Psalms - Commentaries by Unknown Author

Christian Truth: Volume 29, Why Should We Not Trust Him?

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"They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee" (Psalm 9:10).

As to His care: He feeds the fowls, clothes the lilies, thinks of every individual sparrow, and has numbered the hairs of our heads.

As to His love: He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.

As to His purpose: He will have us to be conformed to the image of His Son in glory.

As to His wisdom: He has pledged Himself to make all things work together for good to those who love Him, and who are called according to His purpose.

Why should we not trust Him? Has He not done everything to win and retain the confidence of our hearts?

Christian Truth: Volume 31, Consolation in Christ

"In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul." Psalm 94:19.

This is uttered in view of abounding iniquity which broke in pieces Jehovah's people and afflicted His heritage. The cry comes forth, How long is this to go on? Then comforting thoughts assure the heart. The Lord hears, He sees, He chastens, He corrects, He teaches man knowledge, for He knows. Happy indeed is the man whom the Lord chastens and teaches, in whom the discipline of the Word is effectual as he passes through the varied exercises in and by which he learns to have his senses exercised to discern good and evil. He learns that evil is in man, in himself, but that good is in God alone. "Thou art good, and doest good." Thus God is known and trusted as "the rock of my refuge" (v. 22).

"Shall there be evil in a city?" the prophet inquires, "and the LORD hath not done it?" (Amos 3:6). When we own this it humbles us under the mighty hand of God; yet it is in such moments that the multitude of thoughts are prone to cause a tumult within. It was so in the psalmist. Why was judgment to return to righteousness? It cannot be that the throne of iniquity has fellowship with Jehovah, and yet iniquity prevails. O Lord, how long? These questionings are hushed as the Word is applied to us. As to myself, it teaches me my own nothingness—"I said, This is my infirmity" (Psalm 77:10); then it teaches me to remember who that blessed God is whose way is in the sanctuary, and therefore according to the holiness of His own dwelling place. "I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High." Thus our will is subjected, and the God of patience comforts us.

"Thy comforts"! Who would not have the exercises to possess the comforts? So Paul wrote, "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." 2 Cor. 1:5. As to the Corinthians also his hope was steadfast, "knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation," and this consolation comes from the Father of mercies and God of all comfort. In the epistle to the Romans also, what had been written of Christ aforetime, Paul records that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Here is the comfort, that Christ pleased not Himself, but became the subject of reproaches because of His zeal for the house of God. It is a comfort when in any measure what is of Christ fills the heart to the exclusion of our own thoughts. In His zeal for the house of God, how perfectly did He take into His own soul its state and condition. He wept and made sackcloth His garment. To have Christ's thoughts about that which belongs to God, is indeed a comfort, while fully desiring to own, according to the Spirit of Christ, our own share in that which causes its present condition—"O God, Thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from Thee." Psalm 69:5. It was grace in Him to take this place of confession of our sins; it becomes us.

It is blessed to think that we may in our measure taste the comforts which Jesus knew in the midst of sorrows; but it becomes us here to tread with reverence, for it is holy ground. See Him at the last supper. "One of you," He had to say of His loved disciples, "shall betray Me"; and has not the Lord to say to us sometimes,

"One of you," as we do this or that. Again, was it not a sorrow that He had to say, "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night." There was the added sorrow also because of the self-confidence of one who protested that he would never be offended, a self-confidence which made necessary the sifting of Satan, allowed by his faithful Lord. But was there no comfort of God as He sat with them and spoke of that day when He would drink with them of a new cup in the kingdom of God, and then sang with them a hymn, a blessed anticipation of His leading their praises in the midst of the assembly. Again, as the same hour of rejection and sorrow drew on, there were anticipations given Him, testimonies of what awaited Him in coming ages. Thus He "drank of the brook in the way." At Bethany (John 12) they made Him a supper. He had entered deeply into the sorrows of death when they passed upon that family, and now they were gathering round Himself. Resurrection will indeed seat His own beyond the power of death at the table with Himself, but in order to do this He must taste death. It is at this moment that the house is filled with the savor of the devoted love of one whose affections He had won. He alone knew and could expound the value of Mary's act.

On the next day He is met by much people, who cry, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." It is the anticipation of His glory in the midst of His beloved Israel, while as a present thing the enemy and avenger is stilled by praise from the mouth of babes and sucklings (Matt. 21:16; Psalm 8:2). Then the Gentiles utter their desire—"We would see Jesus," and the full glory of the Son of

man passes before His soul. Are there not also these anticipations for us, and they become to us God's comforts which delight our souls? Is it nothing to think of the blessed Lord being satisfied when He sees in each saint of the travail of His soul? We think of the saints as they are in the eye of the Lord, as they will be when He who has loved them and washed them will present them to Himself, when the body of each saint will be a living ray of His glory. Oh, how differently do we regard them when Christ's thoughts about them, in however feeble a measure, possess our hearts. We are then a little—but oh, how little—able to make their sorrows our sorrows, and the joys of Christ in them, become our joys. We think of the day of His joy when He will be able to have full communion with His own, while it is a present comfort that there is still an answer to the enemy and avenger, as a feeble company rehearse the praises of His whose glory is set above the heavens.

The blessed Lord in John 13 was contemplating the moment of His departure out of this world to the Father. His own were still in the world, and He loved them. He knew full well all that was present among them as well as around them; the defiling world without, the treachery within—the outcome of a heart that went out from the light of the company of Jesus into the darkness of the night without, an awful and eternal night. Then there was the ardent and self-confident Peter on the one side, and the disciple who lay on His bosom on the other. All was present to the mind of Jesus, as He washed their feet and said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.... If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." We shall find happiness if we cultivate these affections of Christ to His own. It was at the moment when He was leaving them, so that no longer would He care for them in personal presence, that He gave them the new commandment, "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." It is as if that love, so perfect toward us in Himself, was now to be carried out by the love, His love in us, of all toward all. How the manifestation of Christ in us would thus be secured! There is no leader here, no attempt in this of one to be greater than another. It is the more excellent way, the manifestation of Christ in each.

When the Lord was thus showing what should be our conduct during His absence, we see how easily a little self-importance can take the place of lowly listening to such an injunction. "Why cannot I follow Thee now?" said Peter, "I will lay down my life for Thy sake." What I will do may thus prevent our hearing and heeding the new commandment. As we listen, so do we hear the voice of the good Shepherd. "As I have loved you" utters in our souls a tenderness of love which can only be His Voice, and as we heed it, so is it the comfort of our hearts to think of all who belong to Him with the same tenderness of love. Love cannot rejoice in iniquity, but it grieves over any that go astray, and would seek to make known the accents of the Shepherd's voice. His love is unchanging, and when we turn to the right hand or to the left He recalls us. The voice may then come from behind us, but it is His voice saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Only let us take care that these affections of Christ have their place in our souls. The "I am right and you are wrong" principle of either speaking or acting will find no acceptance with us then, though we shall all the more desire to discern and be assured that there is the Lord's side on which we earnestly seek to be found with our brethren. A multitude of thoughts may indeed press into our souls, but our consolation will abound by Christ.

Fear Today: October 2022, Thy Testimonies Are Very Sure

In Psalm 93:5, we read these words, “They testimonies are very sure.” In connection with this truth, nearly 2000 years ago, our Lord Jesus Christ (surveying with the all-seeing eye of omniscient God just what the conditions would be on earth prior to His coming back to this world with power and glory) defined most clearly the state of things in these words:

“... upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity [that is, having no way out, no solution]; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken” (Luke 21:25-26).

In all things our Lord Jesus is to have the preeminence; already the prophets of this “present evil world” are paying unwitting tribute to Him. Some years ago, one of its own prophets wrote a book entitled, “The Outline of History,” a book that ignored what God has had to say in His Word as to man’s origin and destiny, a book that exalted the creature and forgot the Creator. This same man, H. G. Wells (after surveying the swiftly moving course of events in later years), reversed himself in statements that startled even his own admirers. We quote him:

“This world is at the end of its tether.

“The end of everything we call life is close at hand and cannot be evaded....

“People are discovering a frightful queerness has come into life. Even unobservant people are betraying, by fits and starts, a certain wonder, a shrinking, fugitive sense that something is happening so that life will never quite be the same....

“... Writers are convinced there is no way out, around or through the impasse. It’s the end....

“Hitherto, events have been held together by a certain logical consistency as the heavenly bodies, as we know them, have been held together by the pull of the golden cord of gravitation.

“Now it is as if the cord has vanished and everything is driving anyhow to anywhere at a steadily increasing velocity.

“The limits of the orderly, secular development of life... has been reached and passed into hitherto incredible chaos....”

[H. G. Wells was a secular, non-Christian writer, historian, and journalist whose life covered the latter half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth — 1866-1946.]

Let us hear once more the voice of Scripture: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star [the hope of the Lord’s coming for His own as a realized thing in the soul] arise in your hearts” (2 Pet. 1:19).

Christian Truth, Vol. 28

Going Home: May 2012, Fruit in Old Age

Psalm 92:14 reminds us that the righteous “shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.”

In Mark’s Gospel there is the account of Jesus’ choosing twelve men to be His disciples. The Bible says, “He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach” (Mark 3:14). Notice that Jesus chose them that they might first be with Him, and then He sent them forth to preach. To be with Him was fellowship; being sent to preach was service. From this we see that fellowship with God is more important than service, because God desires fellowship before service. This may surprise us, but it is God’s order. Fellowship with God is even more important than service for God.

The Christian who is crippled with arthritis to the extent that even the slightest move brings a stabbing pain is obviously very limited in what he can do for the Lord. But what about fellowship? Not only can such a person enjoy fellowship with God, but he can also have even richer fellowship now that he is not pressed for time.

A lady in a nursing home recently said, “Years ago I was so busy raising my family, I hardly had time to sit down and read my Bible as I really ought to have read it. Oh, yes, I often read it with my family. We studied it together; we meditated on it in a rather casual way, but we really did not take time to commune with God as we read the Word of God. We failed in really meditating. But since I have been retired and have time on my hands, I enjoy meditating on the Word of God, and now I have wonderful fellowship with God.” That dear lady is now bringing greater pleasure to the Lord than she was earlier when her time with God was so limited.

Why does God have this special interest in older people? God wants fellowship with Christians, and many people just do not take the time to meditate and fellowship with Him. But older people, many with time on their hands, can enjoy delightful fellowship with the Lord. God enjoys this fellowship with senior citizens who know the Saviour, and this is some of the spiritual fruit that God has been looking and waiting for.

Christian Truth

Christian Friend: Volume 13, Under His Wings in Lovingkindness

“He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.”—Psalms 91:4.

Much blessedness is evidently implied in this threefold! assurance of protection. Our desire is to trace the bearings of the central figure alluded to, being not only striking in itself, but used so frequently as to become familiar to us all. It occurs many times throughout the Psalms in one form or another, and in various connections, and even in the New Testament Thus the Lord, addressing Jerusalem, says, “How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings.” But He has to reproach them with their self-destroying in—difference, if not willful rejection of His grace. Before proceeding we trust this is not the case with our readers. We earnestly long that all would appreciate and yield to the entreating grace of Jesus.

“The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us”—manifesting Himself as capable in every way of meeting, and satisfying every element of our need; more than satisfying it, blessed be His name, and as He alone could justly estimate it. This He did in no respect more truly than in awakening us from the stupor in which the need was unfelt, unrealized by ourselves. He would make us, sensible of it, whether in heart or conscience; indeed, in both; for it was only thus that we could ever know, ever be drawn to Him—the living Center of God’s moral universe. But, refused and rejected, His love told itself out in tears of pity over the despisers of His grace, as in Luke 19, when He contemplates the condition of those who did not, “would not,” recognize Him, and the consequences which should follow their refusal of Him. Man, in his lost state is an anomaly in God’s creation, possessing a will which impels him from his divinely-appointed Center; but the day is coming when all shall own the earth—rejected Son of God. To Him “every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” What wisdom then it is to avail oneself of the shelter of His outstretched wings—now, in this “day of salvation,” before the day of judgment flashes upon heedless thousands, and places them beyond hope!

Returning to the Old Testament, we find in Ruth a striking illustration of the wisdom just referred to. Though doubtless uninstructed as to the immensity of blessing treasured up in God’s promises to Abraham concerning his seed her faith discerned sufficient in Naomi’s circumstances to form a link between her soul and him. Little hopeful that in poor Naomi’s path lay any fair immediate prospect—nay, distinctly warned as to the futility of cherishing such a prospect—who can doubt that Ruth’s earnest soul clung to her mother-in-law as to one representing divine things—the only measure of them her intelligence had as yet attained to, as she says, “ Entreat me not to leave thee, whither thou goest, I will go, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God?” We have here the most perfect expression of attachment one can well conceive, and (may we not add?) the basis of that attachment. God uses this providentially to lead her on; and are not souls often thus linked with divine things, unconsciously perhaps, in a measure of intelligence, at least, scarcely discernible? How blessed also to be in any measure, as was Naomi, an exponent of God’s wonderful purposes, blessings, and grace! It is beautiful to notice how distinctly Ruth thus enters on the ideal pilgrim path, leaving country, kindred, and father’s house (Genesis 12:1; Psalms 45:10); and how thoroughly she has learned the essential lesson for true pilgrimage, that of self-abasement! (Ruth 13) Self-renunciation and devotedness area twin virtues, and more; for they are born together, and are, mutually dependent. From Boaz, Ruth learns she may reckon on the favor of the Lord God of Israel, “under whose wings” she has come to trust.

