and, before many years had elapsed, a Committee was found which went back on the principles of their faithful predecessors, and formally

adopted the circulation of Romish or Vulgate Versions. They thus joined themselves in the use of the false Versions prepared by the enemies of the Protestant Faith.

The result of these alliances was disaster, as it had been in the cases of Jehoshaphat, in Judah, and of James I, in England: for these Romish Versions contained the Apocryphal books, and a great controversy arose which had its chief seat in Scotland. The late James and Robert Haldane and Dr. Andrew Thompson were the champions of a Pure Bible; while the circulation of the Apocrypha was defended by arguments which undermined the Canon of Scripture itself.

The first disaster came in the secession of Scotland.

Separate Bible Societies were formed in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen; which were afterwards united in "The National Bible Society of Scotland" in 1861. After this first disaster, new laws were passed, and added to the Constitution of the British and Foreign Bible Society, forbidding the circulation of the Apocryphal books in any form or manner. This was in 1824 and 1825.

But all this time the Society differed from other Societies in not opening its meetings with prayer; and the godly among its members set themselves to repair the breaches and prevent further trouble by moving, at the Annual Meeting of the Society in 1831, that the word "Christians" in Law ix. "should not be taken as including those who denied the Divinity and Atonement of Christ." This resolution was rejected: and then the second great disaster came, by secession of many of its "best and holiest" members, who formed a new Society, and called it "The Trinitarian Bible Society," the name being intended as an explanation and a justification of its separate existence. Prayer was adopted by the old Society on June 8, 1857 but Socinian ministers, being members, are still able "attend and vote" at the meetings of its committees; the Vulgate Versions are still circulated (though without Apocryphal books). As the circulation of the Apocrypha was defended arguments which undermined the Canon of Scripture, the circulation of these versions is defended by arguments which undermine the Inspiration of Scripture.

Moreover, the plea is made that good men (ie. Jehoshaphat) would not approve of this policy if it was wrong; and that it is a "good work" to circulate these books (as Jehoshaphat thought it good to regain Ramoth gilead).

But it is written: "Better is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. xvi. 32). Jehoshaphat did not rule his spirit; neither did he take the city.

But we are not left in any doubt as to the Lord's verdict on these alliances, either with Romish Versions, Jesuit policy, or Socinian fellowship. The word of the prophet Jehu is written for all time, and it comes with its solemn note of warning for all the Lord's People today: " Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD?" — 2 Chron. xix. 2.

# Praise for Divine Goodness

"Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men" (Psalm 107:3).

This sacred exclamation, this devout desire is repeated four times in this Psalm. It seems as though, when God had heard the cry of His people and had delivered them, they failed to glorify Him for it. Like their forefathers they were a faithless and thankless generation. This lack of gratitude seems stamped on human nature. Hence when the Lord had healed ten lepers of their despised, loathsome and incurable disease, only one came back to give God thanks: out of the ten, only one cried out, "O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness." May we learn this lesson ourselves. May our hearts be roused to thankfulness, that we may be uplifted by the spirit of our text to give thanks to His name for His wonderful works to the children of men. God's people are here regarded as crying to Him in their trouble, when in the hand of the enemy, when hungry and thirsty, when their soul fainted within them, when exceedingly depressed, when wandering in the wilderness, but when the time of deliverance came, their praise was silent. There was need for the exclamation of the text, "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness... Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."

## Two subjects of praise

There seem to be two subjects of praise here; the goodness of God, and His wonderful works, and both these are blessed subjects of meditation, as well as of praise. We are not sufficiently accustomed to dwell on God's attribute of goodness. Sometimes we dwell on God's mercy, and love, and holiness, but our text invites us to contemplate this glorious declaration, His goodness. In all that He has revealed of Himself in His Word what else can we discover? Yes, even in His judgments on sinners we can see it; for if He be not able to manifest His abhorrence of sin, where is His goodness in having mercy on sinners?

He will not overlook sin, "He will by no means clear the guilty," then how good is He in providing a surety for sinners and a saviour for the lost, and an atonement for the guilty. He will not overlook sin in His people; this Psalm is a witness of how He brought trouble on them, and chastened them sore, brought them low and afflicted them. Was this goodness? Yes, for if He had not thus visited them they would have gone on from iniquity to iniquity, and have never cried out for mercy. So would you, so would I. Oh, what goodness there is in thus bringing us back from our wanderings, our rebellion, our ingratitude and our departure from God!

Note David's words, "Thou Lord hast made me glad through Thy work" (Psalm 92:4). "Thy work," not "my work." This will indeed make us glad and ready to praise the Lord. That is why he says in the last verse of our Psalm, "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." See the work of God in Hannah after her prayer! She went home with her countenance no more sad, but with a blessed song in her mouth. See the work of God with Naomi, she went out contrary to faith in God. Though chastened sore she was not given over to death. God loved her the same in Moab as in Judah, and He made her glad through His work. In one Psalm David says, "I am shut up, I cannot get forth" but in another "Bring my soul out of prison." Why? "That I

may run after the vanities of the world? No! "That I may praise Thy name." This is the burden of this Psalm (verses 6, 13, 19, 28). And so, whether we look at the Lord's power, omniscience, omnipotence, immutability, compassion, or faithfulness, we find the goodness of God exhibited in all. If His mercy were exercised at the expense of His justice, His faithfulness would be violated, His truth would be broken. But God is good in all the perfection of His nature, and in all His attributes.

### **God's purposes**

We specially behold His goodness in His purposes. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all Thy pleasure." Just think for a moment of these purposes:

(1). He purposes to have a family as His own distinct from the world, distinct from angels, and to make them partakers of the Divine life. Was there not goodness in this? The whole posterity of Adam had perished but for the goodness of this purpose.

(2). Moreover He purposed to adopt them as sons, to give them into the hands of a Surety under solemn responsibilities. He purposed that this Surety should deliver them from the guilt of sin, from the dominion of sin, and from the power of Satan, and to be "zealous of good works." Oh, the goodness of this wonderful purpose!

Man can speak about the goodness of God in creation, how His sun shines on the evil and the good, how His showers descend on the just and the unjust, how He giveth food to all flesh, and the fruits of the earth in due season. All has been His own doing, and it excites our wonder! Others can speak of His goodness in providence, how He has protected righteous kings, delivered them from their enemies, and caused the winds to blow and change for this purpose. But only those who know His goodness as displayed to His living Church can really enter into the words of our text and say "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men."

You may view it as "putting down the mighty from their seat, and exalting the humble and meek." You may view it as overturning empires and kings; there is goodness in all this, but it pales before that which is connected with the salvation in Christ Jesus. All the purposes of redemption, satisfaction, substitution, all the purposes of operation upon sinners' hearts in their calling, justification, sanctification, preservation and glorification, all were purposed in the goodness of God, and therefore cannot fail. You could not talk about goodness if all these things were matters of chance and might all fail. If all were left to the caprice of man, and the decision of carnal worms of the earth. But when we see all that pertains to the salvation of a sinner as settled and secured in the eternal purpose of God, then we exclaim, "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"

### **Goodness in the Saviour**

Then look at it as displayed in the Saviour Himself. All is goodness here. Had all this purpose to save and pardon been left to the individual transactions of carnal men, to the efforts of mortals all must have been a failure! But when we look at this eternal purpose, anointing, ordaining, appointing, providing, giving, sending a Saviour in the person of Christ, constituting Him as the Covenant Head, making Him "head over all things to His Church," constituting every individual believer a member of His Body, trusting them all to His care so that He should not lose one even in death, numbering them every one into His hand, then we see the goodness of God who purposed all this in Christ. Then we see the goodness of our precious, glorious Saviour in accomplishing all that he undertook. "Then

said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God, yea, Thy law is within my heart" (Psalm 40:7,8). Oh, what goodness! "Lo, I come" equal with the Father, sharing the eternal glory. He looked down as it were and saw the fallen, apostate race, the devil leading them captive, and He undertakes to rescue His own sheep. He saw the depravity of man's heart, and He undertook to subdue its enmity, conquer its rebellion and fit His arrows sharp and fast in men's consciences. Was not this goodness? Then it is not as if He left them alone! If so, they would have destroyed themselves every one.

### **God's goodness to the Church**

We pass over the goodness of His earthly life and sufferings and death, all was goodness in the Good Shepherd giving His life for the sheep, but let us turn our thoughts to Him now. Ascended up again to the right hand of the Father, ever living to make intercession for us, not tired of His work, not leaving us ever, when He has bestowed upon us the spirit of prayer — no, for we use His name and plead His merits and He intercedes and prays for us Himself. Oh, what goodness! And while our souls are overwhelmed with it, hear him saying, "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 lovedest Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

And not only individually, but collectively we see this goodness to His Church. The members thereof could not exist a day without His own preservation. They must be ruined by their own depravity. The devil would destroy them if it were possible, but Christ preserves them; their preservation is in Christ Jesus. So with the increase of His Church. The Lord is the great Worker, and whilst He works, there is no rebel so proud, no enemy so stout, no infidel so bold, no sinner so vile, but Christ can conquer him and His goodness can lead him to repentance.

### **God's goodness in His gift**

Then mark the goodness of God in the gift of the Holy Spirit. He is now the Doer of those wonderful works to the children of men. What a wonderful work when He creates in a depraved heart a capacity for the enjoyment of God. When He makes the dead to hear the voice of the Son of God, and gives him life to praise God. It is this that makes all the difference between carnal men and spiritual men, between the world and the Church of God, between believers and the ungodly. No one can enjoy God but living souls, those into whom the Spirit of God has breathed the breath of life, and who have become "living souls" in this new creation. Apart from this the duties of religion (so-called) are an irksome task, but with it they are real Christianity, the soul's meat and drink. Then His wonderful works are manifested in His comforts, His consolations, His implanting of graces, fulfilling of promises, providing strength equal for the day, and taking of the things of Christ and revealing them to His people. It was the contemplation of all this that established the confidence of St. Paul: "Being confident of this very thing that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it into the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"

Where this goodness is realized, and these wonderful works experienced the praise will be real. It will not be the repetition of prayers, it will not be mere sounds of harmonies correctly sung, it will not consist merely in a bright service, a pretty tune and appropriate words, but these precious truths will be the experimental expression of the heart. Oh that

men — ! What men? Find the answer in verse 2. "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." No other men can say so. Say what? "Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever (verse 1). Because the Lord hath forgiven their iniquity, redeemed them from the hand of the enemy, from the curse of the law, from the power of Satan, from the thralldom of sin; because He hath redeemed them with His precious blood.

Are there any who disobey the exhortation of this Psalm, and have never praised God for His great salvation? Man can glorify man, glorify himself, glory in his possessions, his acquirements, but forget to glorify God. Let us rather be of the number of those who cry with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."

## Right Division

The one great requirement of the Word is grounded on the fact that it is "the Word of truth." And this fact is so stated as to imply that, unless the Word is thus rightly divided we shall not get "truth"; and that we shall get its truth only in proportion to the measure in which we divide it rightly. The Requirement is thus stated in II Tim. 2:15: "Give diligence to present thyself approved to God, a workman having no cause to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth."

The word in question here *orthotomounta*. As this word occurs in no Greek writer, or even elsewhere in the New Testament, we can get little or no help from outside, and are confined to Biblical usage.

It is used twice in the Septuagint for the Hebrew *vashar*, to be right, or straight. In Prov. 3:6; 11:5, the Hebrew is *Piel*, to make right (as in II Chron. 23:30; Prov. 15:21; Isa. 40:3; 45:2,13). But it is the Greek word that we have to do with here, in II Tim. 2:15; and we cannot get away from the fact that *temno* means to cut; or, from the fact that we cannot cut without dividing. To divide belongs to the very nature of the act of cutting. Even as applied to directing one's way it implies that we divide off one way from others — because we desire to follow the right way and avoid the wrong.

The only Biblical guide we have to the usage of the word is in Prov. 3:6, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." In the margin the R.V. gives, "make straight or plain" as an alternative rendering for "direct." But our ways can only be made straight or plain by God's causing us to proceed on our Way aright — i.e., by avoiding all the ways that are wrong, and going in the one way that is right; in other words, the right way is divided off from all the wrong ways.

What else can the word mean in II Tim. 2:15? It matters little what others have thought or said. We could fill a page with their names and their views, but we should learn but little and only become confused. The duties of Priests, Furriers, and Ploughmen have been referred to as indicating the correct meaning. But we need not leave the Biblical usage, which associates the word with guidance in the right way.

The scope of the verse plainly teaches that:

Our one great study is to seek God's approval, and not man's.

We are to show all diligence in pursuing this study.

As workmen, our aim is to have no cause to be ashamed of our work.

In order to gain God's approval and avert our own shame we must rightly divide the word of truth.

To do this we must direct our studies in the right way.

This great requirement is associated with the Word in its special character as being the Word of truth; i.e., "the true Word."

All this tells us that we shall not get the truth if we do not thus rightly divide it; and that we shall get the truth only in proportion to our "rightly dividing" it.

Other titles of the Word have their own special requirements. As "the engrafted Word" it must be received with meekness (Jas. 1:21). As "the Faithful Word" we must hold it fast (Tit. 1:9). As "the Word of life" we must hold it forth (Phil. 2:16). But, because this is "the Word of truth," its paths must be well noted, the sign-posts must be observed, the directions and guides which are in the Word itself must be followed. We are to "give diligence" to this great Requirement of the Word just because it is "the Word of truth."

### **Rightly dividing the Word as to its Subject Matter**

It is the common belief that every part of the Bible is to be interpreted directly as referring to the Church of God; or as pertaining to every person, at every stage of the world's history. This neglect of the precept to rightly divide it is an effectual bar to the right understanding of it, and to our enjoyment in its study. This non-understanding of the Word is the explanation of its neglect, and this neglect is the reason why so many who should be feeding on the spiritual food of the Word are so ill-fed in themselves; and so ill-furnished for every good work (II Tim. 3:17). While the Word of God is written for all persons, and for all time, yet it is as true that not every part of it is addressed to all persons or about all persons in all time.

### **Three distinct classes of persons**

Every word is "written for our learning," and contains what all ought to know: yet, its subject-matter is written according to the principle involved in I Cor. 10:32, and is written concerning one or other of three distinct classes of persons:

"The Jews,  
The Gentiles,  
and The Church of God."

According to the general belief, everything that goes to make up the subject-matter of the Word of God is about only one of these three: and, whatever may be said about the other two (the Jews and the Gentiles), all is to be interpreted of only the one, viz., the Church of God. This comes of that inbred selfishness which pertains to human nature: which, doing with this as with all beside, is ever ready to appropriate that which belongs to others. But no greater impediment to a right understanding of the Word could possibly be devised.

We are quite aware that, in saying this, we lay ourselves open to the charge which has been made by some, that we are "robbing them of their Bible." But the charge is groundless; and it arises from a total misapprehension of what we mean, or from a perversion of what we have said. It is necessary, therefore, for us to repeat, and to state categorically our belief that every word from Genesis to Revelation is written for the Church of God. There is not one word that we can do without: not one word that we can dispense with, without loss. We deprive no one of any portion of the Word of Truth. We protest against robbery in this sphere, as in all others.

It is not we who rob the Church of God; but it is they who rob the Jews and the Gentiles. We would fain restore stolen property to the rightful owners; property which has been stolen by the very persons who charge us with robbery! We may indeed retort in the words of Rom. 2:21: "Thou that preachest a man should not steal, Dost thou steal?" We are prepared to make this counter-charge, and to sustain it. The charge against us we disclaim; while those who make it are themselves guilty of the very offence for which they condemn us.



We hold that what is written to and about the Jew, belongs to and must be interpreted of the Jew. We hold that what is written of and about the Gentile; belongs to and must be interpreted of the Gentile. We hold that what is written to and about the Church of God, belongs to and must be interpreted of the Church of God. Is this robbery? or, Is it justice? Is it stealing? or, Is it restitution?

Evidence of the misappropriation (to use a milder term) is furnished by the Bible which lies open before us. In speaking of the page-headings of Isa. 29 and 30, in our current editions of the English Bibles (KJV), in which the former is declared to be "Judgment upon Jerusalem"; and the latter, "God's mercies to his church." What is this but not only wrongly dividing the Word of truth, but the introduction of error, by robbing Jerusalem of her promised "mercies" and appropriating these stolen mercies to the Church? while the "judgments" are left for Jerusalem, just as burglars take away what is portable, and leave behind what they do not want or cannot carry away.

We believe God when He says that the Visions shown to Isaiah were "concerning Judah and Jerusalem" (Isa. 1:1). True, they were written for us; and "for our learning " (Rom. 15:4); but they are not addressed to us, or written concerning us, but "concerning Judah and Jerusalem."

It would be an act of dishonesty, therefore, for us thus to appropriate, by interpreting of ourselves, that which was spoken of Israel. In like manner, if we take, as some do, the words of the Epistle to the Ephesians as though they were written to or concerning the Gentiles (or the unconverted world), then we not only rob the Church of God of its most precious heritage, but we teach the "Universal Fatherhood of God" instead of His Fatherhood of only those who are His children in Christ Jesus. It will thus be seen that unless we rightly divide the subject-matter of the Word of truth we shall not get the truth, but shall get error instead.

Every part of the Bible is written "concerning" one or other of these three divisions, or classes of persons. Sometimes in the same passage or book there may be that which is concerning all three. Sometimes a whole book may be concerning only one of these three, and the other two be altogether excluded. We may all three learn much from what is written of only the one; for the inspired, God-breathed Word is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction," for all who shall read it (II Tim. 3:16). That which happened to Israel happened unto them for ensamples; "and they are written for our admonition " (1 Cor. 10:11). "Whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning" (Rom. 15:4).

But while this is so, and remains true; what we mean is that every Scripture is written concerning one or other of these three classes; and is especially addressed to that particular class. This class has therefore the prior claim to that Scripture. The interpretation of it belongs to that class; while the other two may apply it to themselves, and are to learn from it. But, inasmuch as it is only an application and not the interpretation, such application must be made only so far as it agrees with the interpretation of those Scriptures which are specially addressed to and relate to such class. Otherwise we shall find ourselves using one truth to upset another truth; we shall be setting what is true of one class in opposition to what is true of another class.