Thus, blessed is it to trace the path which leads into the protection expressed in the figure before us, and, the consciousness of that protection. It is more than entertaining, thank God, as indeed the revelation of His mind about things must be to us. For example, is it not sustaining to observe the zeal with which our God indicates the way—marks for our guidance and encouragement? And is it not by a similar path we’ have all reached the same goal?

The thought of protection involved in the expression “beneath His wings” sufficiently accounts for the frequency of reference to it in the Psalms. The godly are there seen, in God’s dispensational ways; to be subjected to the oppression of enemies, in the midst of whom they are

providentially preserved (Psalms 124), and from whom they are ultimately delivered. These are His means of dealing with His favored earthly people, for their chastisement, exercise of soul, and restoration, as we read, “Deliver my soul from the wicked, thy sword: from men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world.” (Psalms 17:13,14) The effect of these dealings is presented in the foregoing verses (7-9). Deadly enemies compass the godly one about, and he is thus induced to seek the covert of Jehovah’s wings. In that secure retreat the heart is free to rejoice, doubtless in God, known through the efficiency of the protection He affords. Thus, “Because thou hast been my help, therefore under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.” (Psalms 63:7)

There is an expression of great beauty also frequently found in the English version of the Psalms, and occasionally accompanying that now under review; viz., lovingkindness,1 which, being an associated thought, indicates the spirit, the grace, in which our God accords His protection. The expressions are directly connected in Psalms 36:7: “How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.” The tenderness of divine affection is involved in His care for us. Comfort is ministered with the protection. Such favor meets us not only under circumstances of oppression from without, as in Psalms 17, but in trial experienced within, should this even be the agony felt by those newly awakened (as Israel in the Psalms) to a sense of guilt under a broken law. Refuge is needed for an overwhelmed heart, as well as from the persecution of enemies. Both needs are linked together in Psalms 61:2-4; just as the means of comfort and protection are connected in Psalms 36 above noticed. In the great penitential Psalm (51), resource; and we may take him here to be representative of those truly exercised as to guilt before God. It is worthy of observation, that what leads us to trust Him resignedly, when subjected to outward trials, is the knowledge of His lovingkindness learned through deep-soul exercise. This primary, though unquestionably outward trial, is helpful and often necessary in, preparing a soul for the ministration of grace (Job 33:14-33; and outward and inward trials simultaneously descending on Israel by-and-by, will be the furnace by which Jehovah will purge away its dross, and teach it to value the mercy which it now despises. How sweetly then will they who come forth purified sing of the mercy that “endureth forever,” as in, the words of Psalms 107 and 118.

God as Father is not revealed in the Psalms. Hence love in this relationship is not in view here. The love of God, as such moreover, may be contemplated in its blessed essence by those consciously reconciled, apart from the thought of mercy; though it was in mercy towards us, when guilty and dead in sins, that we first tasted His love. This is the fountain whence His mercy flows. And the two thoughts run side by side in Ephesians 2:3-7. His lovingkindness (mercy) known through experienced need, however, is what is chiefly dwelt upon in the Psalms. Psalm 107:43 directly teaches this: “Whoso is wise, and will observe these things” (i.e. men delivered, as set forth in the Psalms, through crying to God when brought to “their wit’s end” in trouble), “even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.” The psalmist himself is full, of this precious theme, and appeals to men to praise the Lord for it.2 Psalms 106 illustrates the absolute need for mercy; and if the subject were doctrinally treated here, as in Ephesians 2, this Psalm would form the natural preliminary counterpart of evil. But the former completes book 4, and has its fitting place, while 107 is the beautiful introduction to book 5, which reviews God’s dealings with Israel, its history, and attitude towards Him when restored.

The place God has given Psalms 106 is to be seen thus: 106 celebrates God’s “honor,” “majesty,” “riches,” and “glory” in creation; Psalms 105 records His dealings in grace, to the glory of “His holy name;” and, lastly, the dark history of man’s utter failure in “the best possible circumstances is set forth in Psalms 106. What fits one for the contemplation of this, as well as the glories of God set forth in the preceding psalms, is the knowledge of God’s mercy—His lovingkindness. And this is found in a deeper way in 103 than it could be learned even through the exercises of 107. It would be disastrous to limit our apprehension of God’s mercy or of our need to that measure of it which is realized through afflictions. At the cross it is that man’s need and God’s love in meeting that need, according to the inexpressible exigencies of His own glory, are fully told out. Christ’s death is in view in Psalm 102; not as sin-offering or burnt-offering in atonement certainly, but His cutting off, whose personal glory gave even the burnt-offering its inestimable value. In lowly association with Jehovah’s servants (compare, Matthew 3:15) the Messiah takes pleasure in the ruins of Zion, and looks for its restoration. This, not for Zion’s sake alone, but for the declaration of the name of the Lord therein. Then how about His cutting off? In reply, God reminds Him of the glories of His adorable person, and finds occasion to pass these glories in review before our souls. (See Hebrews 1) Though cut off in the midst of His years, He is the same whose “years are throughout all generations,” who “of old laid the foundations of the earth,” whose hands made the heavens. What an astonishment is the death, of, such an one Is it any marvel, considering the love that brought Him to this, that Psalms 103 opens with, “Bless the Lord, O my soul!” Thus, are also “benefits” to be recounted, forgiveness, healing, satisfaction, renewal and crowning with loving-kindness and tender mercies, all to be enjoyed as flowing from the cross of Jesus. In view of this also God’s “mercy is from everlasting to everlasting.” And as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy (lovingkindness) towards them that fear Him. Shall we not in all truth and earnestness re-echo, “Bless the Lord, O my soul?” J. K.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Does Psalm 91:11 Refer to the Lord?

Question: Does Psa. 91:11, quoted by Satan, refer at all to the Lord? or are there not three parties implied in it? W.

Answer: The godly one that relies on Jehovah in ver. 2, Who will surely deliver Messiah as in vers. 3-13, and is answered in vers. 14-16 by Jehovah.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Psalm 91:5 Explained

Ques. 84 Please explain: Psa. 91:5. E, G.

Ans. Psa. 91 is divided thus:

Psa. 91:1. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High (the Supreme) shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.”

Psa. 91:2. The dependent Man, the Messiah, says, "I will say of Jehovah, He is My refuge and My fortress: My God; in Him will I trust.”

Psa. 91:3-8. The Holy Spirit testifies to the blessing of such a man.

Psa. 91:9-13. Israel's voice also testifies to His protection Psa. 91:14-16. Jehovah answers His faith with promises.

This Psalm is true in principle for every godly man, but is specially applied to the Lord Jesus as Messiah. But notice that the Lord Jesus suffered in obedience to the Father's will, even to being forsaken of God. We may suffer also, but will never be forsaken. All these blessings were made good to the Lord in resurrection. But in His life time, He took all from the Father's hand. So may we. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee; because he trusteth in Thee," Isa. 26:4.

Now we can look at Psa. 91:5, and see how safe he is who is dwelling in the secret place of the Most High God, abiding under the shadow of the Almighty God. No enemy can shoot him by day, and no unseen enemy by night can get past the Lord to reach him, but only as God wills.

(Continued)

Young Christian: Volume 25, 1935, Answered Prayers

“He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him” (Psa. 91:15).

I think we sometimes discourage ourselves by a misconception of the expression “answer,” taking it to mean only “grant.” Now, an answer is not necessarily an acquiescence. It may be a refusal, an explanation, a promise, a conditional grant. It is, in fact, simply attention to our request expressed. In this sense before we call He will answer. The answer is often not what we asked or expected. Still, we never seek in vain. The gift is always better than the one we sought.

Food for the Flock: Volume 8, Present Place and Glory of the Son of Man, The

I READ these verses from the Psalm itself, though we shall look at several passages of Scripture in connection with them this evening, please God; but it is really these words that I have it on my heart to speak of a little.

There are three remarkable passages in the New Testament in which they are alluded to: 1 Cor. 15; Eph. 1; and Heb. 2 But we shall find, in looking at them, that these passages bring out three distinct points in the one great truth that is presented to us.

I suppose I need hardly state what that truth is. We all know that the " Man " alluded to here is the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us mark well those words: " MAN," and " the SON of man." Of Him it is said: " Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet."

Before looking into these Scriptures in detail, it would be well to say a word as to their general connection with each other, and as to that which distinguishes each from the other.

Hebrews occupies us with the person of the Son of man in the place of glory at God's right hand-the place in which God has set Him. It is the fact of this glorious Person being in this place that is presented to us; and a quantity of truths are unfolded as spiritual deductions from this great fact, revealing the blessings that flow from thence to those whom He is "not ashamed to call brethren."

In Corinthians also we find what results to us from the place of glory in which Christ now is; but here, the Spirit more especially insists on the particular truth that we shall be AS HE IS: " As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." This side of the truth is not developed in the Epistle to the Hebrews. That we shall be with Him there is, but how we shall be is not.

In Corinthians, the glory of Christ is connected with the hope that is formed in the hearts of those who are waiting down here for Him-the hope of His coming. It runs through the whole epistle. In the very first chapter, when the apostle is considering what characterized the saints, he speaks of them as " waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Some might complain of the apostle stating that there were matters about which he ought to give an account; but he says, Well, I have a good conscience, though this is not what justifies me; the Lord is the One who judges me. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart: and then shall every man have praise of God!" Beautiful words! They show what the heart of God is set on! The apostle has no thought of being judged for wrong doing; he knew what Christ had suffered; and though he speaks elsewhere of judging oneself, yet in the consciousness of living for Christ, and walking with a single eye, he could say he knew of nothing against himself; his heart condemned him not; he had confidence towards God. Yet he turns from this blessing to what is brighter still, and looks on with unmingled joy to the day of the Lord's coming; then, embracing others too in the full results of Christ's work as seen in the glory, he says, "Then shall every man have praise of God."

Again, if it is a question of the gathering together of the saints here on earth as members of the one body, with the precious privilege of showing forth His death, it is "till he come." So too, when speaking of the power of death over the bodies of the saints, and of that fundamental truth of the gospel, the resurrection, the Spirit establishes our hearts in God's " order "-" Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." In whatever way the saints are looked at, whether it is their individual calling and service, their corporate gathering, or the hope of their hearts as to the future, everything connected with them is stamped with this hope: " till the Lord come." To that moment is also reserved the judgment of the one who loves not the Lord Jesus Christ: " Let him be anathema maranatha," maranatha meaning the coming of the Lord; so that it is a curse in and for that day when He shall be manifested. I just mention these things to skew how they are brought out in connection with the Lord's coming in this epistle, whilst in Ephesians, where we also find the Psalm quoted, the Lord's coming is not mentioned at all.

In Ephesians, however, we get the highest point. The MAN in glory is always the same, but here the Spirit shews us the heart of the One who is in that place, and what He is occupied with, so that we may have part with Him, and be occupied with the very things with which He is

occupied.

The opening statement of the epistle is: " Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." The Spirit, the earnest of our inheritance, anticipates the moment when we shall be with Christ where He is. We are blessed in Christ Jesus already, in the heavenly places; and that is where our hearts are to be; there is where we find the door open, so to say, into the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the saint's heart may be formed after its divine model.

But let us go back to the first Scripture we noticed in connection with the Psalm, the one in Hebrews, where we find the verses I read are quoted at length. I begin with verse 5, "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." It might be well to remark in passing, that this expression, "world to come," was a term familiar to Jewish ears. There are two or three words used for it in Scripture, but the general thought is the same everywhere. For the Jews there were two worlds, or ages: the age of the law, and the age of the Messiah. The "present age " was the one when the law was in force; the other was " the age to come," that is, of the Messiah-the age to which God looked forward in all the promises that He made to the fathers, and to which all the prophecies converge. Now this " age to come" is not put into subjection to angels, the other one was; and in it there was no approaching God: " The way into the holiest was not made manifest." God shrouded Himself in angelic manifestations. Moses and the people of Israel heard His voice at mount Sinai, when the law was given to them " by the disposition of angels," and the people " entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more."

But the age to come is not put under the angels at all. Whom is it put under then? The apostle quotes prophecy in answer: " Thou host put all things in subjection under his feet" Whose feet? Messiah's evidently. But there is something more than this in it, beloved friends; it is as MAN. We read: " What is man that thou art mindful of him or the son of man that thou visitest him r God has taken up man, and put all things under him! This " age to come" is put into subjection to man in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. " Thou host put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him "-it is not yet the day of the manifestation of His glory-"but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor." We see Jesus, as Man, the Son of man, in that place " at the right hand of the Majesty on high." And the angels are the servants of those who are made heirs of salvation.