All that we are concerned with now is the right dividing of the subject-matter of the Bible, which is three-fold. And the great requirement of the Word as to this is, that we should, and must, whenever we study any portion of the Word of God, ask the question, "Concerning whom is this written?"

Whichever of the three it may be, we must be careful to confine and limit the interpretation of that passage to the class whom it concerns; while we may make any application of it to ourselves so long as it does not conflict with what is written elsewhere concerning "the church of God."

We must not take that which concerns the Jew and interpret it of the Church. We must not take that which concerns the Church and interpret it of the world. We must not take what is said concerning the Gentile and interpret it of the Church. If we do, we shall get darkness instead of light, confusion instead of instruction, trouble instead of peace, and error instead of truth.

# Stablished — Strengthened — Settled

"The God of all grace who hath called us unto His eternal glory, by Christ Jesus, after that we have suffered awhile, make you perfect. stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (I Peter 5:10,11).

These words contain a prayer for a very special blessing. But in order to obtain it we are cast upon the God of all grace — God, who performeth all things for us. Thus we have in this verse four things:

- (1) The God of all grace.
- (2) His effectual calling.
- (3) The necessary suffering.
- (4) The certain blessing.

## 1. The God of all grace

We must not dwell on the first of these (if we are to consider the others), for it is a subject in itself — a vast subject. For we are lost in wonder, love, and praise, the moment we enter upon the consideration of "the God of all grace," and survey His sovereign grace, His redeeming, grace, His saving grace, His justifying grace, His providing grace, His abounding grace, His exceeding grace: and all this uninfluenced grace, invincible grace, inexhaustible and immutable grace.

What grace! All treasured up in Jesus Christ who is "full of grace," and He alone. It can never be said of any mortal as it is said of Mary, "Hail, Mary, full of grace!" in perversion of Luke 1:28, in all the Romish versions. No! all grace is treasured up for us in Christ, and He holds it at His own disposal. Let us pass on to the second point.

## 2. His effectual calling

"Who hath called us unto His eternal glory," not, who is calling us, not, who may call us, but "who hath called us," a past, completed act, and that not to a temporal glory, nor to a fleeting transient glory, but to a glory which knew no beginning and can know no end. If He has called us, it is to His eternal glory. If He has called us, we shall have experienced our inability to obey. That is why it is here, "The God of all grace." When God commands, the first thing we do is to discover our inability to obey; it is this which fills us with anxiety to be saved.

When He calls, we immediately discover that we are like Mephibosheth in II Samuel 9. We are at *Lo-Debar*, a "place of no pasture." We have nothing really to sustain us, we are clothed in filthy garments, we are not worthy to come into the King's presence, not meet to sit at the King's table, and, moreover, "lame on both feet" (verse 13). When King David called Mephibosheth, how could he obey? But David called him not for his own sake. He said, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" (verse 1). "Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy Father's sake" (verse 7). Still, how could he obey, being lame on his feet? We learn in verse 15, only by being sent for, fetched and carried. And so with us. The Lord Himself must be the carrier, the sender, the fetcher, or the appointer of those who shall do so.

Like the man sick of the palsy; he was carried to the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is written, "Jesus seeing their faith." Why is it that we immediately and universally think of the four and not of the five. Why do we exclude the man himself? Had he no faith, no desire? How do we know but that it was he who urged his friends to carry him? It is only our own perversity that thus limits God's grace. Yes, and "When Jesus saw their faith" He saw the desire of His own heart, the work of His own hands. Where there is the Master's gracious call, there will also be His careful carrying.

"Who hath called us unto His eternal glory?" How does He call? By Jesus Christ, it says. Yes, it is all by Christ, with Christ, through Christ, in Christ. Called by Christ to the experience of identification with Him in the glory of God the Father, we are comforted with the fact that as the Head is, so are the members of the body of Christ. As the Father sees Him, so He sees His members. They are glorified together in the purpose of God. But as Jehovah the Spirit brings them into the apprehension of what they are in Christ, it is then that they discover their corrupt and depraved condition. It is then they cry, "I am black," "I am vile," "I am undone." But the declaration of His grace-filled lips is, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." That is glory! Can we believe it? Only as He brings this precious truth home to us by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is thus that we, as the members of His body, realize something of the glory we possess in and through Him.

### **3. The necessary suffering**

"After that ye have suffered awhile." Have we been called to His eternal glory? Then we have the call to suffering also. Has Christ left us the legacy of His peace (John 16:33)? He has left us the legacy of tribulation also. Then in the world we shall have tribulation. Do the consolations of Christ abound in us? Then the sufferings also abound (II Corinthians 1:5). But we have this testimony concerning them: "That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto, for, verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation, even as it came to pass, and ye know" (I Thessalonians 3:3, 4). Is it not a mercy to know this blessed truth, so that we may not be moved? To know that there is not a pain or anxiety or trial or care but what comes in all wisdom, and is accompanied by infinite love.

Have you experienced any of them? What have you done with them? Does your conscience condemn you for having taken them to anyone but to Him, who calls you by them to Himself? May the Lord ever enable us to carry our anxieties, our cares, our distresses and our sorrows to Himself. He alone can comfort us, He alone can deliver us in His own good time. Hence we pray in our service, "We commend to Thy Fatherly goodness all those who are anyways afflicted in mind, body or estate, that it may please Thee to comfort and relieve them according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions." Our hearts respond to that. There is true fellowship there. "The God of all grace who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Christian sympathy breathed in that prayer.

If we are called to His eternal glory, we shall be called to suffering also. If we are called to experience spiritual union with a risen Christ in the heavenlies, to enjoy fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:6), we shall also experience conflict with wicked spirits in the same heavenlies (Ephesians 6:12). The very place of favour is the scene of conflict. You see this in the case of the Lord Jesus Himself. "Lo, a voice from heaven saying, 'This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.' Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." You see the same

in His servant Paul (II Corinthians 12:1-10). Paul was in the third heaven, blest with extraordinary revelations of eternal glory, yet there was the necessary suffering, "a messenger of Satan to buffet him." "A man in Christ," yet a man "buffeted" by an angel of Satan. But after he had suffered awhile he was stablished, strengthened, settled by those gracious words, "My grace is sufficient for thee for My strength is made perfect in weakness." This brings us to...

#### **4. The certain blessing**

"Make you perfect." What are we to understand by these words? It is a word of simple meaning, but full of instruction. It means to adjust, put in order again. Among the Greeks it was the technical surgical term for setting a bone, a medical term for making up and preparing medicine. It was also a nautical term for fitting out, refitting or repairing a ship. We have its various meanings, all true in a spiritual sense, expressed in this prayer; it is the prayer for us to pray, and it expresses the work of God for us.

The following are some occurrences of the word, and they illustrate its use: (Matthew 4:21), "He saw other two brethren... with their father mending their nets." (Galatians 6:1). "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such a one." (Hebrews 10:5), "A body hast Thou prepared (margin fitted) Me." (I Corinthians 1:10), "Perfectly joined together." Who can mend our ways and repair our nets? Restore us when overtaken in a fault, prepare our hearts, join us together in the same mind, the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, but the God of all grace?

It is He also who can stablish us. This speaks of permanency. "It came to pass when the time was come that He should be received up He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51); i.e., His purpose was stablished, fixed, settled; nothing could move it. "And the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you (plural) that he may sift you (plural) as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted strengthen (i.e., stablish) thy brethren'" (Luke 22:31,32). That is the very thing Peter is doing by the Holy Spirit here in our text. He was obeying by the Spirit this very command. May he by these words stablish us his brethren now. His very example stablishes us, for though Peter failed and fell, his faith did not fail, it was the faith of the operation of God, and neither men nor demons, neither Peter's sins, Peter's wavering, or Peter's doubting could ever mar the fair beauty of that faith which stood not "in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" ( I Corinthians 2:5).

Peter's faith had many a shaking, but it was stablished upon the truth of his God, upon the person and work and righteousness of Jesus Christ. A faith, so stablished by the "God of all grace," reconciles the heart to His mysterious and sometimes perplexing providences, and nothing shall ever remove it from its foundation. Peter does not say that we are to arrive at any state of perfection, or at this stablishing by praying, by believing, or by any act of faith or act of surrender as it is popularly called. No. He looks to the God of all grace to do it all for us.

"Strengthen." Why are those who are stablished in Christ to be strengthened? Because in themselves they are weak and often faint and weary. See how we read of this strengthening in the case of Paul (II Corinthians 12:5-10). Paul had no strength out of Christ, and yet he was "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might" (Ephesians 6:10). He could do all things through Christ strengthening Him (Philippians 4:13). He was "strengthened with all might according to His glorious power unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness" (Colossians 1:11). God, having commanded strength for His

people, secures it to them in the Son of His love, and performs it in them by His Spirit. Therefore this is their supplication. "Strengthen, O God, that which Thou hast wrought for us" (Psalm 68:28).

"Settled." Settled means grounded, founded as on a foundation. What mercy to be grounded and settled in the faith so as not to be "moved away from the hope of the gospel" (Colossians 1:23). It is a great blessing to be on God's sure foundation, but it is a greater blessing to be settled thereon. If we know anything of this spiritual settling upon the one foundation which God has laid in Christ, that settling will be experienced in connection with suffering, stablishing, and strengthening.

Those who are by the God of all grace called unto His eternal glory, and are suffering for a little while in fellowship with a despised and rejected Lord, who are perfect only in Christ, those whom He is stablishing, strengthening and settling in the faith, the fear, the truth of God, will be able to sing the glorious doxology of I Peter 5:11, "To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

# The Christian's Greatest Need

There is one thing that the Christian needs more than he needs any other thing. One thing on which all others rest; and on which all others turn.

It is certain from the Word of God, and also from our own experience, that "we know not what we should pray for as we ought." But "the Spirit Himself helpeth our infirmities" (Romans 8:26). He knoweth what we should pray for. He knoweth what we need. He maketh intercession for us and in us. He teacheth us how to pray, and in Ephesians 1:17, we have His prayer set forth in these words: "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."

This, then, must be our greatest need: A true knowledge of God.

If the Holy Spirit thus puts it before all other things, it must be because it is more important than any other thing; yea, than all others put together.

This, it is, that lies at the foundation of the Christian Faith; at the threshold of Christian life.

It is the essence of all trust.

We cannot trust a person if we do not know him. At least, it is safer for us not to do so; and as a rule we do not.

But on the other hand, when we know a person thoroughly well, we cannot help trusting him! No effort to trust is required when we perfectly know a person. The difficulty then is, not to trust.

Why, then, do we not thus trust God? Is not the answer clear? It is because we do not know Him!

Thus we see how this knowledge of God is our greatest need; the very first step of our Christian course. Our trust will ever be in proportion to our knowledge.

If we knew, for example, a billionth part of God's infinite wisdom, we should see our own to be such utter folly, that we should not merely be "willing" for His will, but we should desire it. It would be our greatest happiness for Him to do and arrange all for us. We should say, "Lord, I am so foolish and ignorant; I know nothing, and can do nothing; I can see only this present moment; I know nothing of to-morrow. But Thou canst see the end from the beginning. Thy wisdom is infinite, and thy love is infinite; for, our Saviour and Lord could say of us to Thee, as Thy beloved Son — "Thou hast loved them, as thou has loved me" (John 17:23). Do, then, Thine own will. This is my desire, the desire of my heart. This is what I long for above 'all things.' "

This is far beyond being "willing." We may be willing for a thing, because we cannot help it. It may be even a low form of Christian fatalism. A Mahomedan may be thus resigned to the will his god.

But what we are speaking of is far, far beyond the modern gospel of holiness; far in advance of merely being "willing."

Those who are in the still lower condition; not "willing," but "willing to be made willing," do not see that this condition arises from not knowing God; not knowing how infinite is His love, how vast is His wisdom, how blessed and how sweet is His will. If they did but know something of this, they would yearn for His will. It would be the one great earnest desire and longing of their hearts for Him to do exactly what is pleasing in His own sight, in us, and for us, and through us.

Not knowing this secret, Christians, everywhere, are striving and labouring to be "willing" by looking at themselves; and by some definite "act of faith" to do something of themselves. Instead of thinking of His wisdom and His love, they are thinking of themselves and of their "surrender."

But this is labour in vain. Even if it should seem to accomplish something, it is only like tying paper flowers on a plant. They may look natural and fair; but they have no scent, and no life; no fruit, and no seed. It is an artificial, fictitious attempt to produce that which, if they did but know God, would come of itself, without an effort: yea, the effort would be to stop or hinder the mighty power of a true knowledge of God.

The trouble with us is, if we probe our hearts to their depth, that, at the bottom, we think we know better. We would not say it for the world, we would hardly admit it to ourselves. But there it is; and the difficulty of being "made willing" is the proof of it.

If we really knew Him, and believed that He knows better than we do what is good for us, there would be no effort whatever, but only a blessed irrepressible desire for His will.

Before we proceed further to consider some other of the practical effects of this knowledge, let us notice the fact that there are two words in the original for this knowledge of God, two verbs which mean to know. As these are used some times in the very same verse, it is very important that we should carefully distinguish that which the Holy Spirit has so especially emphasised. There are, indeed, six Greek words which are translated to know, but these two are the most common.

1. The one, *oida*, means to know without learning or effort; and refers to what we know intuitively, or as a matter of fact or history.
2. The other, *ginōskō*, means to get to know; by effort, or experience, or learning. (See Two Words for Knowledge for more information).

### **Practical Christian living**

The importance of getting to know God is our one great need. This knowledge is not only the basis of trust in God; not only the foundation of Christian faith; but of Christian life. Practical Christian life and walk will be in direct proportion to our knowledge of God.

Look at Colossians 1:9, 10, where we have the practical outcome of the prayer in Ephesians 1:17. In Ephesians 1:17 we have the prayer itself. In Colossians 1:9, 10, we have it applied for our correction and instruction. Carefully weigh the words. "For this cause, we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire" — Desire what? "that ye might be filled with the knowledge (the noun from No. 2, i.e., acquired knowledge) of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Why? For what purpose? To what end? "That ye may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Then, to walk worthy of the Lord, I must know Him? Exactly so. If I would please Him in all things I must know what will please Him. Is this all that is required? All that I



have to do? Yes, this is all. Then I have not to rush hither and thither; from Convention to Convention? No, I have to sit down before God's Word, and get to know Him through that. There is no other way of getting to know Him. And He has given us His Word, and revealed Himself therein, on purpose that we may study it and find out what it is that pleases Him; what it is He loves; what it is He hates; what it is He does. To get to know His wisdom, His will, His infinite love, His almighty power, His faithfulness, His holiness, His righteousness, His truth, His goodness and mercy, His long-suffering, His gentleness, His care, and all the innumerable attributes of our great and glorious God.

See how this knowledge is absolutely necessary, if we would please God.

We cannot please any of our friends unless we know what they are pleased with. If we would make a present to one of them, we naturally think, or try to find out, what it is he or she needs or would be pleased to have. If we are receiving a guest, we naturally try to remember or find out what pleases him in food or drink, in occupation or recreation. If we cannot find this out, then we have to guess at it, and we may or may not succeed in our effort to please. We may take the greatest trouble and pains, and yet, after all, we may arrange for or provide the very thing which is most disliked. It is even so with our God.

### **Where can we go?**

How are we to find out the things that please Him? How are we to discover the things He approves?

### **Only from His Word.**

There, and there alone can we get to know Him. There alone shall we learn the fulness of the Spirit's prayer for us in Ephesians 1:17; and the blessed practical outcome of it in Colossians 1:9, 10.

No man has this knowledge of God intuitively. No minister can even help in imparting it, except in and by the ministry of that Word. His own thoughts are valueless. Only so far as he enables us to understand that Word can he be of any assistance to us. He may be mistaken himself, and very easily be a hindrance instead of a help. God has revealed Himself in His written Word, the Scriptures of truth; and in the Living Word His Son, Jesus Christ. And it is by the Communicated Word revealed in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that we begin thus to get to know Him, whom to know is Life Eternal.

This is the one great reason why the written Word is given to us. It is not given merely as a book of general information, or of reference; but it is given to make known the invisible God.

Why do we read it? Why do we open it at all? What is, or ought to be, our object in reading it?

Do we read a portion that someone else has selected for us? Do we read that portion because we have promised someone we would do so? Or do we open it, and sit down before it with the one dominant object to find out God; to discover His mind; to get to know His will.

Those who are not thus engaged make their own god out of their own thoughts and imaginations. They have to fall back on what they think their god likes!

Thousands make their gods with their hands, out of wood, or stone, or bread. Thousands more make him out of their own heads. But, being ignorant of God's Word, they are alike ignorant of the God Who has there revealed Himself.

## **We must worship Him in spirit**

See the power of this truth as it is applied to what is called "Public Worship" or "Divine Service." How many still worship "the unknown God," and serve themselves; and do what is pleasing in their own eyes, studying only their own tastes! Ignorant of that great rubrick, John 4:24, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (i.e., truly in spirit), they talk of the kind of service they prefer, and say, "I don't like that at all"; or, "I do like that so much"; as though "places of worship," so-called, were opened merely for persons to go in and do what pleases themselves, forgetful of that word "must," which dominates the whole sphere of what we call worship.

Worship "must" be only with the spirit. We cannot worship God — who is a Spirit — with our eyes, by looking on at what is being done. We cannot worship God with our noses, by smelling incense, whether ceremonially or otherwise used. We cannot worship God with our ears, by listening to music, however well it may be "rendered." No! worship cannot be with any of our senses; or by all of them put together. It must be spiritual, and not sensual. The worshippers must be spiritual worshippers, for "the Father seeketh such to worship Him" (John 4:23).

How many of such worshippers frequent our churches and chapels? How many are still worshipping "the unknown God" (Acts 17:23)?