Now, before we go on further, I must turn back to say a few words on chapter 1. Before ever the Spirit of God opens out the character and personal glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the exalted Man, He takes care to shew us who He is. He is the SON OF GOD. And here we are struck by the fact that there are not merely things stated of Him that are true of a divine person; but that these things are not true of any but of a divine person. For instance, we often find the Psalm quoted which states that God has said to Him, " Sit thou on my right hand;" but the way in which it is referred to here is quite remarkable; we read, not that " He is set down," but that " He sat down." Now what would be said of a person who sat himself down on Queen Victoria's throne? though she might indeed say to the lowest of her subjects, " Sit down there," and then he would be in duty bound to obey her. The Lord Jesus Christ seating Himself on the throne of God shows that He is God. He takes the place in His own right, as He had in His own power laid down His life and accomplished redemption: " When he had by himself purged our sins," it is said.

Again: " God hath in these last days spoken unto us in [his] Son." It is God that has spoken; but it is God speaking as the Son. Time forbids our going through the whole chapter now; but I just refer to it to skew that, while there is a real Man in the glory, that real man is God. As in the opening chapters of John's Gospel we read: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God."

Then, further on, " And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Having premised this, we come to the great fact that is set before us in the second chapter, that the One who has all authority in the age to come is a Man, and that Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is most simple, but you will find that this truth is the turning-point of Christianity. The Man in whom God is going to head up everything, that MAN is in His own appointed place now; and those who have part with Him, have part with what God has given to Him now.

Our hearts are slow to lay hold of this. Naturally we understand better what refers to this earth, and enters into the domain of temporal blessing and deliverances. We are like the disciples who asked the Lord after His resurrection, " Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" It was quite natural for them, as Jews, more or less instructed in the prophecies, and having their hopes built upon promised earthly blessings, to want to know this. But He answered: " It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power; but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me." Something better than the restoring of the kingdom to Israel was to be their present portion. The Lord, who had associated them with Himself in His service on earth, here gives them this blessed title: "My witnesses."1 He was there with them in His body of glory, risen from the dead, on the point of going up to His Father, whence He would send down the Holy Ghost to unite them to Himself in the glory, and be in them the divine power of realizing and enjoying the position and relationship of which He was personally the expression-Son of God and Son of man. " I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Every redeemed soul now is divinely linked up with the Person of the Son in that place. It is the christian position, and as thus expressed, is seen to be wholly heavenly in its nature, as in its final results.

We find there are four reasons given for the Lord having been so humbled as to become a Man upon earth: for, to go up as such, He must necessarily have come down: as He said to Nicodemus, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." " The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." As such He was made "a little lower than the angels." Why? First, because " it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." It was what became GOD. The very first word in the Epistle to the Hebrews gives us the key which opens up the whole subject, and enables us to understand it all: " GOD... has spoken," has spoken in (His) Son. It is not here a question of what you are wanting, or I am wanting; it is not what meets the need of our souls here, although surely it does meet it infinitely; but it is what GOD has done for His own glory; it is what God has ever had before Him in connection with His own dear Son. It became HIM " in bringing many sons unto glory." It was God's purpose to have a family in glory.

What, then, is that family to be? This is the next question. God is far above all heavens; He looks down upon angels, upon creation, upon all the living beings in this world, and He says: I must have a family in heaven; I want sons. He passes by the angels. He looks down lower, and

sees man under the power of sin and Satan, living in corruption, going on to hell, and He says, I will take my family from among them. They are all defiled, all in ruin, all living in sin; this is their state. But God promised " eternal life" in Christ Jesus before ever the world was, and the Lord Jesus says, " Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." He receives the body prepared, so that He may come down to earth, and die to put away sin, and sanctify those whom God gives to Him. He accomplishes the whole work according to the counsels and glory of God. He gives Himself, lays down His life, to sanctify to God these wicked sinners, to make them sons of God, and to bring this adopted family up into the glory that God has prepared for them. It is God's own purpose, and God's own doing. How it sets aside all our thoughts, all our purposes! God is carrying out His purpose, His thought, and He does it all by His Son! Oh, it is a wonderful revelation He has made to us!

Then we see how He does it: " It became him... in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Except these sufferings had been accomplished, He never could have been a Captain of salvation for them. He might have come down into this world as a passing stranger, and gone up again, in His own perfect holiness and divine right, to that place in the glory. He had often done it before. But He never could have taken sons up with Him, unless He had gone through death for them. To be the " captain of their salvation," He must be " perfected through sufferings."

" For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Here we find the family, the " brethren." And when is this made good? It is after the "sufferings." Before His atoning work was done, He was entirely alone, as He said: " Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." After His sufferings unto death, He can say, " Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God." He can accomplish the word of Psa. 22 " I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." He carries out God's own purpose with reference to all those whom He has chosen. The Scriptures quoted from the Old Testament in proof of it are in Psa. 22 Psa. 18; and Isa. 8 They develop the blessed position He has brought us into. I do not go into them now at all, for it would take us too long, but pass on to verse 14, where we find the second reason for the Lord Jesus having been so humbled as to become a Man.

" Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood." What children? It is these children in God's purpose. He takes His place in grace among them, becoming like them, sin apart. " He also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." He sees them there under Satan's power, under the power of death, subject to it, and He comes down into the place they were in, to deliver them out of it, and bring them up to God. This is the second reason. And then we read: " Verily, he taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold." It is not man universally that constitutes this family; it is of faith, that it might be by grace; the " children " are the seed of " faithful Abraham."

The third reason we find in verse 17, " Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people." He has come down here, He has humbled Himself thus, that He might take away the sins of His people. If their sins were not taken away, the family that God was going to have in glory would have been unholy; that could not be. On the day of atonement the high priest took the blood of the sacrifice, and sprinkled it in the holy place on and before the mercy-seat, and made atonement for all the congregation of Israel, that they might be " clean from all their sins before the Lord." In like manner the Lord Jesus Christ has " made atonement for the sins of the people," and thus," having by himself purged our sins, has sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

The fourth reason is: "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." That is, He is a faithful High Priest, ministering to His people all along the way, so that there is the fullest provision possible made for their arriving according to God's thoughts in the place that He has provided for them.

And in chapter 3. the Spirit still keeps before us this same blessed point: " Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to him, that appointed him." GOD is the starting-point of all the blessing; God, by whom and for whom are all things; God, according to whose will all the work is accomplished; God, who has put all things under the feet of the Son of man; and God, who appointed Him, and to whom He is faithful.

Now let us look for a moment at the place to which Christ has gone. He is not said to be " in heaven " merely; that is not enough. People have a careless way of talking of "getting to heaven," as if their highest hopes only attained to creeping in unperceived at the door. The Spirit sets quite another thought before us. We read in the end of the fourth chapter: " Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God." It is " through," not merely " into." So also in chapter vii.: " made higher than the heavens." He has gone up " far above all heavens." There, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, He has sat down; that highest place is now filled by a MAN. And that "Man" is there, the divine expression before God of what the family that God is going to have there is to be. There He sits on the right hand of God, and makes known to us His glory.

For every believer here in this world, all sin is gone. The Lord Jesus Christ has gone up in spotless divine righteousness; the question of sin settled forever; and therefore every one who looks to Him gets the sense that sin is gone: " Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." But not only this; there is for the believer the divine certainty of going to the glory where Christ is. He who is there, is there as our " forerunner," as we read in chapter 6. " Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." The word " forerunner " supposes there are those who run after. The fact is plainly stated that the One who is there, is there as the " forerunner." And therefore we have got this hope as the anchor of the soul; " within the veil," too, the nearest, the most intimate, place in which the presence of God is known, as shown forth in the tabernacle. In that place Christ is, and He is the anchor of the soul of every believer.

Every captain knows the relief his heart finds on coming into port, when, his voyage over and his care at an end, he drops the anchor, and can go to sleep in peace. No storm can now endanger his vessel, or drive her out to sea; the anchor is dropped inside the harbor. And where is our anchor dropped? In the port for which we are bound; dropped and fixed there before ever we have started on our voyage! No earthly voyage can illustrate this blessing. Christ, having accomplished all the work, has sat down on the throne of God, and the Christian not only knows he is going there, but he has the certainty of arriving where Christ is. Christ has set him on his way. He, who has passed through the heavens, is sitting as Man at God's right hand; He who was here as a Man, and who can enter into all our sorrows, all our feelings that are not sinful, all

our trials here; for He went through them all, sin apart; and now is actually in the place to which He is bringing us. So the word says, " Consider him... who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

There is just one point left, about which a soul might be anxious, and that is as to how the journey is to be accomplished-how we are to get where Christ is. But we read in chapter 9.: " As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." There are three points brought before us in this Epistle: in chapter 2. we " see Jesus;" in chapter 9. we " look for Him;" and in chapter 12. we " look to Jesus." Now these three things sum up the divine power that God gives us to walk through this world in a way worthy of Him. Then courage and patience are stimulated by the assurance that " Yet a very little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." The epistle is an epistle of hope; the hope of getting to the glory where the Lord Jesus Christ is; of getting there through the trials and difficulties which we all have to meet with on the way. But if we want to know how long they will last, it is "yet a little while;" and we " have need of patience," until what time? "Until the Lord come." We are going on to glory; that is the way we are looked at all through this epistle; we are going on, like the Israelites, to the rest; and He is going to shorten the journey on His side, by coming to meet us. And when He comes for us, He will not enter into the question of sin at all, for He has done that already: " He appeared once in the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He " was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." And what, then, is this salvation?2 It is certainly not the salvation of souls, for He did the work that has accomplished that before He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. But it is God's purpose to have many sons in glory, and having saved them, He is bringing them through this world of difficulties and trials, until He gets them there. And while we are going through, we have to " look off unto Jesus, the beginner and finisher of faith," who is now " set down at the right hand of the throne of God." We look to Him who is in that place, and consequently we have courage to go on until we get to Him.

I turn now to 1 Cor. 15, though I do not desire to enter into it much; but it is well to have before us the general principles found in it, in connection with our subject.

We begin at verse 20: " Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." Here we find Christ again presented as a Man; He is spoken of as the " firstfruits." Let us inquire what this expression means.

The children of Israel in the time of harvest brought the firstfruits to the priest, in the presence of God. This act proclaimed a double truth: first that there was a harvest, and that it was there ready to be reaped; and secondly, it gave the priest a specimen of what the harvest was. And so we find it in the Epistle to the Corinthians. The harvest is there, just ready to be reaped in God's thought, " every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." This is the divine order. But the firstfruits has gone up. Is not that beautiful? When we look at Christ in His own place, up there on the throne of God, we see that a Man in glory is the expression, in the presence of God, of what every one of His redeemed will be. So that we find in His person up there, not only the divine certainty of our getting there, because He is the " firstfruits," but also the expression of what we shall be when we get there.

Supposing a man in Israel brought, as his offering of firstfruits, wheat or olives, or figs or bunches of grapes, the priest could say to him: You have a beautiful harvest of wheat or olives, or figs or grapes. The firstfruits expressed what the harvest was. And so now, Christ is the firstfruits, He has gone up to God as the divine expression of everything that God is going to take up there in the time of the ingathering: " afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

And how long have we got to wait for it? The very expression " firstfruits" precludes the thought of any time at all. When the Israelite brought them, the harvest was just upon the point of being reaped. And so it is. Christ has gone into that place as the firstfruits, the earnest of the harvest that is ready; He has become there the anchor of our souls, and He is coming again to fetch His people home. And therefore what becomes us is surely to be waiting for Him; as it is said in Luke 12 " Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord." The one thing that is needed to put a crown upon the lives of the saints in this world, is that they should be like unto men who wait for their Lord.

" For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." And then we get this passage quoted again: " For he hath put all things under his feet." I do not enter into all this blessed and beautiful side of the truth; it would carry us away from our subject now. The point is, as in Hebrews, that everything is subjected to Christ. But we find that He will use His power of subjecting all things in changing the body of our humiliation into the likeness of His own glorious body (Phil. 3), so that when we shall be with Him where He is, we shall be like Him. Then in verse 45 we read: " It is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second Man, the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." We shall bear it. It is God's own purpose which must have its accomplishment.

We are waiting for this; we know that when He comes, He will conform us to His likeness.

Thus we see how inseparably this truth is connected with the coming of the Lord as a formative power in the heart of the believer. You cannot have a sense of the Lord Jesus being in this place in glory, without your heart being formed into waiting for Him to come to take you to be with Him there. The coming of the Lord characterizes this Epistle to the Corinthians, as we have already seen.

Just one word more, however, upon the subject before we leave it; I mean as to the way in which the Lord's coming is presented to us. You will not find it presented as putting an end to all the troubles and trials of this world. You often hear people say: "Things are very bad, and sorrowful, and trying, hut the Lord will soon come and put an end to it all." This is not the way it is put before us in Scripture. I find, on the contrary, that the man who is really waiting for the Lord from heaven will say: I accept all the suffering, all the sorrow, all the trial here as from the Lord; I do not seek to be " unclothed," I do not wish to escape from it, all I want is to be acceptable to Him in it. If I do not get sorrow here of some kind or other, I am not in the place of a son at all; for we are told that by the suffering we go through here, God is working out His own purposes for us, and giving us the immense privilege of finding out in practice what was the path in which the Lord Jesus Christ walked when He was here on earth. I suppose that if there is one thing we shall esteem precious when we see the Lord Jesus in glory, it will be to have been a little while in the world in which He suffered, and through which He walked as the Man of sorrows. But I need scarcely say that,

to do this, we must walk with Him.

Wonderful indeed is this subject, too extensive for us to go into now; but let us remember that the Spirit is not satisfied with our looking for Christ from heaven merely as relief; it is not to be only a future thing with us; He would have us, until He has brought us home to the glory where Christ is, occupied with those things which occupy Christ, and in communion with Him in the place in which He has already set us in Himself.

For this we turn lastly to the Ephesians, where we find the Spirit putting before us " the mighty power of God which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:19-23.)

What a presentation of the church of God! How wonderful the very way in which it is introduced! We have first Christ, the Man in glory brought before us, raised from the dead, and set at God's own right hand by the working of His mighty power;-this glorious "Man" set far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, all things being put under His feet. And then, as established Head over everything, He is seen as Head of the church, which is " His body; the fullness of him that filleth all in all "! And now He nourishes and cherishes it, and the day is coming when He will " present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; holy and without blemish.... For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."

Who can tell it, beloved friends? We have here presented to us the activities of Christ's heart as a world of wondrous occupation for the Lord's people here on earth, so that our hearts may be set upon it, because His heart is set upon it, and so that we may be really walking on in company with Christ in the path into which the Spirit has brought us.

But it is really impossible for us to grasp this side of the truth until we have taken hold of the other two. Unless I know the Lord Jesus Christ as the One who, having purged my sins, has sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and is now for me a merciful and faithful High Priest to meet every need on the way up to glory; unless I am really looking for Him as the One whose glorious image I am. to bear, I have no divine capacity for entering into that which is unfolded to us in the Epistle to the Ephesians. For here it is a question of the heart's affections. It is said, even in ordinary things, that " people cannot command their affections;" and cases are not rare in which we see the affections stronger than the will. But in spiritual things, blessed be God, the Holy Ghost, who leads the saints, sheds abroad in their hearts the lore of God. All is divine. If I have Christ in my heart, I must go on to the glories into which the Holy Ghost would lead me, " where Christ sitteth." I must take hold of this glorious hope that is before me, the hope of soon being with Him in the place where He is, the hope of seeing redemption completed in glory. We cannot see it now, but the day is coming when every child of God will be like the Lord Jesus Christ; the day is coming when God will change poor vile man, he who has been the slave of Satan, into the image of His own Son.

And what is Christ doing meanwhile? He is occupied with His church, with gathering it Out of the world, with nourishing it and cherishing it. Where can we find it? The Lord knows where His members are, and all that is needed for us is to be in the current of His thoughts, that we may find them out, and enter into His thoughts about them. And we need this more than ever now; for it is a day in which Satan is seeking to take from us all truth connected with it. He will leave us with what people call " fundamental truth," but nothing more. Surely every true heart must own as " fundamental " what Christ is, and what is revealed about Him. It is not my salvation, as is generally understood; it is not anything that is of me; it is what is of GOD, as we see in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Getting hold of Christ's thoughts as to His church, is the one thing that will keep our souls in order, no matter what comes up. And truth connected with the church is that which Satan is always trying to take away from the saints; not in a bald way, for they would not stand that, but by so deceiving them as to what is truth, that the true thing just escapes their grasp.

We need to lay hold really of the place in which the Holy Spirit has set us, in Christ, who is seated in the heavenlies, and to be occupied with what Christ is there. The Lord will give us the needed courage as we walk through this world, with all its difficulties, and trials, and sorrows. He assures us that we shall have trouble as we pass through it, but the day is coming which will more than make up for it all. When Christ shall be manifested in His glory, and in His Father's glory, and the glory of the holy angels, we shall be manifested with Him, and meanwhile our blessing and our happiness is to be going on with Him in the scene where He was rejected, and had not where to lay His head, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

(W. J. L.)

Things New and Old: Volume 18, All My Springs Are in Thee

Thou source divine of joys that grow,

Eternal spring of endless peace,

And surest hope, whose constant flow

Of highest bliss can never cease.

O who among us all can tell

The unfathomed depths of love divine,

That brought Thee here with man to dwell,

And grace and righteousness combine?

From Thee flows forth the living stream

Whose waters gladden every heart,

Which fills the soul with joy supreme,

And heals its wounds and soothes its smart.

From earthly springs we turn away—

No more a broken cistern hew;

With heavenly drafts our souls we stay,

With living water strength renew.

In Thee are all our freshest springs,

Perennial sources never dry;

We long to spread our gladsome wings

And mount to drink celestial joy.

R. B.

Echoes of Mercy: Volume 14 (1904), Railway Shunter's Conversion, A

“I will glorify Thy name for evermore. For great is Thy mercy toward me.” — Psalms 86:12, 13.

OF all positions occupied by railway servants, the work of the shunter is the most dangerous, statistics proving that more shunters are killed at their posts of duty than any other railway employee. The one whose conversion is here recorded, although he has had many very narrow escapes, glories in the fact that his soul is saved, and realizes through the grace of God, that whether in life or death, all is well. He gives the following account: —

“My early days were spent in a midland village, and being of lowly parentage and one of seven children, I did not have the advantage of a good education, being compelled to work hard from my earliest recollections. Boylike, I was often in mischief; in fact, if anything went wrong in the village, I was usually blamed for it.

“I shall ever remember with gratitude that I had a praying mother, who always sought to impress upon my young mind the truth that God beheld all my ways. But like hundreds more, I was very self-willed and endeavored to forget her loving counsel; although now I can add that her example, her prayers, and her influence have never left me.

“I recall three very anxious times in my experience. When a boy of twelve, I was spoken to by a young man about my sinful state, and I well remember my brokenness of heart as he told me of the Saviour’s love; but, alas I the impression soon passed away.

“A few years later, I heard an impressive sermon at the Parish Church, which again awakened me to a sense of my danger and caused distress of soul; my anxiety being at times so great that I often fell upon my knees behind a hedge, and tried to pray for mercy. But again the word did not profit me, for Satan suggested that I was too bad, and that I must mend my ways, and again attempt that which I had vainly endeavored to do so many times. As I was ignorant of God’s abounding love to guilty sinners, I became disheartened, and even more careless than before.

“But God in grace bore with my stubbornness and rebellion, not leaving me alone, but about six years later bringing me under the sound of these impressive words: ‘But man dieth and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?’ But I again disobeyed the call of God and sought pleasure in the world. And until I was thirty-two I continued my wild career, without God and without Christ.

“Thus the years passed, until five little children were seated around my table, bringing with them their attendant responsibility and care, and all thoughts of eternity and eternal things were banished from my mind, until death, that dread visitant, called at our home, taking from our midst my wife’s mother. This sad event caused me to see the awfulness of a soul passing into eternity without a ray of hope. Six weeks later my eldest sister passed away, and as we laid her body in the cold grave I felt in utter despair. A fortnight later my youngest boy died, but instead of these sad occurrences softening my heart, I further rebelled against God and complained of His hard and seemingly unrighteous dealings. It was whilst standing by the still form of my beloved child that God again caused me to hear His voice, as the thought vividly presented itself, ‘What had it been you?’ and I was compelled to acknowledge, ‘O God, I should have been in hell.’ From that moment for nearly three months I was in great agony of soul, feeling as never before the great burden of sin, causing me to rise from my bed many times in the night to pray to God for light. Once when digging in the garden, I was so deeply convicted of sin that I felt I dare not proceed lest I should open a hole by which I should sink into hell. I immediately went to my room and cried to God for deliverance. Thus God brought me to own as one before had owned, ‘O wretched man that I am!’

“Some time after the above experiences I went to hear the gospel preached, and although after the service Christian friends sought to point me to Christ, I was so very blind and unbelieving that the way of salvation seemed too simple. The following night, when on my way home, a great longing possessed me to be saved, and glancing upward the heavens appeared to open, and what a sight met my enraptured gaze! for I saw the Lord Jesus dying on Calvary’s cross, and I heard a voice saying, ‘You are refusing salvation through the work of Christ.’ My sin-burdened heart was bowed both with sorrow and gratitude, and I exclaimed, ‘O Lord, I will refuse no longer,’ and there under the broad canopy of heaven I trusted Christ as my Saviour, and joy and peace in believing flooded my heart. It was not long ere I was on my knees,

thanking God for His abounding grace and mercy to me, a poor hell-deserving sinner.

“Many times after this Satan suggested that I was deceived, and once when going to work, greatly troubled with doubts as to my acceptance with God, my attention was arrested by a small piece of paper, which was almost covered by sand, lying by the roadside. I picked it up and found it to be a small leaflet, and in it I read how, in the person and work of Christ, God had made a rich provision, both for the past, the present, and the future. It was just what I needed, and this led me to further praise my God, who had provided such a perfect salvation. My fears all vanished, and from that moment, if doubts arise, I have pointed my adversary to the written Word of God; and I can with thankfulness add that it has been peace and joy all along the way.

“I record the above to magnify the grace of God in saving my soul and sparing my life, whilst numbers of my mates have been cut down both by disease and accident, many in the prime of life.

“One to whom I had many times spoken about his soul’s salvation, had been run over by an engine. I went to where he lay, and when I saw his poor mangled body I knew that he could not last many minutes. Lifting to God a silent prayer, I knelt by his side and whispered, ‘George, look to Jesus; His precious blood will cleanse from all sin.’ I also repeated other scriptures into his dying ear, but, alas! he was too far gone to make any reply.

“Another case very different to the above was that of another comrade who was a fireman, to whom I had many times spoken about the realities of eternity. Once, when on night duty, I felt deeply impressed to speak to him about the welfare of his soul. I was unable to leave my post, so I hastily wrote a passage of Scripture upon a scrap of paper I had by me, and handed it to him as the engine passed. It was some time before I again saw him, when I asked him as to his soul’s salvation. ‘Thank God, all is right,’ he replied. ‘How did it come about?’ I asked. To which he replied, ‘You remember those words of Scripture you gave me? God used them to open my eyes.’

“Now, dear reader, I would add a warning word to you. Do not trifle with the mercy of God, for He has said, ‘My Spirit shall not always strive with man.’

“O unsaved comrade, flee to the outstretched arms of my precious Saviour, for He has suffered the just for the unjust. Hark to His cry at Calvary, ‘My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?’ Why was He forsaken? It was because God could not pass over sin, and as Christ took the sinner’s place, God poured out His indignation and wrath against sin upon Him.

“Moreover, it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. Why? That He might righteously spare you and me. Therefore I repeat to you the words of the One who saved me, who will also save every needy sinner who turns to Him by faith: ‘For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ Believe this glorious message, and your soul shall live.”

Things New and Old: Volume 9, Eighty-Fourth Psalm, Meditations on the

Verses 11, 12. “For the Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory · no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.” We have now come to the close of our beautiful and instructive Psalm. Precious indeed, and most practical are the many lines of truth which, it has suggested for meditation. The Lord in His mercy grant that they may neither be overlooked nor forgotten. Under the head of “Tabernacles,” we have dwelt on the usual occupations of a Lord’s Day, and on the mixed multitudes that throng the various places of worship. The attractions of the world, the dangers of delay in the concerns of the soul, the full gospel, the blessedness of the saved, and the misery of the lost, have also been before us. Oh! that what has been written may be the means of blessing to many, but especially to many mere formal, Christ less professors, and to many poor careless sinners. The Lord knows how much they have both been on the writer’s heart through it all. May all who have read, or who may yet read, these pages, be brought to Jesus, and blessed with God’s great salvation!

We also pray, that the Lord may bless these meditations abundantly, to many of His dear pilgrim saints who are now passing through the valley of Baca. Young Christians just entering on their heavenly way have been especially thought of. The Lord in His tender love and care watch over them, keep them, and bless them. The offense of the cross has not yet ceased. But, the Lord be praised, there are still wells in Baca, and a glorious Zion in prospect. May the faith, hope, patience, and courage of thy beloved ones, most gracious Lord, be kept strong in Thyself, until they have passed the vale of tears, and safely reached the Mount Zion of Thy love and glory!

Like our former Twenty-third Psalm of sweetest and most cherished remembrance, the Eighty-fourth closes in heavenly brightness. In the Twenty-third, the believer ends his journey amidst the grateful recollections of the past, the peaceful joys of the present, and the blessed assurance of a glorious future. The heart overflowing with gladness, and surrounded with mercies, the worn and weary pilgrim leaves the valley and enters his Father’s house — the home of never-ending love. “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” Thus winds up what has been often called — the children’s psalm.

In like manner, we may say, concludes the Eighty-fourth. Amidst the light and glory, the strength and beauty, and the unmeasured goodness of God, the scene closes. And thus, my soul, observe it well, ends every believer’s earthly days. Death is no longer the master, but the servant of the believer — a messenger of peace. All may not know the truth alike, or enjoy it alike, but it is alike true to all. Our unbelief changes not the faithfulness of God, He changeth not, blessed be His name. The Lord God Himself is the pilgrim’s sun and shield. As He said to Abraham, “Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.” (Gen. 15) What had Abram to fear? we may ask; what could Abram lack, when behind such a shield, and enjoying such a reward? Meditate, again, I pray thee, my soul, on these wondrous words. They are directly applicable to thyself. Thou art, in virtue of thy union with Christ in heaven, a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth.