Is it possible that, if the true God were known — the great, the High and Holy God, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands; the God who inhabiteth eternity; the God in whose sight the very heavens are not clean, and who chargeth His angels with folly — is it possible, we ask, that any who know Him could imagine, for one moment, that He "seeks" or could be pleased with, or accept, or regard a congregation turning the Bible into "a book of the words," and listening, for example, to a girl singing a solo, getting as high a note as she can, and holding it out as long as she can! Is that what The Great and Infinite God is seeking? Is that the occupation of the heart with Himself which He says He "must" have? No indeed! and the greater the ignorance of God, the deeper and more degraded will become the accompaniments of what is called "Public Worship."

## **A true knowledge of Christ**

So far we have spoken only of a knowledge of God — the Father. But it is also of the greatest importance that we should have a true knowledge of Christ.

This is the Christian's one object, as well as his greatest need.

This is set forth with remarkable clearness and force in Philippians 3. In the ninth verse we have our standing in Christ expressed in the words:

### **"Found in Him."**

This is explained as not having our own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ; "the righteousness which is of God by faith."

Clothed in this righteousness, nothing of self is seen by God. Like the stones in the Temple, they were covered over first with cedar-wood; and the cedar-wood was covered over with gold. Then it is added, "there was no stone seen." These words are not necessary either for the grammar, or for the sense; for how could the stone be seen if thus doubly covered up? No! the words are graciously added to emphasize the antitype, and to impress upon us the blessed fact that, when covered with Christ's righteousness there is nothing of self seen in our standing before God. We are already "in the heavenlies, in Christ"; and are

comely in all His comeliness, perfect in all His perfection, accepted in all His merit, righteous as He is righteousness; yea, holy as He is holy, and loved as He is beloved. All this is included in those words, "found in Him."

And being thus "found in Him" for our standing, we have in verses 20, 21 our hope; which, is to be:

### **Like Him**

In resurrection and ascension glory at His coming. Hence "we look for the Saviour, 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 to subdue all things unto himself."

This is our "blessed hope." We have referred to it here, and not in the order in which it stands in this chapter, in order to show what it is that lies between the two — the beginning and the end of our Christian course. What is it that is to fill the place between these two? What is to occupy our hearts from the moment when we were in Christ, who is our life, to the moment when we shall be like Christ, who shall be our glory? What is the one object that is to ever fill our hearts and occupy our minds?

### **"That I May Know Him."**

This is henceforth the Christian's great object. Nothing but this aim to get to know Christ (for this is the word used here, in Philippians 3:10).

As verse 9 contained the explanation of the words "found in Him," so this verse (10) contains the explanation of how and why we are to get to know Christ.

We are henceforth no longer to know Him after the flesh, but to get to know Him as risen; the head of the New Creation in resurrection (II Corinthians 5:16, 17).

For this is how this knowledge is explained: "that I may get to know him and the power of his resurrection." Not to know merely the historical fact of his resurrection, but the "power" of it: i.e., what its wondrous power has done for us. But how can we get to know this "power"? Ah! only by experiencing "the fellowship of His sufferings": by learning that when He, the Head of the Body, suffered, all the members of that Body suffered in mysterious and blessed "fellowship with Him." Thus shall we get to know how we were "made conformable to Him in His death." Only when we have thus learned that we suffered when He suffered, and died when He died, can we begin to learn how we have risen also with Christ; and "get to know the power of His resurrection."

How few of us know what this "power" is, as it takes us out of the old creation and sets us in the new creation, where "all things are of God" (II Corinthians 5:17).

This then is our object, to get to know all that Christ is made unto us in resurrection power.

How startling must these words have been as they fell upon the ears of Greeks (for this is the first city Paul set his foot in Europe). They had been brought up on the great motto of Solon, the wisest of the seven wise men of Greece. His motto was supposed by them to embody in itself the essence of all wisdom; and it consisted of only two words, which were carved over the entrance to the schools and colleges of Greece:

## **"Know Thyself."**

But yet, how foolish are those words. For how can one know anything of himself by considering himself? If he looks at others, then he can see how different he is from them; and how much better or worse he may be than they.

But it is only when we compare ourself with Christ, who is the wisdom and glory of God, that we learn what we really are; and how far short we come of that glory (Romans 3:23). It is only as we see ourselves in "the Balance of the Sanctuary," or by the side of the plumb-line of that Perfection, that we see, and get to know, our absolutely lost and ruined condition. Hence this new motto was thundered from heaven into the ears of those who sought to know themselves —

## **"That I may get to know Him."**

Yes; this is our one object. This it is that will have the mighty transforming power over our lives. Every moment spent in seeking to know ourselves is a moment lost: and not only lost, but used to keep us from the one thing that alone can accomplish our object and teach us ourselves. Trying to know ourselves, we not only fail in the attempt, but we cease to learn Christ, which alone teaches us to know ourselves.

And yet, how many are spending their lives in this vain search? Running hither and thither to hear this man and that man. And, being constantly directed to this self-occupation, self-surrender, and self-examination, they are only led into trouble; or, into a joy which lasts only while the excitement is kept up.

Oh! to be occupied with Christ; to have Him for our object; and His resurrection power for our lives.

This we shall have; and have increasingly as we get to know Christ.

Again. What was it that led the heathen world into all its darkness, corruption, and sin? Just this: "they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of corruptible man" (Romans 1:22,28).

Like people to-day who, ignorant of God as He has revealed Himself in His Word, make their god, some with their own hands, or out of their own heads, vainly imagining He is what they think He is, and worshipping, like the heathen, "the unknown God," such an one as themselves.

What was it that led Israel astray and brought upon them all their sorrows and sufferings? Isaiah opens with the Divine indictment, which gathers up in the briefest form the one great cause which lay at the root of all:

"The ox knoweth his owner, And the ass his master's crib; But Israel doth not know, My People doth not consider."

See how the Lord Jesus confirms this in Luke 19:42-44, as He weeps over Jerusalem. All is summed up in the opening and closing words:

"If thou hadst known! even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace."

And then, turning to the reason for that judgment He adds:

"Because thou knewest not the day of thy visitation."

And what is to be the acme of Israel's glory in the day of her restoration?

Ah! then it shall come to pass that "they shall no more teach every man his neighbour saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 31:34).

And what shall be Creation's glory; and the peace and joy of the whole earth? This sums up all:

"The earth shall be full of the knowledge of God, As the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).

And what is the secret of our being able to glory only in the Lord, and to enjoy His blessing in this the day of our visitation? It is given in Jeremiah 9:23, 24:

"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,  
Neither let the mighty man glory in his might,  
Let not the rich man glory in his riches:  
But let him that glorieth, glory in this,  
that he understandeth and knoweth Me."

We are thus brought round, and brought back to the one great duty, which should henceforth absorb our hearts and minds, and fill our days and years; viz., to be instant in our study of the Word of God, which is given to us with the one great, express, commanding purpose — the revelation of Himself, in order that we may

Get to Know Him.

# The Christian's Standing, Object, and Hope

"Brethren, be ye followers together of me" (Philippians 3:17). "Those things which ye have both learned and received and heard and seen in me, do" (Philippians 4:9).

It is interesting to note the character in which Saint Paul, by the Holy Spirit, speaks to us in the passages quoted. In the Epistles to the Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and I and II Timothy, he calls himself "Apostle." In I and II Thessalonians he uses no term at all in regard to himself. In Philemon, he is "a prisoner of Jesus Christ," and in Philippians, only, "a servant of Jesus Christ."

So that when he writes and speaks here, and says, "be ye followers of me," he speaks not as one endowed with extraordinary gifts, or one privileged to see unspeakable visions, not as a laborious Apostle, nor as a gifted vessel, but as the "Servant of Jesus Christ," the simple Christian. We could not follow him in his labours as an Apostle, in his rapture to the third heaven and Paradise; but we can follow him in his simple Christian character as a servant, and this Epistle where he exhorts us to follow him, is the only Epistle in which he thus describes himself simply as a servant. It is true that in Romans he styles himself a "servant of Jesus Christ," but he adds, "called to be an Apostle"; and in Titus, "a servant of God, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ."

We can follow him when he sets the pattern as he does in I Timothy 1:16. "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy that in me first, Jesus Christ might, show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting." What a pattern! What a hope-inspiring pattern! What an encouraging pattern! What a blessed pattern! What a pattern for poor lost sinners (I Timothy 1:13)! What a pattern for such as have been "blasphemers, persecutors, injurious"! The Apostle couples himself with another servant of God when he says to Titus (3:3), "We ourselves were sometimes foolish disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." But he touches the lowest depth of all when he says, "Sinners; of whom I am Chief" (I Timothy 1:15).

What a pattern for Pharisees, for all who are seeking to be saved by works! He refers to this in Philippians 2:3, where he declares that he has no confidence in the flesh," although possessing all the advantages enumerated in verses 4-6. So that, however far any may go in working out a righteousness of their own, so that they may have confidence in the flesh, they hear a voice from a higher height saying, "I more" (verse 4). No one could excel Saul of Tarsus. Hear him in verses 5, 6. The point here is not about sins as in I Timothy 1, but about his "gains". Hence in verse 7 he is not speaking of his needs as a sinner, but of his advantages as a religious man; it was not that Saul as a sinner needed righteousness, but that Saul as a Pharisee preferred the righteousness of God because it was infinitely better and more glorious than any other. It would be a positive loss for anyone to have a righteousness of his own, seeing God has provided "that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith."

This brings us to the first of three things which are revealed in this chapter as making

the perfect character of a true Christian. They are like the three things of I Thessalonians 1:9, 10.

### **1. The Christian's Standing — Turning from idols (verse 9)**

"Found in Him" (Philippians 3:9). This is the Christian's standing. Nothing less, nothing lower, nothing different. Not partly in Christ and partly in a church, but "found in Him." It is in Christ that we must be found, in His righteousness. Like stones in the Temple, hid in Christ. If we are not found in Him, it matters little where else we are. If we are found in Him, it matters little where we are not found. Oh, to be found "in Him," in our own experience! This, then, is the proper Christian standing. See also Galatians 2:15-24.

### **2. The Christian's Object — To serve the living and true God (verse 9).**

"That I may know Him" (Philippians 3:10). Here, again, true Christianity throws us back on Christ, and takes up the thoughts from verse 8. Our object is not this or that church, or this or that work, but Christ Himself in His own glorious Person.

As to the natural man, all is different. The ancient philosophy had a motto continually sounding in its ears, "Know thyself." This saying was introduced by Solon, one of the seven wise men of Greece, and the wisest of them all. A lawgiver, a great reformer, and a great patriot, 638 years before Christ, Solon gave this as his most precious wisdom. It was carved over all the schools and seats of learning, its letters may be seen to-day carved in the marble ruins of Greece. It was good, so far as man's wisdom went; it was the best that man could do! But oh! how impossible to obey it! It is the one thing man never could do. It is the one thing none of us know." The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" And if we could know ourselves thus, what then? When we came to this knowledge, and saw ourselves and our ruin, would it not end in despair? No, we can only know ourselves by the knowledge of Christ.

Christianity came and brought with it a loftier motto, a heavenly wisdom, a Divine truth: "That I may know Him." And why? Because it is only by comparing ourselves with that which is perfect that we can form a true judgment (II Corinthians 10:12). How can we know whether anything measures what it ought to?

Only by bringing it to the standard. How can we tell whether a weight is correct? Only by putting it in the balances. How can we tell whether anything is perfectly upright or perpendicular? Only by applying a plumbline to it. How can we tell whether anything is perfectly straight or horizontal? Only by applying a straight edge, or a spirit level to it. We could never tell, though we tried for years, unless we applied the true test. We might think a thing was right measure; we might believe a thing was right weight; but we could not possibly know it. So it is with ourselves. We might study ourselves all our lives, we might compare ourselves with others — I might fancy I was this, or hope I was that, or believe I was the other, but apart from Christ's perfect standard, I could never know it.

Hence we see the highest earthly wisdom is at fault. This was the best it could do, but it was a failure! Not until Christianity came, could a man know himself. Why? Because Christianity is Christ. Tried by other standards we might compare more or less favourably, but tried by Christ, God's standard, tried by Christ, God's glory, there is only one result for all. "All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God." That is why we must be "found in Him," not having our own righteousness, but covered over with His righteousness. But the desire of the Apostle here is the object of the Christian, and this is Christ, always CHRIST, only CHRIST. Alas! How many have other objects, how many are occupied with lower objects!

## Paul's spiritual gain

We have considered St. Paul's natural advantages, which he once considered his gains, but which he had learnt to count as loss. We now come to his real spiritual gain. In Philippians 3 we learn what this was, viz., "The power of Christ's resurrection." Paul knew he had died with Christ, and had risen with Christ, but he wanted to know (to get to know) what the power of Christ's resurrection was, what it meant to his own life and service. Too many are occupied with the church and its service; Paul wanted to be occupied with Christ's service, with the things of Christ. Even the Word of God is useless without Christ, for "the letter killeth." The one great reason of the lowness of Christian walk is that the eye is taken off from Christ, and rests on some lower object, either on one's self, or on others, or on one's service. Now Saint Paul's object was one (verse 13). "This one thing I do," whether he was resting or travelling, making tents or planting churches, Christ was his object (verse 10). At home or abroad, by sea or by land, by night or by day, alone or with others, "This one thing I do"; and this, remember, not as the Apostle, not as the enraptured Saint, but as the Servant, the one who addresses us in the words of the passages quoted.

Nor should we ever be satisfied with anything lower than this. True, we all fail sadly. Why? Why do we fail in other things? What were we told when we learned to write? "Look at the copy." The copybook had a line of perfectly-shaped letters printed at the top, we looked at it, and perhaps our first line was fairly well done, but what was our tendency? Each line we looked at the last we had written, instead of looking at the copy, so the writing grew worse and worse. This is our tendency in the spiritual life. We copy one another: we are copies of copies, instead of copies of Christ. No! Christ must be our object, and this includes all else. In this way alone can we walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called (Ephesians 4:10).

Christ is our strength as well as our righteousness, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." This being so, it is our adversary's one aim to keep us from Christ. To accomplish this, he will occupy the sinner with his sins; he will occupy the penitent with his repentance; he will occupy the believer with his faith, as though it and not the Object of it were the ground of his salvation. He will occupy the servant with his service; and the saint with his holiness. It matters not what it is, anything can be used for the same end, and if the end is not gained by one thing it is by another: Christ is shut out of view.

How many Christians are taken up with something short of Christ! They are occupied with their holiness instead of with the Holy One; they are occupied with the promises instead of with the Promiser; they are occupied with the blessing instead of with the Blessor. And yet having Him we have everything. The promises of God "in Him are yea and in Him Amen." His holiness is mine. His blessing is mine. The full occupation with a Heavenly Object will alone make us Heavenly without an effort. We have not to try to be this or that: we "beholding ... ARE changed" (II Corinthians 3:18). Nothing else will form our character. It is the object that forms the character; therefore let us run with patience the race that is set before us looking unto Jesus" (Hebrews 12:1, 2).

And now, to help us and make us look to Christ we have a blessed Hope given to us, a hope in Christ. This will ensure our looking to Him. This brings us to the special object of Philippians 3. (See I Thessalonians 1:10, "to wait for His Son from heaven.")

### **3. The Christian's Hope — To be like Christ (verses 20, 21)**

"Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord



Jesus Christ, who shall change our body of humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body " (verses 20, 21).

Here our hope is presented in a manner quite as characteristic as our standing and our object. If our standing is to be found in Christ, then our object is to know Christ, and our hope is to be like Christ. Our hope is not the glory of the Kingdom, but "the Saviour"; not the "Restoration of Israel," but Israel's King; and when we see Him, we shall be like Him (I John 3:1,2). That is the hope presented here.

Here we have a "body of humiliation," but we shall be changed. There we shall have a body like His own glorious Body — for we shall be like Him.

Here we have a body in which we groan, but we shall be changed. There we shall be free from all sin and sorrow, for we shall be like Him.

Here we have a body of suffering and death, but we shall be changed, There we shall have a body of immortality and life, for we shall be like Him.

This is our hope. No sooner do we find ourselves in Christ as our righteousness, than we desire to know Him as our Object, and look for Him as our Hope.

**The Divine Names  
and Titles — No. 13:  
"The Son of Man"**

**July, 1897**

This is one of the most significant titles given to the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is difficult to define it, on account of all that it means, and all that it contains and teaches.

As applied, without the article, to men, it means merely a descendant of Adam — a human being.

But as used of Christ (with the article — "The Son of Man") it is different, for He was not a descendant of the first Adam, at any rate on the father's side. He was man "of the substance of his mother," but His generation was by the Holy Ghost. Herein lies the difference between Christ and mere man. He was "the second Man — the Lord from heaven." We can never dissociate this thought from "the Son of Man." He is "the Last Adam" — not another man like all the other sons of Adam, but a different man. "In the likeness of sinful flesh" of course, with the "infirmities" of the flesh, but not with its sins! We must not confound "infirmities" with sins.

The first man fell by one sinful act, and the second man in righteousness and grace stood under more severe temptation, and by one act of obedience bore the penalty of sin at the Cross. Thus He became the head of a new race. He is the glorified man in resurrection.

Now, to understand the significance of the title, we must go to its first occurrence. In Psalm 8 we have it. And here we are taken back to Genesis 1 and 2. We have God's purpose concerning man: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands" (Psa 8:6). But man fell, and lost that dominion — yes, and lost it for ever had not God made a new provision in another — the Second Man!

With regard to the first man — who and what was he? "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and stars which Thou hast created, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" As regards sentient beings, he trembles in the presence of an angel. As for the animals, the ox is stronger; the eagle more acute of vision, soaring aloft into the heavens while man creeps upon the ground; the lion can rend and tear him in pieces; the fish can go down as man cannot into the depths of the sea and live! and yet, marvellous purpose! — dominion in the earth is for man!

In the structure of the Psalms, Psalm 8 corresponds in subject matter with Psalm 2, but it stands in contrast with it. In Psalm 2 Man sets himself against the Lord's anointed. We see his thoughts and his counsels, and they are "against Jehovah and against His anointed." In Psalm 8 we have God's thoughts and counsels about man. He is nothing, and less than nothing. He has lost dominion in the earth, and now all is to be restored in Christ, "the Son of Man"—"the Second Man." He, too, was made a little lower than the angels, but He came to do the will of His Father, and He did it, and now all things in heaven and earth are

put under His feet. In Him — "the Son of Man," "our Adonai" — man regains dominion in all the earth! In Him, God's purposes to exalt man above the earth and above the glittering heavens will yet be carried out; and it is this thought and the sight of this wondrous purpose which calls forth the exclamation, "Lord, what is man?" The question is not answered! We can only, like the same David, sit before the Lord and say, "Who am I?"