But the great truth for the heart is, not merely the thought of having “a sun and shield” as our light and protection in this world, but rather, who the sun and shield is. Not, observe, what, but who, the sun and shield is. The Lord God is thy sun and shield Blessed truth! It meets the whole need of the heart. There is no sunshine like the beams of His countenance, and no shelter like the shadow of His wing. Treasure in thy heart this blessed truth — meditate thereon — make it thine own. And still dwell upon it, until it has become a part of thyself. Bask, as it were,

in the sunshine, and repose behind the shield of thy God and Father. All must be peace, and rest, and light, and joy, and security there. No harm can ever come to thee there. It is thy Father's shield. It is well to be always in the shade as to this world, but ever in the sunshine of thy Father's face. While here below amidst all the weakness and darkness of this present scene, forget not that the Lord thy God is thy sun and shield — thy light and guidance in darkness — thy strength and protection in weakness. Thus shalt thou be effectually delivered from all doubts and fears, and filled with the full assurance of faith.

Experimentally, may I ask, my dear christian leader, dost thou feel thy heart expand, and willingly open out all its folds to the gracious light of this genial sun? It invites thy fullest confidence. It will warm and enlighten, but not consume. Suffer not a dark corner to remain concealed from its searching, yet cheering beams. It is fitted and intended to make thee perfectly happy. If one dark spot could remain on thy soul in heaven, it would be no heaven to thee.

But not one moment of thy history shall be left in the dark when thou art manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ. There, every moment, and all that belongs to each moment, shall be revealed in the pure light of heaven. Then, thy happiness shall be complete — thy blessedness un-mingled —thy song of praise on the highest key-note of heaven. All will then be fully out between the Lord and thyself. And all that has been contrary to Him in thy ways shall perish from thy remembrance and from His; and all that has been done for Him shall be graciously acknowledged and rewarded. Even a cup of cold water given to one of the least of His disciples in His name shall be remembered and rewarded forever. No good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly. To walk uprightly, is to walk before Him, by Him, and or Him. It is only the believer's ways that are examined and estimated before the tribunal of Christ. The believer himself can never come into judgment, Christ having been judged for him. (John 5:24.) The Lord enable us now to walk in the light as He is in the light, that now we may be made manifest unto Him. 2 Cor. 5:10-21.

But there are other two words in the verse before us which must be noticed ere we part with our rich and instructive psalm. And words they are of no mean significance — "Grace and Glory." All blessing, both for time and eternity, is folded up in these two words. "The Lord will give grace and glory." Both come from Him, and both are the fruit, or expression, of His love. Some have spoken of grace as the bud, and glory as the full-blown beauties of the flower. Others have said, that in David and Solomon we have the illustration of both. Grace was exhibited in David, and glory in Solomon. It was grace that raised David from his low state to the highest honors; and it was the same grace that restored him when he wandered — that comforted him when in sorrow — that sustained him when in conflict, and that kept him safe until he reached his journey's end.

But when grace had done its work in David, glory shines forth in Solomon. Glory was stamped on everything under his reign. His throne, his attendants, every detail of his household, even the whole land of Israel reflected his glory (see 2 Chron. 9:1,12), yet grace shone in all the glory. The two things are inseparable. All the glories of the rose are folded up in the bud. But it is chiefly in this world that grace has to do with us. This marks the great difference between grace and glory.

Grace has to do with us in our weakness, failure, sorrow; and willingly brings the needed strength, restoration, comfort, and joy. It is the sweet and needed companion of the days of our humiliation. Oh! what a friend, what a companion, what a portion, grace is for a soul in this world; and what an unspeakable blessing to know the grace of God in truth! "The Lord will give grace and glory." Forget not this, my soul, reckon on both; on grace now, on glory hereafter. They can never fail. There is no need they cannot meet, and no enemy they cannot conquer. Like the pilgrim's guardian angels, "Goodness and Mercy," in the twenty-third psalm, they surround thee on every side. Encircled indeed thou art, whether in Baca's vale, or on Zion's hill, with a heavenly company. In parting with the companion of many a happy hour, carry this thought with thee. It may give strength and courage to thy heart in a time of need. What can be more suitable for a pilgrim's path, than the precious truths which are at once suggested by the beautiful symbols of a "sun and shield?" or by the plain but all comprehensive words — "Grace and glory?" And, as if these did not sufficiently express the love and care of thy Lord, it is added, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Say, then, say, my soul, is not this enough? He is unwearied in His love, He is all patience in His ministry, He waits on thee in every step of thy journey. He fills the pools and wells of Baca, to refresh the pilgrim on his way. What truth, oh! what truth for the heart — what light for the path — what strength for conflict — what assurance of victory, in His boundless grace!

Suffering first, glory follows. Take courage, my soul. "A little while," and glory will fill the wide, wide regions of thy Lord's dominions. And being with Him, thou shalt be at the center of it all. Conflict ceases there. Here, grace has to struggle with our evil in many ways, and sometimes it may seem doubtful which is to win the day; but the Lord gives more grace, and it always triumphs. But there, no evil can ever be, either to dispute or divide the scene with glory. Then, the days of evil will be past, and past forever. Then, the Lord of glory will have everything His own way — He will form and fashion everything after His own mind — He will keep everything under His own hand, and stamp everything with His own glorious image. It will be glory, glory, GLORY.

Oh! blessed, happy, looked for, longed for day, come quickly! Oh! what a day that will be — a day of, yet unknown, but of unmingled blessedness — a day of inconceivable joy in rejoining those who have gone before — in seeing thee, most blessed Lord, face to face, and those, once known — well known and loved on earth! Oh! day of days, second to none, save that first of all days, when thou didst give thyself for us — when thou didst lay the foundation in thy death of that day of coming glory.

"Loved ones are gone before, whose pilgrim days are done;

I soon shall greet them on that shore, where partings are unknown.

But more than all, I long His glories to behold,

Whose smile shall fill the radiant throng with ecstasy untold.

That bright, yet tender smile — my sweetest welcome there —

Shall cheer me through the "little while" I tarry for Him here."

And now, with mingled feelings, waiting and longing for that better day, I close my meditations on our beautiful Psalm. May the Lord bless it to every reader as He has done to the writer, and more if it be His good will. And may the testimony of the psalmist, in the closing note of his sacred song, be the assurance of our hearts and the testimony of our lives henceforward and forever. “ Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.”

Lord of hosts, how lovely in mine eyes

The tents where thou dost dwell!

For thine abode my spirit faints and sighs;

The courts I love so well.

My longing soul is weary

Within thy house to be;

This world is waste and dreary,

A desert land to me.

The sparrow, Lord, hath found a shelter’d home,

The swallow hath her nest;

She layeth there her young, and though she roam,

Returneth there to rest.

I, to thine altars flying,

Would there forever be;

My heart and flesh are crying,

living God, for thee!

How blest are they who in thy house abide!

Thee evermore they praise.

How strong the man whom thou alone dost guide,

Whose heart doth keep thy ways.

A pilgrim and a stranger,

He leaneth on thine arm;

And thou, in time of danger,

Dost shield him from alarm.

From strength to strength through Baca’s vale of woe,

They pass along in prayer,

And gushing streams of living water flow,

Dug by their faithful care;

Thy rain is sent from heaven

To fertilize the land,

And wayside grace is given,

Till they in Zion stand.

Lord God of hosts, attend unto my prayer!

Jacob’s God, give ear!

Behold, God, our Shield, we through thy care,

Within thy courts appear!

Look thou upon the glory

Of thine Anointed’s face;

In Him we stand before thee,

To witness of thy grace!

One day with thee excelleth o’er and o’er

A thousand days apart;

In thine abode, within thy temple-door,

Would stand my watchful heart.

Men tell me of the treasure

Hid in their tents of sin

I look not there for pleasure,

Nor choose to enter in.

Own thou the Lord to be thy Sun, thy Shield—

No good will He withhold;

He giveth grace, and soon shall be reveal’d

His glory, yet untold.

His mighty name confessing,

Walk thou at peace and free;

Lord, how rich the blessing

Of him who trusts in thee!

German Choral Altisio.

Things New and Old: Volume 9, Eighty-Fourth Psalm, Meditations on the

Verse 9: “Behold, God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed” What marvelous words are these! In writing them down they have touched a chord in the heart, which awakens deep thoughts and feelings. The combination is beautiful and blessed — “our Shield” — “Thine Anointed.” God and the soul are brought near to each other. Their object, their center, is One — “our” — “thine.” Both are looking to the same Christ, though from different points of view. He is God’s Anointed, He is thy Shield, my soul! Dwell on this blessed theme. Precious Savior! He glorifies God — reconciles the sinner, and unites both in Himself. “I in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” (John 14,17.) Blessed union — fruitful in eternal unity and glory!

Never before, my soul, hast thou so seen or felt the power of this verse; and now, happily, patiently, deeply, meditate thereon, I pray thee; while the fire buns concentrate thy musings on this great truth. Think on the many blessings which flow from thy privileged place. All favor, all security, all happiness, both for time and eternity, are found therein.

But especially would I say, Meditate on Him who thus links every believer with God, and the valley of Baca with the courts above. He who is the Father s delight — the One on whom He ever looks with perfect complacency, is every believer’s hiding place — is thy hiding place. There thou art sheltered from every storm in this life; and there, too, as behind an invulnerable shield, thou art safe forever. No enemy can ever break through thy sure defense. They may threaten, but can do no more. Only watch thou, and never wander from thy hiding place. Thy only security is to keep behind the shield. Thou hast all there.

While many, alas, are satisfied with mere formalities in religion, or with the dry discussion of doctrines, high or low, as they may be called, see thou and be occupied with Christ Himself. It is the knowledge of His Person that gives strength and joy to the soul. At all times, under all circumstances, we can say, “Look upon the face of thine Anointed.” We cannot always say, Look on us; but we may always say, Look on Him. In deepest sorrow through conscious failure, or in trials and difficulties through faithfulness to His name, we can ever plead with God what Christ is. God is ever well pleased with Him — ever occupied with Him as risen from the dead and exalted to His own right hand in heaven; and He would have us also to be occupied with Him as the heart’s exclusive object.

True faith can only rest on God’s estimate of Christ, not on inward thoughts and feelings. That which may be called the faith of the formalist, rests on the ability of his own mind to judge of these matters. He trusts in himself. This is the essential difference between faith in appearance and faith in reality. The one rests in God’s estimate of Christ, the other in his own. The one trusts in Christ, the other trusts in himself. But, oh! how wide the difference between the two in God’s sight! and, alas, how wide will be the difference forever, if no change takes place! As to thyself, dear reader, on what is thy faith — thy hope resting? See, I beseech thee, that the word of the living God is the solid rock on which all thy expectations are built; and as one lost and ruined under sin, see that thou art looking to Jesus as thy Savior, and resting on the word of His grace. This is saving faith. It listens only to God.

Take an example — It is on God’s testimony to the good of Christ that the conscience rests with a perfect rest, in spite of all that it feels working within; and it is only His testimony to the Person of Christ that keeps the heart peaceful and happy in spite of all circumstances. What God says must hold good and true independently of all perplexing circumstances without, and of all contrary feelings within. Thus faith argues, and argues fairly, and walks in fellowship with God. When He proclaims from heaven, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;” the voice of faith from earth responds, “This is my beloved Savior, in whom I am well pleased.” The voices meet and agree in One.

This is communion! Oh! wondrous, gracious, glorious truth! The Lord's name alone have all the praise!

Yet one look more at this precious ninth verse, before passing on to the tenth. The thoughts love to linger over the many lines of truth which it suggests. It begets meditation. And still the leading thought is — God looks for the believer to have the same thoughts of Christ as He has Himself. But this is the work of the Holy Spirit. We only know Christ in the proportion that He is revealed unto us by the Spirit. Hence the unspeakable importance of understanding the scriptures on this point; and of giving the Holy Spirit His right place both in our hearts and ways. "For he dwelleth with you and shall be in you." (John 14:17.) When this leading truth of the present period is either overlooked or practically displaced, there must be great darkness and feebleness as to the Person of Christ. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." 1 Cor. 12:3; 2:11; John 16:13, 14.

The great object, we believe, of the Holy Spirit's work in us, is to make good in our hearts the thoughts of God concerning Christ. This is the basis of the Christian's walking in the light as God is in the light, and of worshipping Him in Spirit and in truth. Indeed, all hinges, practically, on this state of soul. Our consistency, spirituality, steadfastness, devotedness, and happiness, are intimately connected with it. When the heart is right with Christ, both the judgment and the practice will be right. The affections govern the judgment. God's way of delivering souls from all evil, both inwardly and outwardly, is Christ. Our only strength is in being filled with Him. Light on the path, and strength to walk therein, flow from this.

Is it not ignorance of Christ that leads the unconverted around us to act so contrary to Him? And on the other hand, is it not the knowledge of Christ that leads to a life of holiness and practical godliness? And just in proportion as the Christian enjoys Christ, does he live above self and the world. And farther, it is only in being occupied with Christ, as He is before God, in all His loveliness, that we grow up into His likeness. This is the principle; If we would love Him more, we must be more occupied with His love to us — if we would serve Him better, we must be more occupied with His devotedness to us — if we would get rid of our spiritual deformities, we must be more occupied with His loveliness. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. 3:18.

But, alas! how often it happens, that even true, earnest Christians are strangers to this line of truth, this character of exercise, and this fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. There is a constant tendency in such to be occupied with a sense of inward evil in place of Christ; consequently, darkness, feebleness, a lack of communion as to Christ, must be the result. Discouraged and cast down from what takes place within, they are filled with doubts and fears. They think the heart ought to get better, and not have so many bad thoughts as it once had. Most true, the Christian has to judge himself daily and hourly for everything that is contrary to Christ. But he has also another lesson of great practical importance to learn, namely, he has to learn what flows from Christ, and what flows from himself. There is no good thing in nature, and no good thing can ever come from it. "In me," says the great apostle, "(that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Every good thing cometh down from above. But we are slow to learn that there is nothing good towards God in our nature, and that nothing good in His sight can ever come from it.

We must live Christ if we would please God, and walk in fellowship with Him; but we must first learn Him. He is our lesson. Oh! that we could impress all our readers and ourselves, more deeply, with the importance of this great truth! "To learn Christ — and to live Christ." "For me to live is Christ," says the apostle, and in writing to the Ephesians he says, "But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus." This is our lesson, — the wide range of truth as brought out and set in. the light of heaven, in connection with the lowly Jesus on earth, and the exalted Christ in heaven. This, I repeat, is our lesson! He is the way, the truth, and the life. The character, the reality, the truth, of everything was tested by His presence on earth. All truth meets in His Person. But most and best of all, by Him we know God and are happy: and in Him as the risen, exalted, and glorified Christ, we know, and still learn more and more of our privileges and blessings in the presence of God. "Behold, God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine Anointed."

Verse 10. "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" Those who only know the pleasures of the tents of wickedness, can have no proper conception of the true, solid, lasting pleasures of the courts of the Lord. Those who know both can speak positively of the difference. Who that has spent a day with God in spirit, and in the varying exercises of meditation and devotion, cannot speak of its blessedness? But the testimony of scripture on the subject is full, and safer to judge from.

The Spirit of truth, by Solomon, has said, "For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity." (Eccles. 7:6) Noisy, empty, sparkling, it may be, for a moment, and then extinguished forever. Such, alas! is the character of the so-called pleasure in the tents of wickedness. But what shall we say of the fearful condition of those who are feeling the sharp sting of sin after the pleasure is gone? Is it not misery — great misery, even in this life? but, oh! what must it be when all its bitterness is felt in the place where hope never enters. The remembrance of those shallow, short-lived pleasures of earth will afford no relief there.

But we turn to the other and brighter side of the question, and there we read of something very different — may this be the happy portion of all who read these lines! "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." (Psalm 16:11.) Which, now, dear reader, may I ask, do you prefer? Eccles. 7:6 is as true as Psalm 16:11. But the path of life in the latter, and the path of folly in the former, are as wide apart as heaven and hell. Which, think you, my dear reader, is the nobler, higher, manlier, worthier, wiser path? The boisterous, hollow, unmeaning mirth of the worldling, or the calm, real, lasting joy of the Christian? Do you hesitate? Need you hesitate? The Lord enable you to choose the better part — the part that shall never be taken from you. This itself is no small comfort to the believer. "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:42.) We may not always enjoy or value the good part as we ought to do, but it shall not be taken away from us. God says it, and that is enough to faith.

Besides, the same blessed truth is plainly taught in our text: "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." What a wonderful place and portion we have here! The Lord's name be praised. What a field for meditation! Enter it, my soul, I pray thee; come and meditate with spiritual power on these wonderful words — "Thy right hand" — the place of dignity, power, and special privilege. "Fullness of joy" — nothing lacking — "all spiritual blessings." "Pleasures for evermore." Not only is it the place of honor and joy, but

it is our everlasting place — “for evermore.” “Pleasures for evermore.” No alloy — no fear of these pleasures ever coming to an end — they are “for evermore.”

Better, surely, better far, be in the humblest condition as to this life, with the knowledge of Jesus, than be the greatest and most exalted monarch that ever sat upon a throne, without the knowledge of Jesus. From the lowest ranks in this life, faith aspires to the highest enjoyments in heaven. It is high-born, high-souled, high in its aspirations, and high in its destinies. It affirms that one day — a single day, spent in the house of God, is better far, than a thousand spent in the tents of wickedness. And if it be so now, O, what must it be hereafter! Then the faithful in Christ Jesus shall ascend to the house of many mansions, where there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore. But, alas, alas, those who preferred the tents of wickedness to the company of the godly during their earthly days, can have no part or lot with them, in those abodes of unmingled, never-ending blessedness. May the Lord, in His rich grace, prevent such a fearful end in the ease of all who read these meditations! And to His name alone be all the praise and glory.

Things New and Old: Volume 9, Eighty-Fourth Psalm, Meditations on the

Ver. 8. “ Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, God of Jacob. Selah.” The weary pilgrim is at length before God in Zion. Blessed journey that has such an end! And blessed be the God of Jacob, that the pilgrim has now and then, even on the journey, sweet foretastes of that happy end; but, oh! what will it be when it is fully tasted in glory — in the Father’s house on high! Till then, my soul, fail not to drink at the fountain, though traveling through a dry and thirsty land. Faith is as welcome now in those courts above, as thou thyself wilt be at the journey’s end. Thy title is as good now as it will he then — the name of Christ can never be more welcome than it is today. Oh! then, use thy title now — let heaven see what great and constant use thou canst make of that blessed name now.

In musing on these words, a solemn thought crosses the mind — Zion, or grace, is the meeting-place of God and His people. Every child of Adam, sooner or later, must meet God on one of two grounds: — the ground of righteousness or the ground of grace. No one can escape, or pass unnoticed in a crowd. Each one must individually, and for himself, appear before God. “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” (Rom. 14:12.) Most solemn thought, surely! But if on the ground of righteousness, all must be lost — forever lost. Who could answer to God for one of a thousand of his many thousand sins? Hence the psalmist prays, “Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.” (Psalm 143:2.) Human reasoning would not avail there. But no man, even now, ever reasons in the presence of God. Clearly then, on the ground of righteousness, the soul must be hopelessly lost. God grant, that my dear reader, through faith in Christ, may pass from death unto life now, and so never come into judgment. John 5:24.

Grace, pure grace, is the only other ground. There is no middle ground in scripture. And he who stands before God on this ground is safe forever. He is saved with God’s great salvation. What he previously was, is not thought of. He is now a true believer in Christ Jesus. He honors the Savior with the confidence of his heart; and in God’s sight, there is nothing too good for him. He honors him in the fullest and most public way. In short, he is blessed according to the riches of divine grace, and the value of the work of Christ. e fares well; yes, as well as Christ Himself! As the bride ranks with the bridegroom — as the wife ranks with the husband, so does the Christian rank with Christ in heaven. He is joined unto the Lord and one spirit with Him. Happy they who are thus done with their own works, and trust only in the finished work of Christ. But tell me, my soul, in plain terms, what is the difference today, between a soul that is on the ground of grace, and one that is on the ground of righteousness? Practically, the one trusts in Christ, the other trusts in himself. This is the great difference, really, between the saved and the unsaved — the Christian and the worldling. It is connection by faith with the Person of Christ that makes the difference. The one may be as full of outward religious observances as the other, but unless the heart be connected with the Person of Christ, these go for nothing. Were a school-boy to cover his slate with ciphers, not one of them could be reckoned, until he had connected them with a figure, then they would all count. Even so, a cup of cold water given in connection with the name of Christ shall have its eternal reward.

He who has felt his need and helplessness, and trusts in Christ alone, is on the ground of the pure favor of God; but he who is still a stranger to this state, however full of good works, charities, and religious duties, is on the ground of inflexible righteousness. The tree must first be made good before the fruit can be good. We must be engrafted into the living Vine, and drink of the fatness of its roots, before we can bear fruit to God. Christ only can bear fruit to God; but as the tree bears fruit through its branches, so Christ bears fruit to God through His members.

Awful indeed must be the meeting between God and the sinner on the ground of righteousness. When the plumb-line is laid to a crooked wall, it does not make it straight, but it shows out all its crookedness. The judgment-seat will prove the sinner’s condition, but it can show him no favor. The day of grace is past. It is too late to cry for mercy — yes, alas! Too late when the sentence, “Depart from me” is uttered — too late when the gates of heaven are closed — too late when the gates of hell are opened — too late when Satan whom he has served claims him as his — too late when enclosed within those fiery walls whence none ever escape! Oh! what an end for an immortal soul! The very thought of it is overwhelming. The soul shudders in writing it. Oh! what can be done now to prevent it? is the first feeling of the heart. And, yet, what can we say? The only thing that can prevent it is done already. Redemption is accomplished. Jesus died and rose again. The sure foundation of grace and glory has been laid in Zion, and whosoever believeth thereon shall never be confounded. “Christ was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,” are plain words; who can misunderstand their meaning? The jailor believed on the Lord Jesus Christ — he trusted in Him according to the word of the apostle, and was saved, and others of his household who believed. The gospel is the same today as it was then; whosoever believeth on the Son of God, hath everlasting life.

Lord of the harvest, send more laborers into the gospel-field; and grant, Lord, that thy preachers may never lose sight of the solemn results of their preaching! Surely, if preachers themselves were more alive to the awful future of a Christless soul, they would be more in earnest, and more would be awakened by their warning voice. The end is near, the time is short, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh; and souls — many souls — are perishing.

Let thy word, Lord, be clothed with power from on high, that it may be more effectual in them that hear it; and fill thine evangelists, blessed Lord, with a burning desire — a consuming passion for the salvation of sinners. With the fearful end of their unawakened hearers in view, may they speak plainly, pointedly, boldly, earnestly, and affectionately: and may their constant prayer be, ‘Lord, suffer not even one precious soul

to depart unimpressed, unawakened, unsaved.’

“Oh! speak of Jesus — of His grace,

Receiving, pardoning, blessing all;

His holy, spotless life to trace —

His words, His miracles recall.

The words He spoke, the truths He taught,

With life, eternal life, are fraught.

“Oh, speak of Jesus — of His death:

For sinners such as we He died.

Tis finished, with His latest breath,

The Lord, Jehovah Jesus, cried.

That death of shame and agony

Opened the way of life to me.”

While meditating on the happiness of those who had reached Mount Zion, and were before God in His holy temple, the psalmist breaks forth in fervent prayer and praise. He was longing to enjoy the same privileges himself. “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord.” How often this has been the experience of the people of God when deprived of the public means of grace so called. There is divine reality in the fellowship of saints. “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.” There is spiritual refreshment and blessing in meeting with those we love in the spirit. Ere long we shall meet in heaven to part no more, and to love each other perfectly.

The mere formalist, of course, knows nothing of these exercises, but the psalmist was the opposite of a formalist. His whole heart was in the temple-worship of God; and he enters into it, in spirit, though, perhaps, in exile. He praises God, but owing to his position, his praise turns into prayer. “ Lord of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, God of Jacob.”

There are two distinct thoughts of great practical value to the Christian, in this short prayer. There is the sense of divine majesty, and the consciousness of divine relationship. As “Lord of hosts,” He is almighty in power; as the “ God of Jacob,” He is infinite in mercy and goodness to His people. The Jew could depend on the covenant-faithfulness of Jehovah; we, on the name of “Father” in connection with Christ. There was power to protect in the Valley of Baca; and, sweeter still, grace to bless on the holy hill of Zion. It is there the happy worshipper loses sight of self, and of all the troubles and trials of the way, and rejoices in the blessed consciousness of his relationship with the living God.

As Christians, we have “received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” We are thus taught and led by the Holy Ghost Himself, to use the sweet expression of our relationship — Father. This is our happy place now through the riches of sovereign grace. “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Gal. 4:6.) Only yesterday, as it were, we were far off from God, and seeking happiness apart from Him, but He has had mercy — great mercy, blessed be His name, and brought us to Himself through faith in Christ Jesus. And now the children’s place and the children’s portion are ours — ours today — ours henceforth and forever. Only think, my soul, on that wondrous word, which has gladdened so many hearts, “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Meditate, I say, on this great truth — on these very words — “no more” “Thou art no more a servant, but a son” — and “an heir” — “an heir of God.” Not merely, observe, an heir of heaven, or of glory, but “an heir of God through Christ.” Oh! wondrous truth! The possessions of God are thine. And mark, too, I pray thee, that the Spirit is not speaking here of what we shall be, but of what we now are. “Thou art no more a servant, but a son.” Marvelous place — blessed privilege — glorious liberty! We can only worship and adore; nothing can be added to our possessions. His name alone have all the praise and glory. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and 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. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure.” 1 John 3:1-3.

Once as prodigals we wandered in our folly far from thee;

But thy grace o’er sin abounding, rescued us from misery:

Thou the prodigal hast pardoned, ‘kissed us’ with a Father’s love:

‘Killed the fatted calf,’ and called us e’er to dwell with thee above.

“Clothed in garments of salvation, at thy table is our place;We rejoice, and thou rejoicest, in the riches of thy grace.‘It is meet,’ we hear thee saying, we should merry be and glad,I have found my once lost children, now they live who once were dead.”