Psalm 8 thus contains and gives us the essence of the meaning of this title. It begins and ends with the words, "O Jehovah, our Adonai, how excellent is Thy name IN ALL THE EARTH." This is the point. The title, wherever it is used, has reference to Christ's right to dominion "in all the earth." It is His special title as "the Heir of all things." It is the title, in virtue of which "all things shall be put under His feet" in reality as well as in purpose.

"But now we see not yet all things put under Him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels...that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every\* man" (Heb 2:8,9). Dominion in the earth is in abeyance until He comes again to claim His rights.

\* I.e., Every man, without distinction, not without exception! Before His death the sacrifices were slain only for Israel. But His death was for all, without any such distinction or limitation.

In this view the first occurrence of the title in the New Testament is deeply significant: "The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head" (Matt 8:20). That is the first thing spoken of "the Son of Man." It refers to the earth in which "foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests."

The second likewise refers to the earth, but it sets forth the fact that the Son of Man — "the second Man — the Lord from heaven," is God as well as Man, for "the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (Matt 9:6). It is this forgiveness of sins that is the basis of all future blessing for man in the earth, and the secret of his restored dominion in it.

The third occurrence refers to the time when this forgiveness shall be proclaimed, and how that proclamation shall go forth and not be finished "till the Son of Man be come" (Matt 10:23).

Thus in beautiful harmony the teaching is carried on. Every occurrence is worthy of deep and patient study. Our object is rather to point out the lines on which such study should be pursued.

The use of this title teaches us that it has nothing whatever to do with the Church of God, and only slightly with Israel. It has to do special with the earth, judgment, rule and dominion in the earth.

As contrasted with the title, "Son of God," it is most significant (see John 5:25-27): "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!"

As the Son of Man He had not in this sense life in Himself. Before the hour can come when "the Son of Man should be glorified," that precious "corn of wheat" must fall into the ground and die (John 12:23, 24). But having died and brought forth much fruit in resurrection life and on resurrection ground — as "the Lord from heaven" — then all judgment is committed unto Him because He is "the Son of Man" (Acts 10:40-42). And "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by THAT

MAN whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

Thus it is clear how carefully and divinely and exactly these titles are used by the Holy Spirit of God.

How incongruous it would be! How confusing to the thought and the teaching if the title, "Son of Man," were used in connection with the Church of God, or with reference to Christ as the Head of the Body!

No, the fact is that it is never once so used! Not once in all the epistles! Only in Hebrews 2:7 is Psalm 8 quoted to prove that Psalm 8 is spoken of Christ.

The title occurs 84 times.\* Seven times twelve (7 x 12). Twelve the number of governmental perfection and seven of spiritual perfection. Thus the number of the occurrences corresponds with the meaning and teaching of the title, for it will be as the Son of Man that His name will be excellent in all the earth, and that He shall judge the world in righteousness.

\* This is omitting with RV, Matthew 18:11, 25:13 and Luke 9:56.

It is interesting also to notice how these 84 occurrences are distributed. Out of the whole number, 80 are in the four Gospels! And the number in each Gospel is also significant.

In Matthew it is 30, which is 5 x 6. The number of grace and the number of man, for it was in perfect grace that the King had not where to lay His head.

In Mark it is 14, which is twice seven. The two of testimony and seven of spiritual perfection, for the Servant is spiritually perfect.

In Luke, which is the special Gospel setting forth Christ as the Perfect Man, this is balanced by the number 25, five times five, or the square of five — the number of grace.

While in John it occurs eleven times, a number which stands associated with Divine designs. It is the fifth prime number, and stands alone.

Then we have one occurrence in the Acts (7:56), one in Hebrews (2:6), and two in the Apocalypse (Rev 1:13, 14:14). It was "the Son of Man" whom John saw in the midst of the seven golden lamp-stands, showing that the Lord from Heaven was there in judgment and not in grace. And it is "the son of Man" whom John saw, "having on His head a golden crown and in His hand a sharp sickle" — for the vision has reference to the time when it shall be said "the harvest of the earth is ripe," "and He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped" (Rev 14:14, 15).

Thus we see that the Lord Jesus, when He is first named as "the Son of Man" in Matthew 8:20, "had not where to lay His head." Yet in this last mention of Him in the New Testament, that head has upon it "a golden crown."

Similarly significant are the first and last occurrences in each of the four Gospels.

In Matthew, where we behold the King, the first (8:10) shows Him as the Son of Man, with nowhere to lay His head, while the last (26:64) proclaims Him coming hereafter in the clouds of heaven.

In Mark, where we behold the Servant, the first (2:10) shows that He is no mere Servant, but is the Lord of all, and has power on earth to forgive sins, while the last (14:62), as in Matthew, shows Him sitting at the right hand of power.

In Luke, where we "behold the Man," the first (5:24) shows Him, as in Mark, to be God, with power on earth to forgive sins, and the last (24:7) the Son of Man proclaimed as betrayed, crucified, and risen again from the dead.

In John, where we behold our God, the first (3:13, 14), shows the Son of Man, which was in heaven, lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, while the last (13:31) shows Him in the darkest hour of that last "night," saying, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him"!

In the Acts, the only reference (7:56), Stephen sees "the son of Man standing on the right hand of God" — the pledge that He will one day rise up to avenge the blood of His servants; while in the Epistles the only occurrence is, as we have seen, in Hebrews 2:6, where Psalm 8 is quoted to connect it with the Lord Jesus as the Son of Man.

In all this we have a key to and a help to the rightly dividing of the Word of Truth; and, if we heed the lesson thus taught us, we shall never be found interpreting of the church of God any passage (such as Matt 24) where this title is used. It is a finger-post pointing us to the fact that we are to interpret it of Christ as the One whose right it is to exercise universal dominion, and Whose name shall one day be excellent in all the earth, and His glory above the heavens.

# The Ground is Thirsty

A figure is simply a word or a sentence thrown into a peculiar form, different from its original or simplest meaning or use. These forms are constantly used by every speaker and writer. It is impossible to hold the simplest conversation, or to write a few sentences without, it may be unconsciously, making use of figures. We may say, "the ground needs rain": that is a plain, cold, matter-of-fact statement; but if we say "the ground is thirsty," we immediately use a figure. It is not true to fact, and therefore it must be a figure. But how true to feeling it is! how full of warmth and life! Hence, we say, "the crops suffer"; we speak of "a hard heart," "a rough man," "an iron will." In all these cases we take a word which has a certain, definite meaning, and apply the name, or the quality, or the act, to some other thing with which it is associated, by time or place, cause or effect, relation or resemblance.

Some figures are common to many languages; others are peculiar to some one language. There are figures used in the English language, which have nothing that answers to them in Hebrew or Greek; and there are Oriental figures which have no counterpart in English; while there are some figures in various languages, arising from human infirmity and folly, which find, of course, no place in the word of God.

It may be asked, "How are we to know, then, when words are to be taken in their simple, original form (i.e., literally), and when they are to be taken in some other and peculiar form (i.e., as a Figure)?" The answer is that, whenever and wherever it is possible, the words of Scripture are to be understood literally, but when a statement appears to be contrary to our experience, or to known fact, or revealed truth; or seems to be at variance with the general teaching of the Scriptures, then we may reasonably expect that some figure is employed. And as it is employed only to call our attention to some specially designed emphasis, we are at once bound to diligently examine the figure for the purpose of discovering and learning the truth that is thus emphasized.

From non-attention to these Figures, translators have made blunders as serious as they are foolish. Sometimes they have translated the figure literally, totally ignoring its existence; sometimes they have taken it fully into account, and have translated, not according to the letter, but according to the spirit; sometimes they have taken literal words and translated them figuratively. Commentators and interpreters, from inattention to the figures, have been led astray from the real meaning of many important passages of God's Word; while ignorance of them has been the fruitful parent of error and false doctrine. It may be truly said that most of erroneous and conflicting views of the Lord's People, have their root and source, either in figuratively explaining away passages which should be taken literally, or in taking literally what has been thrown into a peculiar form or Figure of language: thus, not only falling into error, but losing the express teaching, and missing the special emphasis which the particular Figure was designed to impart to them.

This is an additional reason for using greater exactitude and care when we are dealing with the words of God. Man's words are scarcely worthy of such study. Man uses figures, but often at random and often in ignorance or in error. But "the words of the Lord are pure words." All His works are perfect, and when the Holy Spirit takes up and uses human

words, He does so, we may be sure, with unerring accuracy, infinite wisdom, and perfect beauty.

We may well, therefore, give all our attention to "the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

## Introduction

Jehovah has been pleased to give us the revelation of His mind and will in words. It is therefore absolutely necessary that we should understand not merely the meanings of the words themselves, but also the laws which govern their usage and combinations.

All language is governed by law; but, in order to increase the power of a word, or the force of an expression, these laws are designedly departed from, and words and sentences are thrown into, and used in, new forms, or figures.

The ancient Greeks reduced these new and peculiar forms to science, and gave names to more than two hundred of them.

The Romans carried forward this science: but with the decline of learning in the Middle Ages, it practically died out. A few writers have since then occasionally touched upon it briefly, and have given a few trivial examples: but the knowledge of this ancient science is so completely forgotten, that its very name to-day is used in a different sense and with almost an opposite meaning.

These manifold forms which words and sentences assume were called by the Greeks *Schema* and by the Romans, *Figura*. Both words have the same meaning, viz., a shape or figure. When we speak of a person as being "a figure" we mean one who is dressed in some peculiar style, and out of the ordinary manner. The Greek word *Schema* is found in I Cor. 7:31, "The fashion of this world passeth away"; Phil. 2:8, "being found in fashion as a man." The Latin word *Figura* is from the verb *ingere*, to form, and has passed into the English language in the words figure, transfigure, configuration, effigy, feign, etc.

We use the word figure now in various senses. Its primitive meaning applies to any marks, lines, or outlines, which make a form or shape. Arithmetical figures are certain marks or forms which represent numbers (1, 2, 3, etc.). All secondary and derived meanings of the word "figure" retain this primitive meaning.

Applied to words, a figure denotes some form which a word or sentence takes, different from its ordinary and natural form. This is always for the purpose of giving additional force, more life, intensified feeling, and greater emphasis. Whereas to-day "Figurative language" is ignorantly spoken of as though it made less of the meaning, and deprived the words of their power and force. A passage of God's Word is quoted; and it is met with the cry, "Oh, that is figurative" — implying that its meaning is weakened, or that it has quite a different meaning, or that it has no meaning at all. But the very opposite is the case. For an unusual form (*figura*) is never used except to add force to the truth conveyed, emphasis to the statement of it, and depth to the meaning of it. When we apply this science then to God's words and to Divine truths, we see at once that no branch of Bible study can be more important, or offer greater promise of substantial reward.

It lies at the very root of all translation; and it is the key to true interpretation... As the course of language moves smoothly along, according to the laws which govern it, there is nothing by which it can awaken or attract our attention. It is as when we are travelling by railway. As long as everything proceeds according to the regulations we notice nothing; we sleep, or we read, or meditate as the case may be. But, let the train slacken its speed, or

make an unexpected stop; — we immediately hear the question asked, "What is the matter?" "What are we stopping for?" We hear one window go down and then another: attention is thoroughly aroused, and interest excited. So it is exactly with our reading. As long as all proceeds smoothly and according to law we notice nothing. But suddenly there is a departure from some law, a deviation from the even course — an unlooked for change — our attention is attracted, and we at once give our mind to discover why the words have been used in a new form, what the particular force of the passage is, and why we are to put special emphasis on the fact stated or on the truth conveyed. In fact, it is not too much to say that, in the use of these figures, we have, as it were, the Holy Spirit's own markings of our Bibles.

This is the most important point of all. For it is not by fleshly wisdom that the "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth" are to be understood. The natural man cannot understand the Word of God. It is foolishness unto him. A man may admire a sun-dial, he may marvel at its use, and appreciate the cleverness of its design; he may be interested in its carved-work, or wonder at the mosaics or other beauties which adorn its structure: but, if he holds a lamp in his hand or any other light emanating from himself or from this world, he can make it any hour he pleases, and he will never be able to tell the time of day. Nothing but the light from God's sun in the Heavens can tell him that. So it is with the Word of God. The natural man may admire its structure, or be interested in its statements; he may study its geography, its history, yea, even its prophecy; but none of these things will reveal to him his relation to time and eternity. Nothing but the light that cometh from Heaven. Nothing but the Sun of Righteousness can tell him that. It may be said of the Bible, therefore, as it is of the New Jerusalem — "The Lamb is the light thereof." The Holy Spirit's work in this world is to lead to Christ, to glorify Christ. The Scriptures are inspired by the Holy Spirit; and the same Spirit that inspired the words in the Book must inspire its truths in our hearts, for they can and must be "Spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:1-16).

On this foundation, then, we have prosecuted this work. And on these lines we have sought to carry it out.

We are dealing with the words "which the Holy Ghost teacheth." All His works are perfect. "The words of the Lord are pure words"; human words, indeed, words pertaining to this world, but purified as silver is refined in a furnace. Therefore we must study every word, and in so doing we shall soon learn to say with Jeremiah (15:16), "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart..."

It is clear, therefore, that no branch of Bible-study can be more important: and yet we may truly say that there is no branch of it which has been so utterly neglected.

A figure is, as we have before said, a departure from the natural and fixed laws of Grammar or Syntax; but it is a departure not arising from ignorance or accident. Figures are not mere mistakes of Grammar; on the contrary, they are legitimate departures from law, for a special purpose. They are permitted variations with a particular object. Therefore they are limited as to their number, and can be ascertained, named, and described.

No one is at liberty to exercise any arbitrary power in their use. All that art can do is to ascertain the laws to which nature has subjected them. There is no room for private opinion, neither can speculation concerning them have any authority.

It is not open to any one to say of this or that word or sentence, "This is a figure," according to his own fancy, or to suit his own purpose. We are dealing with a science



whose laws and their workings are known. If a word or words be a figure, then that figure can be named, and described. It is used for a definite purpose and with a specific object. Man may use figures in ignorance, without any particular object. But when the Holy Spirit takes up human words and uses a figure (or peculiar form), it is for a special purpose, and that purpose must be observed and have due weight given to it.

Many misunderstood and perverted passages are difficult, only because we have not known the Lord's design in the difficulty.

Thomas Boys has well said (Commentary, I Pet. 3), "There is much in the Holy Scriptures, which we find it hard to understand: nay, much that we seem to understand so fully as to imagine that we have discovered in it some difficulty or inconsistency. Yet the truth is, that passages of this kind are often the very parts of the Bible in which the greatest instruction is to be found: and, more than this, the instruction is to be obtained in the contemplation of the very difficulties by which at first we are startled. This is the intention of these apparent inconsistencies. The expressions are used, in order that we may mark them, dwell upon them, and draw instruction out of them. Things are put to us in a strange way, because, if they were put in a more ordinary way, we should not notice them."

This is true, not only of mere difficulties as such, but especially of all Figures: i.e., of all new and unwonted forms of words and speech: and our design in this work is that we should learn to notice them and gain the instruction they were intended to give us.

The Word of God may, in one respect, be compared to the earth. All things necessary to life and sustenance may be obtained by scratching the surface of the earth: but there are treasures of beauty and wealth to be obtained by digging deeper into it. So it is with the Bible. "All things necessary to life and godliness" lie upon its surface for the humblest saint; but, beneath that surface are "great spoils" which are found only by those who seek after them as for "hid treasure."

Ethelbert W. Bullinger.  
November, 1899.

**Taken from "Questions and Answers"  
August, 1897**

## **The Inscriptions on the Cross**

### *Question No. 2*

We have had several Questions addressed to us on this important subject.

These have always been a source of perplexity to many a Bible student.

It is well known that four different forms are forced on our attention, being for some reason usually printed in large capital letters, as follows:—

Matthew: This is Jesus the King of the Jews (27:37).

Mark: The King of the Jews (15:26).

Luke: This is the King of the Jews (23:38).

John: Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews (19:19).

Some explain the apparent discrepancy by assuming that there was one full inscription ("This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews"), and that each evangelist selected the words which best accorded with the character in which Christ was presented in his gospel. This is ingenious, but it affords too wide a scope to human instrumentality in Inspiration to please or satisfy us.

Others assume that as it was written in three languages, there might have been some variation in each of the three, and that each evangelist gives one of the three versions. This, we believe, is the more popular or general explanation of the difficulty.

But is there a difficulty? If so, is it in the Text, or do we put it there by starting with the assumption that there was only one Inscription? If there was only one, then of course there cannot be several different forms of it and each be correct. One must be right and the others wrong. This is where the difficulty lies, and our belief is that it is created by the readers and not by the writers.

We answer the question therefore by asking another: — Was there only one Inscription; or were there more? Let us look and see.

First, with regard to Mark, we may put him aside for the moment, because he does not profess to give a version which he or anyone else had seen. He merely mentions "the accusation" or bill of indictment, which may or may not have been the same as "the title" of which the others speak.

If it were, then it is sufficiently like Luke's to be identical with one of the Greek, Latin, or Hebrew inscriptions which he gives.

Secondly, as to time: — In John 19:19 we read that "Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross." Whether written by Pilate's own hand or by some person acting for him, it was

undoubtedly written in Pilate's presence and put then and there upon the cross before it left Pilate. For the act is recorded in connection with his delivering Jesus to the Jews and His being "led away" to be crucified. This was written, not like Luke's in "Greek and Latin and Hebrew" characters, but in "Hebrew and Greek and Latin." Pilate would certainly have written in the official language — Latin — and therefore the last was evidently regarded by him as the place of authority. This would distinguish it from Luke's in which the Hebrew was put last. In any case it was put on the cross itself, and that before it left Pilate's presence and before it arrived at Golgotha.