Correspondence, Correspondence: "Ye are Gods";Circumcision; 1 Cor. 3:21-22; Psa. 88 and 22

Ques. What is the meaning of, "Ye are gods,' in Psa. 82:6, and John 10:35, 36?

M. G.

Ans. It means judges or great men. In John 10, they found fault with the Lord for saying He was the Son of God. He silenced them by quoting that men are called gods in Scripture, which cannot be broken. And why should they say of Him, whom the Father had set apart, and sent into the world, "Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God." Look at My works, they are the Father's, as My words had been the words of the Father. But they hated Him and tried to take Him. In vain; His hour was not yet come. He escaped out of their hands.

Truly, our hearts by nature, even at their best, are enmity against God. (Rom. 8:7.)

Ques. What does circumcision mean for Christians? D. C.

Ans. Circumcision in the Old Testament was a mark of subjection put upon the flesh of Jehovah's people; it signified death. Its teaching for us is, that as men in the flesh, we are put to death in the death of Christ (Col. 2:11), "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." In His death on the cross as men in the flesh, we have been put to death before God.

Phil. 3:3 says, "We are the circumcision," that is: those who have owned that there is no good in the flesh; in contrast with the concision, that is: those who are trying to improve it. We are to bear about in our body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be manifested in our mortal body or flesh. (2 Cor. 4:10,11.)

Christians are not under the law or ordinances, but under grace. (Rom. 6:14.)

Ques. What is meant by 1 Cor. 3:21, 22? How are all things ours? E. C. D.

Ans. The Christians in Corinth were carnal; they followed men (1:12, 13; 3:1-6). The apostle tells them all these teachers were for their benefit. They are to take all as the Lord's ordering for their good. And so of the world; they had it from God, the Lord. Life was from Him; death, it was His servant for them; things present were His ordering for them; things to come were just what He would send. All was settled and sure, for they were Christ's and Christ was God's.

Ques. Are Psa. 88 and 22 similar? Does the 91st follow the 88th, as the 23rd follows the 22nd?

H. C. W.

Ans. Psa. 22 is the experience of the Lord while making atonement for sin. Atonement is completed (Verse 22), and Christ is seen in resurrection declaring the Father's name to His brethren (John 20:17; Heb. 2:12). In the Psalm, it is Israel and the nations; it is blessing to the ends of the earth. And the Psalm closes with, "He hath done this."

Psa. 23. Jehovah is the Shepherd caring for the sheep.

Psa. 24 is His coming in glory into His Kingdom, and the character of the godly who receive the blessing of Jehovah, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Psa. 88 has some expressions of suffering, similar to the Lord's sufferings under the judgment of God, but the soul in Psa. 88 speaks under the sense of God's wrath lying hard upon him in his lifetime. It is the experience of a godly Israelite under the broken law, without the knowledge of Christ's redemption. The Psalm closes leaving him in darkness. A dreadful state truly, yet there is faith, for he calls on Jehovah, God of his salvation. It is Israel in their trouble before deliverance comes.

It was only on the cross, when bearing our sins, that Jesus was forsaken of God. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. All His lifetime He walked in the sunshine of His Father's approval, though outwardly a man of sorrows. If we apply any language like this to Christ, we must think of Him on the cross at the time. We need to be careful how we apply the Psalms to Him personally.

Even Psa. 69 is not the atoning sufferings of Christ, but the godly man suffering for righteousness' sake, and for Jehovah's sake, suffering from his persecutors for his godliness, and while specially applicable to Christ on the cross, it is also true of others who suffer in the same way. His prayer is unto Jehovah and is accepted (Verse 18), and judgment comes to the persecutors.

Psa. 91 is specially Jesus as the Messiah, but also takes in others as far as they walk in His steps.

Verse 1, as is usual in the Psalms, gives the theme. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "Most High" is (absolute supremacy) God's Millennial title (Gen. 14:18-22). "Almighty" (complete power), He was this to Abraham (Gen. 17:1).

Verse 2. (Jesus) Messiah claims this, "I will say of Jehovah, He is My refuge and My fortress: My God; in Him will I trust."

Verses 3-8 is the Holy Spirit's voice speaking to the Messiah.

Verses 9-13 is Israel's voice also speaking to Him in the same way.

Verses 14-16 are Jehovah's words to that faithful and true One.

The Lord Jesus was perfect in all His ways. He needed no chastening. All we believers need it. In applying this Psalm to ourselves, we must mark the difference, and submit to needed chastening.

The Lord, in grace, resigned this place of exemption from suffering, to walk in a lowly, suffering path, rejected and despised of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but all His sufferings were in fellowship with God, and only on the cross He suffered for sin, our sins. We, too, suffer now with Christ in a world whose ruler is Satan.

Young Christian: Volume 15, 1925, Open Thy Mouth Wide, and I Will Fill It

In the garden of the house where we lived recently, was a raw of tall trees. In one of these, some birds, like crows, built a nest, and in due time hatched out a little family.

It was a great interest to us all to watch them, though the chief thing, we could see was a cluster of little heads, with big, wide-opened mouths. Soon the mother bird, or father bird, would come with some choice morsel and then what excitement ensued, as it was dispensed to the hungry family!

There was never any question as to whether they wanted it or not. They seemed to be always ready with their mouths opened wide—that was their part. The parent birds did the rest, and dropped the food into the open mouths of those tiny, helpless creatures.

Is it not somewhat the same with us and the Lord? He is ever faithful to provide us with food in due season, and yet how many Christians seem to be half-starved, and why? Is it not because they have not learned to open their mouths wide to receive the food? There was an earnest, eager desire with the birds, and is it not that which we lack too often? The Lord says, “As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.”

The food is ready and waiting. There is no other way to grow, and yet how slow we are to desire it; so slow to open our mouths wide, and let the Lord fill them.

I was hearing recently of some of the Lord’s dear people who had come together to feed on the Word of God—(or perhaps I should say, to be fed with His Word), and they were greatly discouraged and disappointed because some of those whom they were accustomed to have dispense it to them—(their “nurses,” shall I say?) were not with them, and they felt it hardly worthwhile to open their mouths. And yet when they did, they found the Lord as faithful as ever, and they came away filled.

Is it not ever so, dear fellow-believer, whether alone or together, if we approach that Holy Word with wide open mouths, we will ever come away with them full? The difficulty so often is that we are so “full” already with other things, that there is no room for the Lord to fill us. Most of us have to own it with shame. How little in spiritual things is our “progress” “manifest to all.” (1 Tim. 4:15, New Trans.).

But there was one other thing we noticed about the birds. They were always at work early. Very early in the morning those older birds might be seen walking across our lawn, gathering worms. I could not but think of our old proverb, “The early bird gets the worm,” and perhaps this may be spiritually applied.

May we each one be found, like Israel of old, out gathering that “Manna” before the sun is up, and it is melted!

“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.” (Col. 3:16).

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, "Why" in Psalms 78:67-68

Question: Psa. 78:67, 68. Please explain the “why.” W. H. G.

Answer: God is sovereign, or He abdicates Godhead. One of the twelve tribes must of necessity take precedence; and He chose Judah. If any creature is entitled to ask “why,” surely it is a very plain answer that His Son deigned to be born of that tribe. But it is well to be content with God’s wise, good, and holy will, if we could give no reason.

Three Looks and Their Results, Three Looks and Their Results: A Look Within - Depressed

In Psalm 77:4-9, the soul looks within, and reasons on what it finds there: all is darkness and depression; it always is if we commune with own our hearts, and the conclusion is: "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?"

Christian Treasury: Volume 3, Two-Fold Way of God, The

Psa. 77:13, 19.PSA 77:13-19

His way is "in the sanctuary," and His way is "in the sea," but there is a great difference between these two things. First of all, God's way is in the sanctuary where all is light and clear. There is no mistake there. There is nothing in the least degree that is a harassment to the spirit. On the contrary, it is when the poor troubled one enters into the sanctuary and views things there in the light of God, that he sees the end of all else—everything that appears to be entangled, the end of which he cannot find on the earth.

We have the same thing in Psa. 73:16, 17. "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." That is, in the sanctuary of God, everything is understood, no matter how difficult, trying or painful in regard to ourselves or others. When we once enter there, we are in the place of God's light and God's love. Then whatever the difficulty may be, we understand all about it.

Not only is God's way in the sanctuary where all is bright and happy, but God's way is in the sea also. He walks where we cannot always trace His footsteps. God moves mysteriously at times, as we all know. There are ways of God which are purposely to try us. I need not say that it is not at all as if God had pleasure in our perplexities. Nor is it as if we had no sanctuary to draw near to where we can rise above them. But still, there is a great deal in the ways of God that must be left entirely in His own hands.

The way of God is thus not only in the sanctuary, but also in the sea. And yet, what we find even in connection with His footsteps being in the sea is, "Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." That was through the sea; afterward it was through the wilderness. But it had been through the sea. The beginnings of the ways of God with His people were there, because from first to last, God must be the confidence of the saint. It may be an early lesson of his soul, but it never ceases to be the thing to learn. How happy to know that while the sanctuary is open to us, yet God Himself is nearer still, and to Him we are brought now. As it is said, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." 1 Peter 3:18.

This is a most precious thing, because there we are in the sanctuary and brought to God Himself. Even heaven itself would not satisfy our hearts if we were not brought to God there. It is better than any freedom from trial—better than any blessing to be in the presence of the One to whom we belong, who is Himself the source of all blessing and joy. That we are brought to Him now is infinitely precious. There we are in the sanctuary brought to God.

There are other ways of God outside the sanctuary—the sea. And there we often find ourselves at a loss. If we are occupied with the sea itself and with trying to scan God's footsteps there, we become perplexed. But confidence in God Himself is always the strength of faith. May the Lord grant us increasing simplicity and quietness in the midst of all that we pass through for His name's sake.

Christian Truth: Volume 18, Final Word, The

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain." Psalm 76:10.

God makes the wrath of man to praise Him. He turns everything to His own glory and purpose, and then stops all the rest. Where faith is in exercise, it counts on God through all, sure that God will have the last and final word in the matter.

Edification: Volume 8, "Surely the Wrath of Man Shall Praise Thee."

(Psa. 76:10.)

WE can trace the truth of the above statement in the Scriptures, as well as in the happenings of the present happenings time, in so far as they are in the line of the fulfillment of Scripture.

For instance, take the Scriptural case of Joseph. As a lad of seventeen he twice had remarkable, God-given dreams, foreshadowing a wonderful future. His brethren were envious. “Jealousy [envy] is cruel as the grave” (Song of Sol. 8:6).

And so it turned out. Joseph’s brethren, threw him into a pit to die. They took his coat of many colors, dipped it in the blood of a goat, to deceive the old father at home that his loved son had been torn to pieces by a wild beast. God however, preserved his life, and he was sold into Egypt as a slave.

Years rolled by. Joseph, now about thirty years of age, is making himself known to his brethren. We all know the story leading up to this point. Joseph was flung into an Egyptian prison because he refused to yield to the seductions of a temptress. Then by a strange combination of circumstances he is brought before Pharaoh, interprets that monarch’s remarkable dreams, and in the course of a few hours exchanges the languishment, of the prison for a place of power, rule and organization, second only to Pharaoh himself.

The biting famine comes. Joseph’s brethren are driven to Egypt for supplies of food. Joseph makes himself known to them in the memorable words, “Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with, yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life (Gen. 45:5).

Their wrath had sold Joseph into Egypt. God used their sin to utilize Joseph as the: super-organizer of the day to the saving of countless lives. There could be no condoning of the terrible sin of Joseph’s brethren against their brother, but it must have been very consoling to their accusing hearts to find that God had used the wrath of man to praise Him.

Take the most wonderful example of all. The greatest crime this world has seen, or can see, is the murder of the Son of God. One, Who only displayed love, whose life was spent in undoing the works of the devil, was done to death by the insensate hate of the religious leaders of the nation. But God has used man’s blackest sin as an occasion for showing His great love to man. The cross was the occasion of man’s sin, the cross was the very place where atonement was made, which enables God in perfect righteousness to forgive sin. This is the instance above all others where God has made the wrath of men to praise Him.

Take two instances from modern times. We know how the fulfillment of prophecy centers round the Jew. As it has often been said; the Jew is the barometer of the world. We also know how the Scripture prophesies that the Jews will return to their own land in unbelief, pass through the great tribulation, and a remnant acknowledge the Lord as their Saviour and Messiah.

God anticipates events. Things that happened many years ago may in the light of present day happenings be found to be divinely ordered with a foreknowledge that is startling to us. For instance, the Jews are largely congregated in the heart of Europe as the following table shows:

France has only 165,000 Jews; Great Britain, 300:000; Italy, 46:000; Japan 500.

Yet the United States has 3,800,000, and New York city alone contains 1,750,000 Jews, one to, every, three or four of the population. How is this? We think it is a prominent illustration of our text that God makes the wrath of man to praise Him.

In 1880, that is over half a century ago, Russia passed some cruel laws, called the May Laws, which forced hundreds of thousands of Jews out of the country. Multitudes of them sought asylum in the United States. There they have taken root, and have become captains of commerce,

and have made themselves wealthy. Today they are in a position to help their poorer countrymen to settle in Palestine. Surely God foresaw all this, and has made the wrath of man to praise Him.