We know that the Jews objected to this particular title, and tried to induce Pilate to alter it. Pilate merely replied, "What I have written, I have written" (John 19:22). He implies that he is not disposed to alter it: but there is nothing to make a subsequent alteration impossible. We cannot tell how earnestly or pertinaciously the objections were urged, or with what success they met: we are told, however, of the commencement of the altercation.

We only know that some time after Jesus was put upon the cross, and after the garments were divided, and after they had cast lots upon His vesture, that they then sat down and watched Him there (Matt 27:36), while they were watching "they" then and there "set up over His head" another inscription. By what means it was obtained we are not told, or by what authority. It may have been without authority, for it appears as if it were in only one language (probably Greek).

This Inscription may have taken the place of Pilate's, or have been added to it, being placed "over His head." But it was put there, not by the "soldiers" who nailed Him and parted His garments, but by "they" who had crucified Him.

The official mockings followed the setting up of this title (Matthew's: compare Matt 27:37-43 with Luke 23:35-37); and then, after the mockings of the "rulers," Luke tells us that another three-language title was put up or written over Him.

So that it would appear (1) that Pilate's was the first official title, put on the cross in his presence; (2) that while the arguments were being pressed, the title recorded in Matthew was put up in addition to it or in substitution for it, and was intermediate until (3) the one mentioned by Luke was brought in official form, modified according to the request of the Jews in John 19:21. This was seen about the sixth hour (Luke 23:44).

There is nothing unreasonable in our explanation. We know that there were altercations, but we are not told how the tide of victory fluctuated or what was the result; we submit that these three different titles are the evidences of that conflict and mark its various stages and its final issue.

In any case, those who may hesitate to accept our explanation, have got to account not only for the variation in the words, but for the differences of the times and occasions.

### ***Question No. 3***

Nemo, London. "How shall we reconcile such passages as Matthew 23:34-36 and Revelation 18:24 with Luke 23:34? How was the prayer on the cross answered?"

As in Acts 2:22-40, and not as the religious world teaches.

There was no petition for indiscriminate forgiveness whether they wanted or not; it was a request, under plea of their ignorance of the full extent of the wickedness they were consummating, that judgment might be suspended and that door re-opened for mercy

which Israel and her rulers had closed by the murder of the Root and Offspring of David, the Holy One of God, the nation's Lord and Messiah. With the seventy weeks running out, what could save Jerusalem from instant destruction? But for the covenant with David, nothing stood between Jehovah and Israel to ward off the curse for the broken law. The sacrifices had only been restored for seventy weeks, and only for the express purpose of presenting the Son of David, i.e., Messiah, to the nation. They were back where they were in 2 Chronicles 21, having neither the house of David nor sacrifices to stay the sword of Jehovah; for, whether the king broke the covenant or they destroyed the line of David, the practical result to them was the same.

But that prayer was sufficient.

The distinction between God's purpose and man's responsibility clears all up. It was open to every individual Pharisee, to every individual scribe, to every individual chief priest; nay, to every individual Israelite by repentance to deliver himself on the day of Pentecost from that evil generation of Jews which the Lord had said should not pass away till vengeance should overtake it for all the righteous blood shed upon the earth. It was called "Jerusalem" in those days; but its true name is "Babylon," a name which will be openly stamped upon it at some time between to-day and the commencement of the Apocalyptic judgments.

The offer of "Messiah" was repeated as a result of this prayer; but at the stoning of Stephen, the Lord had again exchanged this title for that more comprehensive one of "Son of Man," which, now that He had been "lifted up," was the sign of impending judgment. Stephen's prayer, however, further availed to ward off the judgment — as the continuation of the Book of Acts proves. But at last came the destruction of Jerusalem; and the curse for the broken law fell upon the Jews. The "Son of Man," however, did not descend. That was owing to God's most gracious purpose in calling the apostle Paul; so that from Acts 8 and thenceforward, the title "Son of Man" does not occur again in Scripture until, in view of the completion of that purpose by the rapture of the Church, the question of judgment is reopened in the Apocalypse.

The basis of these is clear enough from Daniel. The Chaldee portion of the Book closes with a reference to the Lord under His comprehensive title of "Son of Man." Daniel was puzzled. So he is afterwards told in the Hebrew portion that "Messiah" would be rejected and cut off, and Jerusalem destroyed — which explains the position.

**Taken from "The Dispensational Parables"  
August, 1897**

## **IV. — The Marriage of the King's Son**

**(Matthew 22:2-14)**

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king which made a marriage for his son."

The parable is concerning "the king's son" when about to receive his bride and to enter into possession of his inheritance. It refers to the fulfillment of Psalm 2:8-12.

The guests had been bidden by the preaching of John the Baptist that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

To these "bidden" guests the Lord Jesus sent out His twelve apostles still to preach, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt 10:7).

After His resurrection the Lord Jesus sent His apostles to preach "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God," that "all things are ready"; for the Scriptures concerning the sufferings of Christ had been fulfilled (Acts 3:18). All things were ready for his return in power, when His foes should be made His footstool. Although the heathen did rage, and the people imagined vain things. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ" (Psa 2:2; Acts 4:26). Christ being raised from among the dead to sit upon the throne of David, as God had sworn; all things were ready for God's King to be set upon the holy hill of Zion (Psa 2:6; Acts 2:30-33).

But the nation through its rulers at Jerusalem rejected each successive invitation. Not only so, they took His servants and entreated them spitefully and slew them. For the record of the Gospel testimony at Jerusalem ends with the death of Stephen (Acts 7:59).

"When the King heard thereof He was wroth, and He sent forth His armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city."

From the destruction of Jerusalem, i.e., the burning up of their city, the parable passes over the time during which the Lord is sitting in the heavens, and is being declared as the Son of God among the Gentiles (Psa 2:4,7), unto the time of verse 8 when He shall receive the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. Jesus "having received the kingdom" sends forth His apostles first to the nations to claim their submission to His authority. "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage" (v 9).

This bidding to the marriage is parallel with Psalm 2:10-12, Matthew 24:14, and 28:19, 20. The proclamation of Christ to the Gentile nations, as "the Son of God" and "the King of Israel" by a Jewish ministry, a revived apostleship, at the end of the age, calling

the Gentiles to submit themselves to his authority before the great day of His wrath; that they may be spared when His foes shall be made His footstool, to share the joy of the bridegroom, and to be blest in His kingdom.

The Gospel whereby the nations will be bidden to the marriage feast will have its own special characteristics. Its subject will be the authority given to the King's Son: "All power in heaven and in earth" (Matt 28:18), the Son having received the heathen for His inheritance. Those who receive it will be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; thus confessing the God of Israel in each Divine person as dwelling with His people from their deliverance out of Egypt to the day of Pentecost (Exo 29:46; Matt 1:23; Acts 2:4).

Each Divine person has been manifested as dwelling with His people and in Jerusalem. It was as "The Father" that God was known to Israel dwelling in the temple built by Solomon (Isa 63:16; Jer 3:19; Mal 1:6). The Son was manifest in flesh, and dwelt in Nazareth and Capernaum, and was declared as such in Jerusalem (Mark 14:61, 62; John 5:17, 18). The Holy Ghost came down on the day of Pentecost, and His presence was manifest in the miraculous gifts. At the end of the age those who receive the testimony will be baptized in confession of each Divine person as manifested to Israel, to be the true God, the God of Israel; in contrast with the Man of sin, the Antichrist then sitting in the temple of God in Jerusalem, and shewing himself that he is God (2 Thess 2:4).

This parable shows very clearly the peculiar character of the Gospel by Matthew as looking onward to the time of Israel's deliverance as a nation, at the end of the age, and not at all to the present time of grace to the Gentiles. There is absolute silence as to all that takes place between the destruction of Jerusalem ("the burning up of their city," v 7) and the gathering of the "guests for the King" immediately before His return at the time of the wedding-feast (vv 9-11).

The same silence as to the present time of grace is apparent in chapter 27:50-53. As soon as the Lord's death is announced, it is immediately connected with His death and His resurrection and with the circumstances that accompany the deliverance of the nation at the time of the Great Tribulation (compare Matt 27:50-53 with Dan 12:1, 2), and from that point to the end of the Gospel there is not a word of reference to the Lord's absence from the earth or to the presence of the Holy Spirit, the two great facts which characterize the present time.

It was on a mountain in Galilee that the Lord proclaimed to His disciples the coming kingdom and its principles (chap 5-7); it was also on a mountain in Galilee that after His resurrection He gave the commission to his disciples to proclaim Him as the King of Israel to the nations, for use at the end of the age. He spoke to them prophetically as having already received the kingdom, "all power in heaven over the earth" and as come to take possession of it by power.

The subject of the Gospel is Christ the Son of David, Emmanuel, God present with His people Israel for their salvation (1:21-23). Therefore the time of His absence and of the desolation of Jerusalem and of grace to the Gentiles is passed over in silence, except as it is referred to in some of the parables, but never the subject of the Lord's direct teaching. The last words in chapter 28:20 show that the application of that commission is at "the end of the age."

The sequel to the Gospel by Matthew is the Book of the Revelation.

Then the Gentile disciples are to be taught subjection to the rulers of the Jews.

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The Lord Jesus commanded His disciples to "observe all things whatsoever the Scribes and Pharisees bid you observe"; for they "sit in Moses' seat" (Matt 23:2, 3). These things the Gentile disciples are to be taught to observe (Matt 28:20). To recognize the authority of Moses in the Scribes and the Pharisees. The Gentile nations are to be subject to Israel as a nation, for the Lord has said concerning Israel, "The nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish" (Isa 60:12).

"And when the King came in to see the guests, He saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment."

The authority of the King is the subject of the Parable, but it is associated with the grace of the Son of God. A "wedding garment" (justification in Christ) is provided for each guest. For truth once revealed is not withdrawn however ordinances may change. But the guests are bidden, and are not compelled as in Luke 14:23. The invitation is addressed to the responsibility of those bidden, and may be accepted feignedly or in truth. Some will accept it professedly and yield feigned obedience (Psa 18:44 and 66:3, and 81:15), as did Simon in Acts 8:13, and will obey a command without a new heart. The Lord can discern between subjection to ordinances to fulfil a legal righteousness, and the heart that accepts and responds to the word of His grace.

The false professor is judged as the avowed unbeliever, is cast into outer darkness, that is, eternal judgment.

The difference between those who are gathered from the highways in Matthew 22:10, and those who come in Luke 14:23 is the difference between being bidden and being compelled.

In the future ministry indicated in Matthew 22 the guests are bidden as the Jews were by the ministry of John the Baptist, and also by the Lord's disciples (Matt 10:7). The people are addressed as under law, and the responsibility is theirs to accept or to reject the invitation. It was the same in the ministry of Peter in Jerusalem (Acts 2 and Matt 22:4). In Luke 14:23\* the present time of grace to the Gentiles is referred to, and those who are compelled to come are those ordained to everlasting life, whose faith is the result of the action of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus; among such there is no one without a wedding garment (Acts 13:48).

\* The principle in Matthew 22 is government.  
The principle in Luke 14 is grace.

# The Names of Jesus

So little attention has been paid to these titles of the Lord Jesus Christ, that few imagine there is any significance in their choice or order. But enough has already been said to convince us of the importance of accuracy in noticing and studying every detail. So numerous are these variations, that in Paul's epistles alone there are seventeen different combinations of the words "Lord," "Jesus" and "Christ." This includes the article, and in three cases the word "our."

Unless these words are used at random, there must be a reason why, if certain words are used, no other words would have answered the same purpose. For example, if it says "Jesus Christ" we must believe that "Christ Jesus" would not have been appropriate. Whether we may ever discover a reason, or whether the reason I now submit may be the right one, does not alter the fact.

I was led to the conclusion at which I have arrived from the circumstances of counting the number of occurrences of each name and the various combinations. When I discovered that the Resurrection was the great line of demarcation, the reason was not far to seek. When I found that in the Gospels "Jesus" occurs alone 612 times, and in the other books only 71 times (out of which 38 are in the transitional book of the Acts); while in all the four Gospels "Christ" occurs alone only 56 times, and in the other books 256 times, the reason was clear. But let us look at the names in order:

## "Jesus"

*"Iēsous."* It means not merely "a saviour" because there is another word for that. It means really Jehovah our Saviour. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). It was therefore, the name of His earthly life, and was associated with Him as the sin-bearer, the sufferer, the man of sorrows. It was the name of His humiliation and shame. It was the name under which He was crucified. "This is Jesus" was the inscription on the Cross.

Notice then, that though it occurs alone some 683 times, it never occurs with an adjective. Let us learn to observe accurately what is omitted as well as what is written, and never say with sentimental Christians "blessed Jesus," "dear Jesus," "sweet Jesus." Nothing can add to the perfection of His person, His works or His ways; He needs no adjective to set Him forth.

Let us also be accurate in our use of scripture expressions. If we were all more careful in this matter, there would not be so many and great differences between us. Again, the expression "in Jesus" is not a scriptural expression. It does occur once in the English version in I Thessalonians 4:14, but following the Greek, this should read "by" or "through Jesus." "Yours in Jesus" is written in epistolary correspondence because the writers have not noticed that we are never said to be "in Jesus": but, as we shall presently see, we are always said to be "in Christ."

Jesus was His earthly name; and suffering, sorrow, and death were His earthly lot. But God raised Him from the dead, and then all was changed. "God hath made that same Jesus,



whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). God has now ordained that the scene of His suffering shall be the scene of His glory, and "that at the name of Jesus (not the Lord or Christ) every knee shall bow... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10, 11).

Whenever, therefore, you meet with the word "Jesus" alone, it bids you think of "the man of sorrows" who humbled Himself to death for you.

## **"Christ"**

"*Christos*." This word means "anointed." It speaks of Him as the Anointed One. Anointed and appointed to carry out the gracious covenant of Jehovah as the light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel.

As I have said, it occurs only about 56 times in the four Gospels, and then it is generally with the article, the Christ, His official title. The Christ who came unto His own, and was set for the blessing of Israel. But Israel knew not the day of their gracious visitation. They saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. But now, as raised from the dead, He is made the Head of His body — the church, anointed for blessing to His people.

In the other books therefore, we have this title 256 times, setting Him forth as the risen and glorified One, defining the believer's position as justified and accepted in Him. And hence, believers are always said to be "in Christ," quickened with Him, raised with Him, sitting together in the heavenlies with Him, blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Him. We connect our position with Him as Christ, but we connect our responsibility to Him as —

## **"Lord"**

"*Kurios*." This title, according to its meaning, sets Him forth as the One who owns, and therefore as one having power and authority. Whenever we find this title, this is the thought connected with it. It is a title connected with the privileges and responsibilities of our position and standing "IN Christ." All the various conditions of life are associated with Him as "Lord" —

Marriage: "Marry only in the Lord" not merely "in Christ." That would mean you must marry only a Christian, but this means more, — not only that you are to marry a Christian, but, in doing so, you are to say "If the Lord will": you are to recognize His authority, whom you are to acknowledge in all your ways.

Wives: "As it is fit in the Lord" (Colossians 3:18).

Children: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord" (Ephesians 4:1).

Servants: "Do it heartily as to the Lord" (Colossians 3:23).

Believers: It is "the Lord's supper," "the cup of the Lord," "the body and blood of the Lord," "the Lord's table" (1 Corinthians 11). He, therefore, has a right to command, and say "Do this in remembrance of me."

Unbelievers: "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." He may say He is Jesus or Christ, but to say that He is "Lord" is to take Him for our Master as well as our Saviour, it is to bow our wills to His, and take His yoke upon us. That is the work of the Holy Ghost.

## **"Jesus Christ"**

When we have this combination, the emphasis is on the first word, and our thoughts are conveyed from what He was to what He is, from His humiliation to His exaltation. You may translate it in your own minds as you read, "The humbled one who is now exalted" or "The suffering one who is now glorified." In every instance you will find the most remarkable accuracy.

## **"Christ Jesus"**

"Christ Jesus" conveys just the opposite thought. The glorified one who was once humbled. The exalted one who once suffered and died.

I must not stop to give you many examples. The whole New Testament is one vast example. You will not find however, each passage equally clear. Sometimes you will see it at once, and it will give you the thought of the context; at another time, the context will tell you why the titles are used in a particular order.

Look at Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus". Why "Christ Jesus"? Why not "Jesus Christ"? Because the thought of the context is — from what He was to what He is. The next verse explains, "Who being in the form of God...made Himself of no reputation." Philippians 1:1, 2: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of JESUS CHRIST, to all the saints IN CHRIST JESUS... Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father, and from the LORD JESUS CHRIST." Here the Apostles were servants of Jesus (now exalted) servants of the One who sent them forth even as He was Himself sent forth, as a servant: but they wrote to the saints who were "in Christ" (once humbled) and they prayed that, as Lord and Master He would send forth to them grace and peace.

## **"Son of Man"**

This title sets Him forth in His human nature, as the "second man," and as the "last Adam."

## **"Son of God"**

This title reveals Him in His divine nature, and in His relation to God. Hence, in Him all who believe are "called the sons of God."

There is an important difference to be observed in the use and choice of these names. Sometimes they occur in close proximity. Notably in John 5:25. The hour is coming "when the dead shall hear the voice of the SON OF GOD and they that hear shall live." It is as Son of God that He is the quickener of the dead, as is explained in the next verse: "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." It is as Son of Man that He will judge, as it is written: "God 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" (Acts 17:31).

In conclusion, let me exhort you to be accurate, not merely in your reading and in your study of the Bible, but in your quotation and interpretation of it. Do not sit down to interpret it, but sit down before it that it may interpret to you the will and purposes of God. It is too often assumed that God never means exactly what He says; and persons go to His word not simply to learn what He says, but to tell us what He means, which is very often

something quite different. But may we not ask: If the Holy Ghost meant just that, why did He not say just that? For example, if He says Jerusalem or Zion, why must we suppose that He meant the church? If He says Euphrates, why are we to assume that He meant to say Turkey?

**Taken from "Religious Signs"  
July, 1897**

## **The New Gospel**

Among the "notable books of the month," The Review of Reviews gives a long notice of one entitled Social Meanings of Religious Experience, by Professor Herron of Grinnell University. We do not further advertise it, or place it among our "Reviews," but rather among our "Signs of the Times," because it preaches the new—

### **"Gospel of Social Duty"**

—as the "True Religion": and the true Gospel: but it is "another Gospel"! It is the Gospel of Antichrist rather than of Christ. It deifies man, and it is intended to "glorify humanity." Indeed it boldly puts forth in so many words—

### **"Humanity as the Incarnation of God."**

"The universe is an eternal development of the life of God through sacrifice; it is the eternal becoming of God in obedience to the law of His being."

Again, he says in his work on The Duties of Man:

"God has placed beside you a Being whose life is continuous: whose faculties are the results and sum of all the individual faculties that have existed for perhaps four hundred ages; a Being who, in the midst of errors and crimes of individuals, yet ever advances in wisdom and morality; a Being in whose development and progress God has inscribed, and from epoch to epoch does still inscribe, a line of his law. This Being is Humanity, and Humanity is the successive incarnation of God."

Professor Herron has of course got his own panacea for the effects of the curse. He has not much faith in the Churches (and we do not wonder at it). Indeed he looks upon the influence of the Churches with dread, so far as regards the hope of bringing in—

### **"A New Heaven and a New Earth."**

"The new order of things will not be brought about by great men, it will be the political outgrowth of a religious evolution of the common life..."

"They who prepare the way of the new social kingdom will be quickening spirits, rather than political and religious reformers; and through them the regeneration of society will proceed without observation, while the politically and religiously wise are mocking their impracticability."

This seems all very "good" to those who have not "heard the joyful sound of the Gospel of God." But this is the Gospel of man. It begins and ends with man. By this sign it may always be known, for God's Gospel is "concerning His Son Jesus Christ" (Rom 1:3, 4).

While some are attempting in this way to—

## **"Glorify Humanity,"**

—man is seen to be reverting to his original type — and that type is Fallen Man! He will soon see the Devil's Millennium, and have enough of man and all his works. No! there is no hope for man but in the Son of Man — the Second Man, the Lord from Heaven, and He alone can make this earth the Paradise of God.

Others are adopting different methods. Those who expect the Millennium to come from "civilization" will do well to read some comments, not ours, but those of The Daily Mail of May 17th last:—

" 'Scratch the Russian and you will discover a Tartar,' remarked Napoleon I. This expression slightly altered may apply to civilized man at the present day. Even the crust of civilization which has gathered on some families for many centuries is incapable at times of restraining the primal barbarism which is latent in most. Some of the fine flower of French nobility was gathered at the Bazar de la Charite in the Rue Jean-Goujon on the day of the terrible fire, and in the panic that ensued gave way to bestial passion. About 120 men, it is now said, were present, and they fought with the weak and helpless women for places of safety. With sticks and fists they struck out, not caring whom their blows reached in a shameful struggle for life. Alas! for poor humanity."

Scientists tell us that after all cultivation, whether of animals or plants, there is a law which causes them "to revert to the original type" as soon as artificial means are cut off. It is, and will be so with man, after all his civilization and cultivation, when the Church has been gathered unto the Lord, and the salt has been removed.

## **Even the World is Astonished!**

After describing the recent re-opening of the Restored Chapter House of Canterbury Cathedral, The Daily Telegraph records a service of a very different character which followed it a few hours after and says:—

"Instead of processions and prayers, hymns and blessings, gilt crosses, and white-robed choristers, courteous canons and scarlet-robed mayors and sheriffs in fur-robed gowns, white-wigged recorders and stewards adorned with Royal purple badges, lovely children with still lovelier women beautifully dressed, 'men of Kent' side by side with 'Kentish men,' an Archbishop leaning on a pastoral cross, and a lily-adorned Dean, with the faint suggestion of a crimson cardinal on his robes, we shall see 'a well-graced actor' reciting a stage play for the first time in the world in the Chapter House of Canterbury. And why not, when a Dean is in the chair, when the Sermon House has been secularised, when the actor is Sir Henry Irving, and the stage play is the beautiful 'Becket' by Alfred Lord Tennyson? Canterbury will have done wonders in these two memorable days, when Royalty and ecclesiasticism, the Church and the Canon, the Chapter House and the Stage, the Dean and the Drama have clasped hands in friendship and goodfellowship. A memorable occasion and a record indeed. A stage play recited under the 'pictures in little' of a series of Archbishops ranging from St. Augustine to Edward Benson, and an actor's mission unknown in the days of Queen Bertha receiving ecclesiastical recognition in the glorious reign of Queen Victoria!"

Other newspapers describe the applause and the waving of handkerchiefs, and the several actors and actresses whose presence helped to complete the "Union of the Church and the Stage!"

And all this in the name of Christianity, and in part commemoration of its introduction into England!

## **Ichabod!**

The Romish conspiracy must be nearly complete when we have to call attention to a recent letter written conjointly by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the Russian Church.

It commences thus:—

"London, Lambeth Palace; on the day (New Style) of the Annunciation of the most holy Mother of God and ever Virgin Mary, in the year of our Salvation, 1897." This is a title which has no warrant in the Word of God, or in the formularies of the Church of England.

The Globe very truly remarks that "The communication is dated in a style which will not commend it to those who have charged them with betraying English Protestants."

Not only will it "not commend itself," but it will be regarded as one of the most ominous of signs to those who "know the times," and observe the rapid strides which apostasy is making.

What are we to say when archbishops and bishops openly side with the "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits," which they are solemnly pledged to "banish and drive away"; while they are at the greatest pains to devise means for crushing all true witnesses for Protestant and Reformation truth and practice?

### **Arminian Tricks and Shifts.**

When men cease to depend wholly upon the Spirit of God for Spiritual results there is no limit to the means which may be adopted. The cry is, "Get the people in," but the question is, what is done by those got in?

In order to "get them in" there is a growing catch-penny style of announcement either of the subject or of the character of the service.

The Christian Register recently called attention to a notice running thus:—

"A Bright, Brief, Breezy, Brilliant, Brotherly service is advertised." Whereupon The New York Observer comments: "That will do for the men. Next we should have Short, Sweet, Suggestive, Sunshiny, Sisterly services for the women, or as Dr. Parker, of London, once suggested, something of a Meek, Mild, and Motherly order."

All this betrays a loss of faith in the Power of God's Word to accomplish God's purposes, and is the direct outcome of the loss of faith in its truth.

**Taken from "Some Dispensational Parables"  
September, 1897**

## **V. — The Pounds**

**(Luke 19:12-27)**

A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

"And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, 'Occupy till I come.'

"But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'"

The parable points to the glory and exaltation of the Man Christ Jesus, for it was a man of noble birth who went away "to receive for himself a kingdom."

His ten servants refer to His glory among the Gentiles, for ten is the number used in Scripture for the Gentile nations.

Each servant received one pound. One testimony was committed to each, to be used after the people of His city had refused Him to reign over them. That is after the martyrdom of Stephen.

The glory of the Lord Jesus has been declared in three distinct degrees, thus—

His official glory as "Lord of all."

His personal glory as "the Son of God."

His divine glory as "the Man Christ Jesus" in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

The first recorded proclamation of Christ to the Gentiles was after the death of Stephen, by Peter to the household of Cornelius (Acts 10). Peter preached Jesus as "Lord of all" and the Judge of quick and dead. The Man anointed of God with the Holy Ghost and with power, to give remission of sins.

The second recorded ministry of Christ to the Gentiles is that of Paul at Antioch in Pisidia to both Jews and Gentiles in the synagogue preaching Jesus as "the Son of God," by whom all who believe are justified, and receive everlasting life (Acts 13:32-48). The word of salvation is sent to all who fear God (v 26). The doctrine preached by Paul among the Gentiles is given to us more fully in the Epistle to the Romans. It was concerning Jesus as "the Son of God," proved to be such by resurrection from among the dead; in whom the believer has, through faith in God, justification from sins, deliverance from the dominion of sin and of the law of Moses. Association with Christ in His relationship to God as sons of God, and assurance of eternal glory, Christ being exalted at the right hand of God to make intercession, so that nothing can separate the believer from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The third ministry of Christ to the Gentiles is contained in Paul's epistles to the Gentiles after his preaching in the synagogues is ended. These epistles commit to the Gentile believers the truths peculiar to the present dispensation of grace to the Gentiles, and which were never declared either at Jerusalem or in the synagogues, because separation from Jerusalem and from Israel, as a nation, is essential to their manifestation. These epistles declare Christ to be "Head over all to the Church which is His body" (Eph 1:22-23). The Head of every man is Christ (1 Cor 11:3). "Now, ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Cor 12:27). "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor 6:17). The union of the believers to Christ as the Head and to one another by the Spirit given by Christ, is the basis of all the practical teaching of these epistles. "As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For with one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor 12:12, 13).

The Gospel committed to the Gentiles is concerning the Godhead of Christ, and His death as an offering for sin. "To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself...For He hath made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us: that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor 5:19-21).

The exaltation of Christ "at the right hand of God, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named," as the Head of the Church which is His body, is further taught in Ephesians 1:21-23 and in chapter 2:15, the fact of His "having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments contained in ordinances."

In the Epistle to the Colossians the Godhead of Christ is stated in connection with His headship of the Church: "all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the Church" (1:16-18). This is repeated in chapter 2:9-12, together with the fact that the ordinances of circumcision and baptism were fulfilled in His crucifixion and His burial. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ: buried with Him in the baptism, in whom also ye are risen together through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised Him from the dead."

Thus Scripture shows us three successive ministries to the Gentiles concerning the glory of Christ, answering to the three servants named in the parable; each ministry surpassing the previous one in the declaration of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ; the Judge of quick and dead — the Son of God, the justification of the believer and Giver of eternal life; and lastly, the Man in whom dwells all the fulness of God, the Head of His body the Church, in whom all His members are complete. All the glory of God being revealed in the face of the risen and ascended Christ, in whom believers are risen together with Him. The first and second of these ministries have accomplished the purpose for which they were given; for, throughout the whole world wherever the Name of Jesus Christ is acknowledged, it is acknowledged "that He is ordained the Judge of quick and dead."

So also wherever Protestant Christianity is known it is acknowledged, at least in doctrine, that Jesus is the Son of God, the justification of the believer and the Giver of eternal life.



But where is there or has there ever been any corporate testimony, either ecclesiastical or national, to the truth committed to the Gentiles through the epistles of Paul? Confessing Christ only as the One Head of the Church which is His body—confessing the Deity of His person, and His One offering as the One sacrifice for sin, and the Holy Spirit given by Him as the One Baptism, by which alone every believer becomes united to Himself in resurrection in the perfection of His person?

But to return to the Parable:—

"And another came saying, 'Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin, for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man; thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.'"

The important lesson in the parable is in the conduct of the third servant and in the Lord's dealing with him.

The napkin is spoken of only twice in the Scripture, it was bound about the face of Lazarus (John 11:44), it was about the head of the Lord Jesus when He lay in the grave (John 20:7). When He rose from among the dead, "He wrapped it together in a place by itself"; it was laid aside for ever, for it was the symbol of death and burial, and "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more" (Rom 6:9). "The head of Christ is God" (1 Cor 11:3). When the Lord Jesus lay in the grave the glory of God was veiled, for "the Living One" had become dead (Rev 1:18); but when He rose from among the dead, all the glory of God was unveiled, revealed in the face of the Risen Son of God, never to be veiled again; the napkin was done with for ever!

The servant took up that which the Lord Jesus laid aside as having no further use, and used it to keep in concealment the one thing that the Lord had committed to him to use in His service!

Christendom has done likewise; so long as the Church was connected with Jerusalem, Christ being preached in the synagogues as the hope of Israel, "to the Jew first and to the Gentile also," the stand-point of the believer was association with Christ in His death, as being freed thereby from the dominion of sin and of law (Rom 6:11 and 7:4). Baptism with water, a figurative burial with Christ, was a suitable illustration of such a stand-point, it was also the ordinance appointed by the Lord for the outward and visible association of the uncircumcised with the circumcised in one company as confessing Jesus to be Lord of all; both Jew and Gentile who believed "were planted together in the likeness of His death" (Rom 6:5).

But when the Church of God was set in order among the Gentiles, in separation from Jerusalem and from the hope of Israel as a nation, further truth was made known to the saints which gave them an entirely new stand-point in their relation to God through faith.

Christ was declared to be the sanctification as well as the justification of the believer (1 Cor 1:30); the bodies of the saints were declared to be the members of Christ (6:15); Christ being the Head of the Church which is His body. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (v 17). Therefore the confession of Jesus as Lord henceforth does not stand in connection with the flesh, but by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, for "no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (12:3). The Holy Spirit given by the Lord Jesus being the "One Baptism" administered by the Lord Himself, whereby all His members are united to Himself the Head (1 Cor 12:12, 13).

Henceforth the stand-point of the believer before God is union with the Man whom

God has raised from among the dead and exalted at His own right hand, and made Head over all things. The Man in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; who has "abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances: for to make in Himself of twain one new man." Circumcision and baptism having been fulfilled in the death and burial of the Lord Jesus, in whom the believer is risen through faith (Col 2:11,12), the believer is "COMPLETE IN HIM," being united to Him in resurrection in all the perfection of His own person before God: "Accepted in the beloved."

But Christendom, throughout, obscures this precious revelation of the glory of Christ. Like the wicked servant it hides the Lord's money in the napkin which the Lord had "folded together and laid aside." Christendom has continued to obscure the truth that the believer is risen with Him through faith, and uses the symbol of death to set forth a dead Christ, thus hiding the truth of a risen Christ, as it were in a napkin. The servant esteemed His Lord an austere man. So, by subjection to ordinances, the "One Baptism" with the Spirit administered by the Lord Himself in infinite grace is obscured, if not actually denied.

The Lord does not reject the charge of taking up that He laid not down and reaping that He did not sow, for the Lord laid down all that belonged to Him as Man and as a Jew. He was buried as the manner of the Jews is to bury. He rose the Head of a new creation, the first-born from the dead. He sowed the word of the kingdom, He gathers fruit from the word of His grace (Col 1:6).

"Take from him the pound and give it to him that hath ten pounds."

When the Lord Jesus returns, "having received the kingdom," the testimony to His exaltation is taken from the Gentiles and given to a Jewish ministry as at the beginning of the Gospel; this revived apostleship will fulfil towards the Gentile nations the commission given in Matthew 28:19, 20, proclaiming the Lord Jesus as the Son of God, the King of Israel, according to Psalm 2:9-12 about to sit upon the holy hill of Zion and to judge the world in righteousness.

"But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me."

When the Jewish ministry to the Gentiles is resumed, proclaiming the Lord Jesus at His return to take the kingdom which He has received, then judgment begins to be executed upon Jerusalem, and "the Great Tribulation" commences (Matt 24:15-22). The Lord will be present with His disciples during these days according to His promise: "Lo, I am with you all the days, so long as the end of the age." The days of the Son of Man (Luke 17:26).

The stand-point of Matthew 28:19, 20 is shortly before the days which constitute the end of the age. The Lord's presence will be until and through the continuance of those days.

## **"The Resurrection of the Body"**

There are few subjects that are made more of in the word of God, and there are few subjects that are more set at nought by the traditions of men, than the doctrine of the Resurrection. I believe that it was the late Mr. Spurgeon who lamented the fact that our English theology, while it was rich in every department of Christian doctrine, does not contain a single satisfactory work upon it; and a reference to a bibliography of the subject, such as you find in Alger's *Future State*, will convince anyone of that fact — a fact as instructive as it is remarkable. We are all constantly confessing in our Creed, "I look for the resurrection of the dead." Do we look for it? We are all as constantly confessing, "I believe the forgiveness of sins." Do we believe it? I think that the two may go together; and we may say of them that all the thousands who take the Christian name upon their lips know little about the forgiveness of sins, and look but little for the resurrection of the dead. It was with special reference to the resurrection that our blessed Lord said to His enemies, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." And we err with regard to this subject of the transformation of His people, because we are ignorant of what the word of God has to say about it; and we are ignorant, upon the other hand, about all that flows from the knowledge of the forgiveness of sin, because we are ignorant of the blessed standing and privilege which He has given us. We separate ourselves from Christ; we separate this great doctrine from Christ; and hence it is that, while He holds out the blessed hope for troubled hearts, and says, "If I go away, I will come again and receive you unto Myself," and "I am coming to gather My saints, to raise them that are asleep, and to change them and those that are alive and remain," we reply practically, "No, Lord, Thou needst not come for me; I am going to die, and come to Thee."

While we may draw our own inferences from what the Scriptures state, we shall all agree that it is highly important that we should clothe those views in Scriptural terms, and that we should ask and answer how far it is that this popular saying hope of the Lord's coming again to fulfil His promise, to receive us to Himself; and how far it has practically blotted out the hope of resurrection and disestablished it from the place it occupies in the word of God, and disestablished it altogether from the Church's various hymn-books as a great object of hope. This error crept into the Church at a very early date. You remember how the apostle speaks to some in the 15th chapter of the 1st Corinthians, who say that there is "no resurrection of the dead"; and in writing to Timothy he refers to Hymenaeus and Philetus, who had led away some from the faith by saying that "the resurrection is past already." It is remarkable, and it is instructive and worthy of all attention, that, though there is so little said about death in the New Testament, and nothing about it at any rate as a hope; and though there is so much said about the blessed hope of the transformation of His people at their resurrection, yet in the 6th of John, four times in a few verses, Jesus says, "This is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at tire last day"; and again, "This is the will of Him that sent Me" (so that the words of Jesus really are the Father's will), "that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life"; and, more than that, "I will raise him up at the last day." And again, "No man can come to Me,

except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." And again, "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54.)

The greatest comfort which the greatest Comforter that the world ever knew had to give to a sister who had been bereaved of a beloved brother was, "Thy brother shall rise again." All hope is bound up with this great subject: and, if our Theology has no place in it for this great hope, then the sooner we change it the better; for remember that this subject is one wholly of revelation. There is not a man on the face of the earth who can tell us anything whatever about it, except what he himself learns from the word of God. It is not therefore a question of human reasoning; it is not a question of the opinion of great or learned men; it is not a question of any system of doctrine or of philosophy; but it is purely a question of Divine revelation.

Our eyes see at every street corner at the present moment a placard advertising a book, *Death and afterwards*, by a poor mortal woman; and what can she tell us about it? What does she know about it, except the lies that she has been taught by demons and evil angels? True, even with the Word of God in our hands, we know only "in part"; but, thank God, a time is coming when we shall know in whole, when "that which is perfect is come."

The great fact of the resurrection of the dead was known all along the ages, and it was the hope of God's people; but a great secret was made known with regard to it by Jehovah to the Apostle Paul. Our Lord had previously given a hint of it when, coming down from the mountain of transfiguration (see the 9th chapter of Mark), he said that they should tell no man of the things they had seen until the Son of man were risen "from" the dead. The disciples would not have been puzzled if the Lord had spoken simply of resurrection. He had merely spoken of resurrection, when He told Martha that her brother should rise again. She said, "I know that he shall rise again." But here He spoke of a different thing. He said here, "Till the Son of man be risen FROM the dead," and it says that they kept that saying to themselves, questioning one with another what the rising FROM the dead should mean. The resurrection of the dead — of dead people — that they knew. As to this resurrection from among the dead, they wondered what it could mean. But the revelation was made to the Apostle Paul, and he writes in 1 Cor. xv. 51, "Behold, I show you a mystery"; that is, "Behold, I tell you a secret. I am going to tell you something that has hitherto remained hidden and been kept secret," just as the secret with regard to the Church — the Body of Christ — had been kept. "Behold, I tell you a secret. We shall not all sleep." And the heathen world before, and the world to-day who are ignorant of this secret, say one to another, "Ali, there are many things that are uncertain, but there is one thing that is certain, we must all die!" Thank God, we know a secret about that. We shall not all die; but whether we are alive and remain, or whether we fall asleep, we know that we shall be changed and raised at His coming.

I ought to remark, in passing, that wherever the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of, and wherever the resurrection of His people is spoken of, it is always with this preposition, "From among the dead." It is not always observed in the Authorized Version, but I believe that in the Revised it is uniformly rendered "from"; so that, in studying this subject for yourselves, if you take the Revised Version you will make no mistake about the true usage of the reference in this matter of the resurrection.

But now it is time for us to ask, "How are the dead raised up?" Of course, man has got his thoughts upon it, many thoughts; and of one thing we are perfectly sure, that we shall find that they are contrary to God's thoughts. We may summarize the whole of them in four

great classes. We may call the first one the GERM theory. It is a very ancient theory. It is an ancient Jewish theory. At any rate, it is a theory of the Talmud. It was entertained by some of the Fathers, such as Tertullian and Gregory of Nyssa and Basil. They supposed that there is a bone, or a certain substance, in the human body which nothing can destroy, and they say the name of it is "luz". You may pulverize it in a mortar, but you cannot destroy it. You cannot dissolve it in acids, or in other substances, and nothing upon earth can destroy it; and that is the germ from which the resurrection body will be made.

Well, after all, that is only an hypothesis. There is no Scripture for that at any rate, and what saith Scripture? It distinctly says, "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die"; but this germ never dies, and therefore it cannot be quickened. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." "That which is born of the flesh [and this germ is flesh] is flesh." The seed which is spoken of by the Holy Ghost in 1 Corinthians xv. is only an illustration. I think we can hardly say that it is intended to be an exactly analogous identical process; but it is an illustration, just as when the Lord said with regard to Himself, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die [and that means to dissolve and to go to corruption] it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." He referred to His own body. His own body did not die in that sense. It saw no corruption. And therefore the "much fruit" which it has produced shows that this is only an illustration.

And then the *second* great class of ideas may be included under the term of the IDENTITY theory. This is a later theory, but it was an early Christian theory, and several of the Fathers professed it. Tatian and Tertullian and others believed that cripples would rise cripples, that infants would rise infants. Jerome believed that everyone would rise at about thirty years of age, at whatever age he died. Of course, that is only theory. The Mahometans hold this; and the mediaeval or scholastic Fathers held that as a person died so he would be raised. That is why, at this very moment, if a Mahometan is wounded in battle, he will never suffer his limb to be amputated. He would rather die in any agony, because he believes that he will rise again exactly as he dies. But this theory is met by such scriptures as these: "Thou sowest not that body that shall be"; "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." We know that the earthly house of this tabernacle is to be dissolved, and that we are to have a new house, a house from heaven. These scriptures effectually dispose of what we may call the identity theory.

And then the *third* theory we may call the: RE-INCARNATION theory. That is the theory of the great ancient religions of the East. It is being revived to-day under the guise of theosophy. Re-incarnation is one of the cardinal features of theosophy, the teaching of evil angels at the present moment. Satan is getting a circulation for this lie now, in order to prepare for the moment when he is to re-incarnate the man of sin. And there are many Christian writers who verge very closely on this theory. Even Archbishop Whately did in his Future State. There is something akin to it in Bishop Westcott's writings and in Bishop Perowne's. They illustrate it thus, that it is all the same if the spirit inhabits another body; it is only another house. You may take this house down, and you may build another house with the same material, and it is practically the same house. But it is not the same thing. The body is a home for us, and if the house of our childhood were taken down and another house were built, we should go to it and should want to find the room where we found the Saviour. We should want to find the room where our mother died, or where some holy and hallowed scene took place. No; it says, "We are at home in the body"; and Job says, "I shall see Him for myself. Mine eyes shall behold Him, even though my reins be consumed within me." The Scriptures always assume that it is ourselves; and that has led to what we have called the identity theory.

You remember the words of the Lord Jesus which we have just repeated, "I will raise it up again," "I will raise him up again," four times in John vi. Then the apostle says to the Thessalonian saints, "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Who shall change our vile bodies" — the bodies of our humiliation, our humble bodies — "and make them like His own body of glory." "We shall be changed." We ourselves shall be changed. "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." The law of continuity is utterly broken down by this theory of re-incarnation.

And then, *fourthly*, there is what we may call the SPIRITUAL BODY theory. It is the Swedenborgian theory; it is the theory of the spiritualists, the teaching of demons. It is much more popular than you imagine. But this is also an ancient error, and it leads, as it did lead, to the denial of the resurrection altogether. According to this theory, resurrection practically takes place at death by a spiritual body which is evolved from the mortal body: but this utterly destroys resurrection as a hope; because the hope which is held out to us is, that those who are Christ's will be all raised together at His coming; not merely that we which are alive and remain are to be transformed together, but that those who are asleep are to be first raised, and then caught up together with the living ones to meet Him in the air. We are to be raised in a definite order — "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." (1 Cor. xv. 23, 24.) We are to be raised at a definite time, at the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that day is not the hour of each believer's death, but it is the hour of the Lord's appearing. We are distinctly told by a direct revelation from the Lord, in 1 Thess. iv. 15 (R.V.), "that we that are alive that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise PRECEDE them that are fallen asleep." Why shall we not precede them, or get before them? Why! Because they are to be raised first; and then, when they are raised and changed, we shall be changed and caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. It cannot be that they have so preceded us! But this spiritual body theory utterly and entirely destroys this blessed hope of resurrection as a hope. It utterly reverses the teaching of Scripture as to death and as to judgment. It makes a mockery of those two great solemn statements, "Thou shalt surely die," and, "There shall be no more death." And what utterly negatives this spiritual body theory is, that the resurrection body is to be like Christ's, and we know that His body was not such a body. His was a glorious body, and His body is the very type and the likeness and the illustration and the definition of what the raised bodies of the saints are to be. "We know," in spite of all these hypotheses and thoughts and imaginations, "that when He shall appear we shall be LIKE HIM." How do we know it? Because God has told us that we shall be like Him. And What was He like? What was His resurrection body like? Well, as He came from the sepulchre the women held Him. So it was a body that could be held. He said to them, "Handle me, and see." So it was a body which could be handled, and a body which could be seen. He said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands: and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side." So that it could be seen and handled and touched. The spear marks were visible, the prints of the nails must have been visible. And there is great meaning in those solemn words which refer to Israel, and yet await their fulfilment "They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced." We may imagine for a moment that solemn supper scene at Emmaus, when they knew not who He was; how when he blessed the bread, and lifted up His hands in blessing, they may have seen the marks of the nails. He is the firstborn from the dead. He will have many brethren. It was by a resurrection of the dead that He was declared to be the Son of God. (Rom. i. 2.) And that is how we shall be declared to be the sons of God. We have the blessed and high and holy privilege now; but it has to be "declared," it has to be "manifested," and we are told in

Rom. viii. 19 when that manifestation will take place. It will be when the body shall be redeemed from the grave, and the manifestation of the sons of God shall take place at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the air. Resurrection was His right, because he was Who He was. It is our blessed privilege and hope, because we are Who we are.

Again we may ask, "How are the dead raised up?" And the answer to the question is, "By the power of God." Nicodemus asked, "How can these things be?" What was the answer? "God so loved the world, that He GAVE His only begotten Son." God's gift, therefore, was the answer to Nicodemus's "How?" And so in the next chapter, when the woman of Samaria asked, "How is it that Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?" Jesus said, "If thou knewest the GIFT of God, and who it is that with to thee, Give Me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." And so it is in 1 Cor. xv. 35. "But some man will say," says the apostle, "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" What is the answer? "God GIVETH it a body as it hath pleased Him." (v. 38.) The gift of God, the power of God as manifested in the gift of God, is the only answer to all our questions; and, thank God, we know this. "We know," as it says in 2 Cor. v. 1, "that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved." We know that "If it shall be dissolved." The particular Greek word for "if" there, with the mood of the verb that follows it, show that it is not at all a certainty. "If the house of our earthly tabernacle be dissolved." It is not at all certain that it will be. It may be. Of course, if we fall asleep in Jesus, it must be. But it may not be, because we may be "alive and remain" at His appearing. But, supposing that it should be dissolved, then we know that we have a better one. We know that we have a house that God Himself shall build. We know that we have no longer an earthly house, but a heavenly one. And when shall we have it? Many commentators — in fact, all that I have looked at — say that we have this at death. But you notice that this chapter begins with the word "For"; and it is one in a series of reasons for a statement that has been previously made in the 14th verse of the 4th chapter: "Knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." How do we know it? By the next verse. "For all things," etc.; the next, "For which cause," etc.; the next, "For our light affliction," etc.; and then the verse of the next chapter, "For we know," etc. This is another of the reasons how it is that the Spirit which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise us up and present us with Him. How? "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God." And that is how we shall be raised up, and that is how we shall be presented. It is no mere transition, it is no mere evolution; but it is a transformation, it is a manifestation, it is a transfiguration, it is a resurrection, it is "the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 23), it is the manifestation of our sonship. The Greek does not say "waiting for the adoption," but waiting for the sonship, waiting for the manifestation of our sonship in the resurrection of our bodies. So, while identity is not the word, CONTINUITY is the word, which really expresses the truth as to the transformation of God's people. The bodies that we possess at this moment are the same bodies in one sense as when we were children. We have photographs of ourselves, doubtless, at different ages — one taken in infancy, another in childhood, another in youth, and now those that have been recently taken. It is the same body, and yet philosophically and scientifically it is not the same. It is all the same for us, at any rate. "He that was dead came forth." Lazarus it was who came forth, and not another. "He that was dead sat up, and began to speak," and not another. "Women received their dead raised to life again," and they knew them and spoke to them. The grave, thank God, has already been robbed of some of its prey, and there are those who are to escape death altogether. The grave has been robbed of many, and death has been baffled by two; and, if we may answer this question, "How are

the dead raised up"? in a definite statement, I would express it by the words CONTINUITY and re-creation: and that is why we are exhorted in 1 Peter iv. 19, "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." In fact, the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the type of the resurrection body, and that was a visible body. Moses and Elijah "appeared in glory," it says. But Christ's body was so glorious, and His raiment so white, "as no fuller on earth can white them." It was the glory of the revelation of the King. It is a specimen of the King coming in His kingdom with those who had been raised from the dead and those who had been changed.

But let us for a moment pay a visit, as Jeremiah did, to the potter's house, in Jeremiah xviii. 1-4. "The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear My words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." In the margin we read "he returned and made." If we look at the immediate context, we will find that the interpretation of these words refers to the house of Israel; but there is an application of the words that goes very much farther than their interpretation. The context shows that the interpretation belongs solely to the house of Israel; but we may apply the passage as exhibiting a great and divine principle which we see in all the works of God.

You see it, for example, in the COVENANT of works which He made with Israel. That was made, and man has always marred everything with which God has ever entrusted him. "Which My covenant they brake." The first covenant of works was like that vessel marred upon the wheels; and then He made another as seemed good to the potter to make it. And it is written of this covenant that if the first "had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second" (Heb. viii. 7); but it was broken by His faulty people, and therefore a new covenant was made as it pleased the potter to make it.

And so it is with regard to THE EARTH. The earth was created in glory and beauty, but it has been marred. Sin entered, the curse was pronounced, and this earth has been marred in the hands of the potter. It is not going to be mended, but there is going to be a new one. "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." (Rev. xxi. 1.) And it was made "as it seemed good to the potter to make it."

It is true of our OLD NATURE that it has been marred in our first parents, and we know how it is marred in each one of us. It is never God's principle to mend that which man has marred. He always makes something new. And so He now makes a new creation in Christ Jesus. As the old nature is fallen and marred, man must have a new nature given to him. The new wine cannot be put into old wine skins, the new piece of cloth cannot be put upon the old garment; but the new wine must be put into new wine skins, and then both are preserved. And so with our bodies. These BODIES of humiliation, which are made of clay like the vessel of the potter, have been marred upon the wheel. As soon as we are born we begin to die. There are the seeds of suffering and disease and death in every one of us. We are made of clay, and marred upon the wheel. But the potter "returned" and made it again another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make it. And so with these transformed bodies at the resurrection, when the great potter Himself shall return. He will make them again another body, as it hath pleased Him: and so, whether it be the old nature, whether it be the heart, whether it be our bodies, they are never mended or repaired or improved or reformed; but they are condemned, and a new nature and a new heart is given,



and by-and-by new bodies will be bestowed. Oh, what a depth of meaning there is in those few simple words — "He made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it". "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him." (I Cor. xv. 38.)

And so you find in Hebrews x., with reference to the sacrifices and offerings which were under the first covenant, it is said they are all taken away because they were marred in their use; and then He said, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." In each case "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." (Heb. x. 9.) Thank God, THE SECOND IS ALWAYS ESTABLISHED. And so it will be with these new glorious bodies. They will be established. These poor vile bodies will be soon taken away and disestablished; but that which is to come will be established for ever and ever in glory.

This is our hope, and you will see how it is all bound up in Christ. It shuts us up entirely to Him; but people do not heed it. The shepherds went and told the people about His first coming. It says, the people "wondered." That is all. The people wondered, and they went on talking about the topics of the day. The topics of the day were very much like the topics of our day—taxes, and commerce, and politics. Augustus had just made a taxing throughout the empire, and that was doubtless the great matter of conversation. They "wondered," and passed on with their business. But the early Christians cherished this blessed hope, and the testimony of Gibbon is worth repeating. It is contained in a few words from the 15th chapter of his 1st volume. This great truth of the Lord's coming, and our being raised at His coming, was universally believed among these early Christians. He says, "The approach of this event had been predicted by the apostles. The tradition of it was preserved by their nearest disciples, and those who understood in their literal sense the discourses of Christ Himself were obliged to expect the coming of the Son of man before that generation was totally extinguished." [That is where Gibbon was wrong. They were not obliged to expect it before that generation was extinguished; but the fact remains that they did.] "As long as for wise purposes this error" [you see we have the testimony of an enemy who does not believe this truth himself] "as long as for wise purposes this error was permitted to subsist in the church, it was productive of the most salutary effect on the faith and practice of Christians." There is the testimony of an enemy then to this truth, as to the effect it produced upon the lives of those who held it. Oh, that Christians to-day would try this experiment! Oh, that we might be influenced by this blessed hope now! That we might accustom ourselves to looking for it, just as an army is practised in meeting a night attack, or just as upon a vessel the crew is practised by a false alarm of fire, so that each man may go to his right station. Oh that we might rehearse for ourselves, and practice for ourselves, the waiting for this assembling shout the waiting to hear the voice of the archangel and the trump of God! That will be an assembling shout. The trump of God is for the same purpose. See in Numbers x. 7, "When the congregation IS TO BE GATHERED TOGETHER, ye shall blow." And when His people are to be gathered together in the air this trump of God shall sound. But He says, "Ye shall not sound an alarm." No, it will be the signal for our being gathered together unto Him. It will not be an alarm for us, but it will be a blessed assembling shout and gathering trump. As Christ is the blessed object and centre of our hope, so He is presented to us in this great subject. "He that hath this hope in Him" — not in himself. "He that hath this hope in Christ." What hope? Why the hope of being like Him at His appearing, when we shall see Him as He is. He that hath this hope fixed upon Him, what does he do? What is the effect of it? "Every one that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." Yes, it is a purifying hope. And why is the low standard of walk among Christians at the present day so much deplored? Why are so many efforts put forth for raising the standard of this walk? Because that standard has been

changed. And why? Because this purifying hope is not held. Why are other methods tried and sought after for the promotion of purity of life, and this great divine advent method not tried? Here is God's method to secure our purity of life and walk. "He that hath this hope" (of the transformation of His people) — he that hath this blessed hope fixed upon him — "purifieth himself." And this Divine method cannot be carried too far. Other methods which men may propose to you may be carried too far. They are carried too far; but you will never carry this one too far. You can never look to Christ too much. You can never look for Christ too much. There will never be any ill effect from looking to Him; and, whatever may be left uncertain from the consideration of this subject, we may be sure that, with all our knowledge and all our thoughts about it, we shall surely say, when this blessed hope is realized, "The half was not told me." It will surely be beyond all that we have ever expected: it will surely exceed all that we ever desired: for "it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

**Taken from "The Dispensational Parables"  
July, 1897**

## **No. III. The Talents**

**Matthew 25:14-30**

"For it [the coming of the 'Lord' verse 13] will be as a man traveling into a far country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one — to every man according to his several ability, and straightway took his journey" (vv 14,15).

The parable evidently refers to the conduct of the Lord's servants during His absence, concerning the things committed to them. It refers to ministry committed to Jews, for He called "His own servants." The people of Israel were "His own people" (John 1:11).

"He delivered unto them his goods" — the things which belonged to Him as Man, in connection with His own people. These things are:—

His Royal authority, as King;  
His Prophetic office, as Teacher and Leader;  
His Priesthood and Offering.

To Peter the Lord Jesus gave the "keys of the kingdom of heaven," Peter being the first of the twelve.

### **THE FIVE TALENTS**

Five is a number of grace, and is intimately connected with the deliverance of Israel and with David. The people came out of Egypt in ranks of five (Exo 13:18). They put their feet on the necks of "five kings" in the days of the conquest of the land under Joshua (10:24). David met Goliath with "five stones" (1 Sam 17:40), and received "five loaves" from the hand of Abiathar (1 Sam 21:3).

The five talents therefore represent the ministry committed to Peter and the apostles concerning Jesus as the King of Israel, the seed of David.

### **THE TWO TALENTS**

Two loaves baked with leaven were to be offered to the Lord on the day of Pentecost (Lev 23:17) — the firstfruits unto the Lord. The two talents may therefore represent the ministry of the twelve apostles with Paul, concerning Jesus the Messiah, the Prophet like unto Moses (Acts 3:22), whereby the Gentiles were brought into association with the saved of Israel, in confession of Jesus as the Christ and Lord of all.

### **THE ONE TALENT**

One talent expresses unity. The ministry to the people of Israel in the Epistle to the Hebrews, concerning Jesus as the One Priest after the order of Melchizedek and His one offering for sin. Now, with regard to the reckoning.

## THE TEN TALENTS

Ten is the number used in Scripture in reference to the Gentile nations (Zech 8:23; Rev 17:12). The testimony of Peter concerning Jesus as God's King has been received by the Gentile nations. The professing Church among the Gentiles to-day claims to be the kingdom of God. So the five talents have become ten.

Two is the number expressing the association of Jew and Gentile in confession of Jesus as Lord of all (Acts 10:36; Eph 2:15-18; Rom 1:16).

The testimony of the apostles both Peter and Paul concerning Jesus as the Christ, the Teacher from God has been received throughout the four quarters of the earth "in all the world" (Col 1:6).

So the two talents have become four.

"But he that had received one went and digged in the earth and hid his Lord's money. After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them."

The Lord commends the servant who had received five talents as faithful to his trust, for the nations of the Gentiles acknowledge the Son of David to be God's King.

The Lord commends also the servant who had received two talents as faithful over a few things; both these servants are to be made rulers over many things, and to enter into the joy of their Lord: to reign with Him.

The ministry of the twelve apostles within the land of Israel was fulfilled according to the mind of the Lord.

The ministry in the synagogues among the Gentiles by Paul in association with the other apostles was fulfilled according to the mind of the Lord; for Jesus is owned as the King and Saviour by every professed Christian of all nations.

"Then he that had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed, and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine' " (vv 24, 25).

The important lesson of the parable is in the conduct of the servant who received the one talent.

The last truth given by the Lord Jesus to His own servants, the Jews as His own people, concerning Himself, is that of His Priesthood, and of His One offering in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Unity is its characteristic, for He abideth a Priest continually in contrast with the many priests of the Levitical order, and His One offering is in contrast with the many sacrifices under the law.

But where has there ever been a corporate testimony to the truth concerning the Lord Jesus, declared in the Epistle to the Hebrews to be "made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek"; all the ordinances of the Levitical priesthood being ended, having been fulfilled in the offering of the body of Jesus once, when He suffered without the gate, to sanctify the people with His own blood?

On the contrary, men professing to believe the Scriptures have continued a worldly sanctuary, an earthly priesthood, and ordinances upon the flesh in continuation or in imitation of the Levitical order; thus denying practically the Melchizedek priesthood of Christ, and the perfection of the believer as sanctified with His blood; hiding the results of

the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and of His appearing in the presence of God for us in the value of His One offering, under the imitation of the earthly things that belonged to the Mosaic dispensation.

The conduct of the wicked and slothful servant is seen in the ritualism of Christendom, of those "who say they are Jews and are not," who claim to possess authority given by the Lord to His apostles, and reject the grace declared in connection with His Priesthood and His Sacrifice.

The wicked servant judged the Lord to be a hard man, according to his own carnal mind; he knew nothing of the perfect love that casteth out fear.

The Lord did not disown reaping where He had not sown, nor gathering where He had not scattered; for He had been a sower in the land of Israel, the harvest is among the Gentiles; He is gathering among the Gentiles while Israel is scattered.

The blood of the covenant is treated as a common thing, and the Spirit of grace is despised, when ordinances administered by an earthly priest are credited with a result which can only arise from the one offering of Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit (Heb 10:29).

The wicked servant who hid in the earth the things revealed from heaven (Heb 12:25) falls under the same judgment as those who rejected the Lord Jesus when on earth (Matt 8:12), and the man at the marriage supper without a wedding garment (Matt 22:13), outer darkness, eternal judgment. To reject grace is a more fearful thing than to transgress law.

The one talent is given to him who has ten, for the unity which has not been manifested in the day of grace under the Melchizedek priesthood, will be manifested in the day of Christ's power, when He shall sit on the throne of His father David on God's holy hill of Zion, and all nations shall serve Him.

# **They Sang His Praise They Soon Forgat His Works**

"Then believed they His words: they sang His praise. They soon forgat His works: they waited not for His counsel" (Psalm 106:12, 13).

These are solemn words, because they record a solemn fact. They are true, not only of Israel but of God's people in all ages. They refer to that tendency in the heart of each one of us to cry unto the Lord in our trouble, and then to need the exhortation, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness" (Psalm 107:8), and even to sing His praise and then forget His works.

When God separated a people to Himself, it was not merely that He might be the God of Israel, but a God to Israel. He will not only have the people for Himself, but He will be their God, and "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 144:15). This Psalm records many examples of the statement made in the text. The first refers to the deliverance from Egypt. For a brief moment we see them in the attitude of faith: "Then believed they His word, they sang His praise" (verse 12). They are on the wilderness side of the Red Sea — "THEN." The waters that opened just now for their salvation and closed again for the destruction of their enemies roll between them and the house of their bondage. They are celebrating in their song the triumphs of God's right hand. They measure everything by it. Not only do they sing of what it has done, but by faith they celebrate victories yet to come, Exodus 15. Compare verses 12 and 13 with 15-18, and note the repeated "shall," "shall," "shalt."

Not one thing remains to be done; all is accomplished to Faith. Faith is seen thus to be the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. And now Moses and the children of Israel are silent, and Miriam and the women are taking up the strain, but still the burden is the same (verse 21). But what is the Divine comment on the scene? "They sang His praise, they soon forgat His works." So quickly does praise give place to murmurings: "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness (Exodus 16:2).

Is, then, the Lord's arm shortened that it cannot save? Is His ear that heard their cry in Egypt grown heavy that it cannot hear? No! But the instrument of deliverance has been leaned on instead of the Deliverer. Yes! So really is this true that as soon as Moses is out of sight, they run with haste to Aaron, and say: "Up, make us gods which shall go before us, for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him" (Exodus 32:1). The comment of the Spirit is: "They forgat God their Saviour which had done great things in Egypt"! (Psalm 106:21). And so it is ever! Where there is not a living God — wrought faith, man must have something to look to that is visible and tangible — that is IDOLATRY.

## **Occupied with the instrument**

We have another example of this in the days of the Judges. The people had gone into

open idolatry, and the Lord had sold them into the hands of their enemies Yet (as in Psalm 106:8, 41-44) "Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges which delivered them" (Judges 2:16). But there was man's "nevertheless" in verse 19; they returned to their evil ways after God's merciful deliverances, and in chapter 6 we see them greatly impoverished. The hand of Midian prevails; the Midianites were as grasshoppers for multitude, the people betook themselves to mountains, dens, and caves, the highways were unoccupied, the harvest was reaped by others, there is no sustenance left for Israel. Then the Lord raised up Gideon, He looked on him and strengthened him; He went forth with him, and delivered Israel with a great deliverance by "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon." But Israel was occupied with the Instrument! and they say to Gideon: "Rule thou over us, both thou and thy son and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian" (Judges 8:22). It was "thou, thou." Gideon was true to God here, but a few verses later we find him making an ephod of the gold that had been given him, and "all Israel went a whoring after it, and it became a snare to Gideon and his house."

Again, if we turn from the times of the wilderness and the days of the Judges to the reigns of the Kings, it is still the same. The history of the Kings is a dreary record of provoking the Holy One of Israel to anger, so that but a few reigns, like those of Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah stand out as bright exceptions. Manasseh, indeed, did repent and reform at the end of his reign, but we read of his son Amon that "he did evil in the sight of the Lord as did Manasseh his father...and humbled not himself before the Lord as Manasseh his father had humbled himself, but Amon trespassed more and more." We see the condition of things worse and worse till Baal-worship was carried on in the Temple of Jehovah, and actually the horses of the idol were stabled in the house of the Lord (II Kings 23). At this juncture Amon's son Josiah succeeded to the throne, and the history of his reign is minutely given in II Chronicles 34 and 35.

"While he was yet young," he sought the Lord (II Chronicles 34:3), and four years afterward he set about purging the city and the land, and thus fulfilled a prophecy uttered 300 years before: "There came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense, and he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, 'O altar, altar! thus saith the Lord, behold a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee'" (I Kings 13:1,2). And although the messenger, the instrument employed, failed directly after delivering his message, yet the word of God could not fail. That word came to pass. The king, "Josiah by name," received a great encouragement for his work, and a solemn warning to "take heed" to the voice of the Lord, for in the midst of his labours "the Book of the Law" was found (II Chronicles 34:14). The king received it in its power, for he traced all the misery up to neglect of this blessed book (verses 19-21). He learned that the Law may be neglected, though it cannot be broken. A blessed season from the Lord was vouchsafed, and the chapter which gives the record ends with the words: "All his days they departed not from following the Lord." Ah! "all his days"!

### **Man's "nevertheless"**

Yes, it is the same lesson still; the Lord Himself detects it, He sees the heart, and He has recorded what He saw in Jeremiah 3:6,10. Treacherous Judah "hath not turned unto Me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord." Hence we read: "After all this...Necho King of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish...and Josiah went out against him" (II Chronicles 35:20). Listen to Necho's words: "What have I to do with thee, thou King of

Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war, for God commanded me to make haste; forbear thee from meddling with God who is with me that He destroy thee not" (verse 21).

Hark what the Scripture says: "Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him...and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God" (verse 22), with fatal result. Oh, how solemn! how instructive! We are not told all the reasons, and how far, like Uzziah, "he was marvellously helped till he was strong. But when he was strong his heart was lifted up to his destruction" (II Chronicles 2:15,16). Like ungodly Ahab he disguised himself in the battle, but no disguise will hide us from God's eye, no shelter will avail us, and like another Ahab he is struck down by an arrow.

Sad! Solemn! and instructive lesson! Yet he was taken away from evil to come, and great lamentation was made for him (II Chronicles 35:25). Let us draw near and listen to the mourners. "The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits, of whom we said, 'Under His shadow we shall live among the heathen'" (Lamentations 4:20). Ah, it is the same lesson still. Israel served God "all his days," but at heart they were the "same generation." In the light of Josiah they walked, and not "in the light of the Lord." Upon "the breath of his nostrils" they lived, not on the words which proceeded out of the mouth of God. Under the shadow of Josiah they thought to dwell, and not under the shadow of the Almighty. These things happened of old, they are "written for our admonition." Like a bell swinging to and fro over the sunken rock, giving warning to the mariner, that hard by where he is passing others have made shipwreck, they sound in our ears: "Take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God."

### **The Christian life**

No one is really a Christian, but he who has received the Word of God "with the Holy Ghost and with power." He who has done this has turned to God from every idol, and is entitled to know that the blood of Christ has cleansed from all sin; and in Him who is now at the right hand of God he has been brought nigh. But the Christian life down here is not merely a fresh direction given to religious instincts or to the fleshly activities of man. It is not the holding of certain views or the taking of certain vows; pledges, or badges, or the shaping the conduct after a certain course, but it is the having to do with God in Christ, believing God, obeying God, fearing God, walking with God, worshipping God, serving God, joying in God. In short, "setting the Lord always before us," and setting the heart and conscience before Him. All ministry of the Word is for this end, and is healthful only as it subserves it.

The days in which we live are marked by the same character as of old: "They sang His praise, they soon forgot His works." God is forgotten, the instrument is too much thought of; man is glorified, the creature is exalted as though the saint has anything which he has not received. See what godly jealousy was manifested, by that faithful pastor, Saint Paul: "Let no man glory in men" (I Corinthians 3:21). "These things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos... that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another" (I Corinthians 4:6). "The Lord gave...God giveth" (I Corinthians 3:5, 7).

To lean on the instrument is the very essence of idolatry, for it displaces God. It is natural for us to do so because it is ever irksome to the flesh to be directly, continually, and absolutely depending upon God. When the stripling David returned from the fight, the



women sang his praises (I Samuel 18:7); but they were no true daughters of Miriam, their song was not "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously," but "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands"; and we read that "Saul eyed David from that day forward" (I Samuel 18:9).

While we may see in this Saul's envy and jealousy, we must note that it became David's "thorn in the flesh," the Divine antidote for man's praise, and though a "messenger of Satan," it ministered the love of God. There is but ONE on whom we may safely depend, only ONE under whose "shadow" we may dare to dwell. Of that One, the voice from the excellent glory has testified as the cloud hid Moses and Elias: "HEAR HIM" (Luke 9:33-35). What do we know of all this? Are we dwelling under His shadow, occupied with Him? Or are we taken up with instrumentalities, doctrines, observances, ceremonies, things about Christ instead of with Christ? Oh, to be occupied with Christ Himself! May God bless His Word to our hearts, reveal Christ to us in it, and open our ears to HEAR HIM!

## Two Words for "Knowledge"

Before we proceed further to consider some other of the practical effects of this knowledge, let us notice the fact that there are two words in the original for this knowledge of God, two verbs which mean to know. As these are used some times in the very same verse, it is very important that we should carefully distinguish that which the Holy Spirit has so especially emphasised. There are, indeed, six Greek words which are translated to know, but these two are the most common.

1. The one, *oída*, means to know without learning or effort; and refers to what we know intuitively, or as a matter of fact or history.

2. The other, *ginōskō*, means to get to know; by effort, or experience, or learning.

This difference will be clearly seen, if we examine one or two passages:

John 13:7. "What I do thou knowest not now." This is the former of these two words, and tells us that Peter had no intuitive knowledge of what the Lord was doing; and had no means of knowing. It was impossible. The Lord, however, goes on to say, "but thou shalt know (i.e., get to know) hereafter." Peter would learn, and find out, by experience and revelation, what the Lord was then doing.

John 8:55. "Ye have not known him (i.e., gotten to know him. No. 2 of these two words); but I know him (No. 1); and if I should say know (No. 1) him not, I shall be a liar like unto you; but I know him (No. 1)." Here the Lord declares His immanent knowledge of the Father; and declares that those whom He was addressing, not only had no such innate knowledge of God, but had not even attained to that knowledge.

I John 5:20. "We know (No. 1, i.e., we know as a historical fact, without learning it) that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know (i.e., get to know, No. 2) him that is true."

Here the truth is taught that, before any one can get to know God, he must have a spiritual understanding imparted to him. With this agrees 1 Corinthians 2:14. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he get to know them." Why not? Because "they are spiritually discerned." The natural man has no means of getting to know spiritual things. A spiritual understanding must first be "given" to him. Then he is able not only to discern, but to love and delight in the revelation of spiritual things, and to get to know Him, "the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." "This is life eternal" (John 17:3).



## About the Author

Ethelbert William Bullinger, born in Canterbury, Kent, England on December 15, 1837, was one of history's greatest Biblical scholars. His mastery of primary Biblical languages, his comprehensive research, and his literary skills introduced indispensable and unparalleled resources for the study and understanding of the Word of God. Through those publications, Dr. Bullinger not only revealed remarkable Biblical truths, he also instructed students in the method of Biblical interpretation that would enable them also to let the Book speak for itself.

E. W. Bullinger received his formal theological training from King's College in London, graduating with an associate's degree in 1861. In recognition of this outstanding scholarship with the publication of *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, the Lambeth degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon Bullinger by order of the Archbishop of Canterbury on August 31, 1881.

E. W. Bullinger was ordained a priest in the Church of England in 1862. Between 1861 and 1888, he served the church at various parishes, first as associate curate, then curate, and finally as vicar. Beginning in 1867, Dr. Bullinger held the office of clerical secretary for the Trinitarian Bible Society, which he continued in for the rest of his life. The society was dedicated "to promote the Glory of God and the salvation of men, by circulating, both at home and abroad...the holy Scriptures...without note or comment." Part of the organization's efforts to provide the Scriptures to all men involved the translation of the King James Version into other languages, including the first ever translation into Portuguese. Most notable among the Trinitarian Bible Society accomplishments during Bullinger's association with them was the publication of the *New Testament into Hebrew* and the *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible*. Over 100,000 copies of the *New Testament into Hebrew* were distributed into the Russian Empire, beginning in 1887.

Dr. E. W. Bullinger was a prolific writer and editor, publishing major reference works, as well as other books, pamphlets, and articles. His major works include: *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*; *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; and *The Companion Bible*. The books: *The Witness of the Stars*, *Numbers in Scripture*, and *How to Enjoy the Bible* also remain widely circulated today. Bullinger also published and edited a monthly Biblical research journal, *Things to Come*,

for over 20 years. Many of his writings were printed there first, and some of his books were even serialized there.

The Rev. Dr. Ethelbert William Bullinger died in London on June 6, 1913. As the Scripture found on his tombstone attests to, he lived his life to: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.” (II Timothy 2:15). Nearly 100 years later, his books continue to illuminate the Scriptures, and delight and aid the readers.