Take a second case at the present time. The repeopling of Palestine by the Jews was proceeding at a comparatively slow rate. About 5,000 a year were admitted. One morning the civilized world was startled by the news of the stringent laws passed by Hitler against the Jews. A wave of intense anti-Semitism swept over Germany. The Jews, who were able, quickly fled from the country. The trains running to Holland and other parts, the ferry boats running to Denmark and Sweden were filled day after day with fleeing Jews. Many committed suicide.

It was their very prosperity that was their ruin. Numbering only three per cent of the population in Germany, yet the Jews accounted for about eight per cent of the legal, medical and other professions, bides their share in the manufacturing and commercial life of the country.

The whole of Jewry felt very insecure. In 1931 The immigrants to Palestine numbered 5,000. In the first half of 1932 The number had risen to 15,000, and it was expected the second half of 1932 would witness a further 25,000 to 30,000 finding a home in Palestine. It is stated that three times as many Jews went to Palestine from Poland in 1932 as in 1931. Moscow contains 250,000 Jews. By a new passport decree 150,000 of these are threatened with expulsion. It is said on good authority that 3,000,000 Jews are eager to settle in Palestine. No wonder! They feel how insecure they are in the lands they have long dwelt in. Palestine is the only land they can lay claim to. If they leave Germany or Russia or Poland, other countries will refuse them asylum. So Palestine is the spot they are seeking refuge in. Verily God makes the wrath of man to praise Him.

Finally God has been preparing for all this. The Dead Sea, 46 miles long by 8 to 10 miles wide, super-salted, has for centuries been a scene of desolation. No fishes can live in its waters, no bird can fly over its dreary wastes, no herbage grows round its shores.

But in these later years a change has taken place. We cull the following extract,

“THE DEAD SEA ALIVE AGAIN.

This is the description given of the new activities in the region of the Dead Sea. From its bitter and imprisoned waters mineral salts are being withdrawn. The lorries containing them are every day carrying them from the Dead Sea to Jerusalem. There they join the railway, from there are carried by sea to Europe, and more especially to England. For thousands of years the Dead Sea and its valley have been an abomination of desolation. Under the stimulus of modern British enterprise its potash helps to make other desert places blossom like the rose. Other mineral salts besides potash are in the recesses of the dark waters, and the men of this century can make use of them for medicines and for a dozen industries. The Dead Sea, fifty miles long, ten broad, is at some places 1,300 feet deep.”

Dr. Thos. H., Norton, Editor of Chemicals computes the value of chemical deposits in the Dead Sea at 253 billion pounds. The contents are computed as follows: —

Potassium Chloride	2,000,000,000 metric tons.
Sodium Chloride	11,000,000,000 metric tons.
Magnesium Chloride	22,000,000,000 metric tons.
Magnesium Bromide	980,000,000 metric tons.
Calcium Chloride	6,000,000,000 metric tons.

How is it that all this fabulous wealth has lain unknown for centuries and has now startled the world by its late discovery? We believe this has been allowed of God, so that when money is needed in vast sums to finance the ever-increasing rush of population into the country it is forthcoming.

In the light of all these happenings can we not see events shaping as the fulfilment of Scripture? Do not our hearts thrill as all this tells us that the coming of the. Lord draweth nigh? God makes the wrath of man to praise Him.

A. J. Pollock.

The Remembrancer: 1894, "Whom Have I in Heaven but Thee?"

JESUS! 'tis Thou Thyself I need,

At every time, at every hour;

Oh! wilt Thou guide my feet, and lead

And keep me by Thy Spirit's power,

That from Thee I may never stray,

But still press on the narrow way.

Close to Thy side I fain would cling,

And learn the mysteries of Thy love,

Into Thy presence entering

With boldness through the precious blood;

Oh! Jesu's love is vaster far

Than all our poor conceptions are.

It is this love my soul would know,

Would learn it in its heights and depths,

Would mark it in that hour of woe,

When on the cross He tasted death-

Would ponder all His wondrous ways,

And never cease His name to praise.

That precious name, it cheers the heart

When burden'd, or with care opprest,

Then to that blessed One I turn,

And always find a place of rest,

There on His bosom calmly stay,

And then-all else may pass away.

Yes-everything may pass away;

In Him my all in all I've found,

And having Him, sure I can say

Now I have all things and abound;

My precious Lord-to Thee I bow,

And own no other Lord but Thou.

It was the power of Jesu's cross,

That turn'd my darkness into light,

Now for His sake I'd count but loss,

All that might dim this precious sight;

Full well He knows the flesh how frail,

Yet in His strength I shall prevail.

Still 'tis Thyself, O Lord, I need

A sense of Jesus always near;

His love, the joy on which I feed,.

His presence, all I need to cheer.

With this I'll sweetly journey on,

And wait till He, my Lord, shall come.

Christian Truth: Volume 34, Psalm 73:2-17

It is indeed a trial of faith to find ourselves in the midst of evil which we have been taught to abhor. Nothing could be easier for God than to set everything right at once by His power, to put an end to all that disturbs our peace and gives us grief. But He does not do this, because He has something better in store for us. And faith has to learn to endure, in humiliation accepting the grievous situation, though it cause the utter crushing of what is dear to the heart. "In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psalm 16:11.

Three Looks and Their Results, Look Around - Distracted, A

In Psalm 73:1-22, the soul looks around, and becomes envious of the foolish and the prosperity of the wicked, and then becomes distracted; until it finds itself in the sanctuary, then to discover not only the end of the wicked, but also its own folly, ignorance and unworthiness.

The Evangelist: Volume 2 (1868), Scripture Queries and Answers.

WILL you kindly tell me, at your leisure, what you think the meaning of the words are, “Prayer also shall be made for Him continually; and daily shall He be praised”? (Psalm 72:15.) —S.

The difficulty in the mind of the enquirer we judge is, how, if we regard the psalm to be a description of the reign of Christ, that “prayer” could be made for Him who is God over all. We should, however, remember that our Lord Jesus will reign over the earth still as in subjection to His God and Father, though sitting on His own throne, and reigning before His ancients gloriously. Jehovah says of Him, in the second psalm, “Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.” We understand the force of the prayer in question to be this, that at the time when every knee is bowing to Christ, and all know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, there will be adoring worship to Him, and a constant desire animating the heart for His exaltation and honor. Regarding Him—as they will do—as the fruit of David’s loins, that Jehovah promised should sit upon David’s throne, when they are really beholding the King in His beauty, He will not only be the object of constant praise, but of desire also, that His name be continually exalted.

In Isaiah 53:4 we read, “Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” Does this apply to the cross? —S.

When the Jews crucified the Lord of glory, they thought they were carrying out the law of Moses in thus disposing of Him as a blasphemer. They said, “He hath spoken blasphemy;” and when Pilate hesitated to pass sentence, they said, “We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.” So now, in their present state of ignorance and unbelief, the Jews regard Him as thus having been stricken and smitten of God for His own evil. But by-and-by, when the Spirit of God removes the scales from their eyes, and they repent, they will utter this very touching language of the prophet, “He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace (or the chastisement which purchased our peace) was upon Him, and with His stripes we ARE HEALED.”

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Then I Restored What I Took Not Away"?, What Is the Meaning of "

Question: Psa. 69:4 (5). What means “Then I restored what I took not away”? I. H.

Answer: Our Lord pleads that He was not guilty of the wrong, but yet it was His to make good the right. His causeless enemies were innumerable; they were as strong as they were false; and where He was unrighteously charged, He walked in grace, seeking at all cost nothing but Jehovah’s glory.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Then I Restored What I Took Not Away in Psalm 69:4

Question: Psalm 69:4 (5). What is the meaning of “Then I restored what I took not away”?

R.M.

Answer: As this query has already been put and answered in Vol. 20 (December, 1894), of this magazine, we give again what there appeared— “Our Lord pleads that He was not guilty of the wrong, but yet it was His to make good the right. His causeless enemies were innumerable; they were as strong as they were false, and where He was unrighteously charged, He walked in grace, seeking at all cost nothing but Jehovah’s glory.”

Scripture Queries and Answers, Scripture Queries and Answers: Then I Restored … ; He that Hath Suffered in the Flesh

Q.-Psalm 69:4 (5). What is the meaning of " Then I restored what I took not away "?

R.M.

A.-As this query has already been put and answered in Vol. 20 (December, 1894), of this magazine, we give again what there appeared:—"Our Lord pleads that He was not guilty of the wrong, but yet it was His to make good the right. His causeless enemies were innumerable; they were as strong as they were false, and where He was unrighteously charged, He walked in grace, seeking at all cost nothing but Jehovah's glory."

Q.-1 Peter 4:1, 2. "For he that hath suffered in the flesh," &c. To whom does the "he" refer in these two verses? R.M.

A.-To the believer-who, refusing to yield to the solicitations of sin, suffers thereby instead of gratifying the flesh. As Christ once suffered for sins not His own-Himself the ever sinless One-but ours, so are we called to let this suffice, as well as " the time past of our life," and if now we suffer from without it should be not for sins but for righteousness (3:14), or as a Christian (4:14-16). Arming ourselves " with the same mind " we refuse the evil at whatever cost, that we may live to the will of God.

Scripture Queries and Answers, Scripture Queries and Answers: When do O. T. Saints Rise; Church Left Behind?; PSA 69:4

Q.—When do the O.T saints rise? A.C.W.

A.—" They that are Christ's at His coming ": not the church only, but the O.T saints also, being Christ's (1 Cor. 15:23).

Q.—Are any of the church left behind to go through the final tribulation, or to miss the millennial reign in Christ? A. C. W.

A.—-Not a single scripture intimates either. That which is written forms and strengthens the hope that every member of Christ's body will enjoy all so clearly and fully pledged in John 14, 17., and elsewhere. The bride of Christ is no mutilated body, as the error imagines. Again, those that go through the great tribulation are demonstrably (as in Rev. 7, 14. &c.) either Israelitish saints or Gentile ones, while the symbol of the glorified company is seen only on high. So far is it from being true that any real Christians miss the millennial reign with Christ, Rev. 20:4 is explicit that such of the Jewish or Gentile saints as follow after our translation to heaven, and are put to death under the earlier persecution of Rev. 6 &c., or under the Beast's violence later (Rev. 13 &c.), are to be raised from the dead and share that reign, though only called after the Lord comes and takes us to heaven. Those who survive are kept to form the nucleus of the Jews and Gentiles blessed on the earth under His reign.

Q.—Psa. 69:4 (5). What means " Then I restored what I took not away "? I. H.

A.-Our Lord pleads that He was not guilty of the wrong, but yet it was His to make good the right. His causeless enemies were innumerable; they were as strong as they were false; and where He was unrighteously charged, He walked in grace, seeking at all cost nothing but Jehovah's glory.

Young Christian: Volume 23, 1933, Daily Mercies

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation.

Psa. 68:19.

The Gospel Messenger: Volume 19, Twenty Five Years Ago.

“Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.”—Psalms 66:16.

IT is twenty-five years since He did it, and it will never be forgotten. “Did what?” asks the reader. Saved the man who pens these lines. “But why make so much fuss about it?” Not fuss, dear friend. What God did then was so tremendously real, and had such glorious results, that it were impossible to forget it.

See that man! He is drowning; twice he has sunk, and for the last time he rises, when a strong swimmer plunges in and rescues him. He never forgets it, and he never tires speaking of the man who did it.

Reader! I was sinking; God in His infinite mercy opened my eyes to the fact, and rescued me. A servant of the Lord was preaching from the solemn story of the flood. He spoke of man’s wickedness and God’s righteousness; he told us of the love that provided the ark, a way of escape from the coming judgment. He then told us of “judgment to come,” presented Jesus as the only Saviour, and pleaded with us to trust Him. That night a beloved and godly mother’s prayers were answered, and I rejoiced in the knowledge of God’s salvation.

Perhaps someone says, “There is nothing remarkable in that; we have read and heard far more thrilling tales.” That may be, friend; but you never heard a more thrilling story than that of the love that saved me. Every conversion is remarkable. What could be more remarkable than that those who are steeped in sin, in the bondage of Satan, and traveling at express speed to hell, should be saved, and that by the very God against whom they had sinned?

In the twenty-second Psalm we read—prophetically—of the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ; we get a wonderful view of Calvary; we learn what it meant for Jesus to take the sinner’s place, when He was forsaken of God. Reader, He suffered in the distance and the darkness, that you and I might see the light and taste the nearness and joy of the Father’s presence and the Father’s love.

At the close of the Psalm we get a picture of Christ in resurrection; there is a ring of triumph, and it is said, “They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be borra, that He hath done this” (Psa. 22:31). Friend I it is our unspeakable privilege to tell you what He has done. He has died for sinners. He has shed His precious blood to redeem them. He has met every claim of God, He has laid the oasis whereby God can be “just, yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus” (Rom. 3:26).

The one who has benefited by His death delights, in the words of our text, to say to others, “Come and hear what He hath done for my soul.” My sins are forgiven, my conscience is purged, my soul is saved, my heart is supremely happy. All the blessing that God has to bestow is ours, and He has done it. His grace has preserved us these five-and-twenty years; crooked may have been our ways, unchanging have His been; feeble our love, unbounded His. We give Him glory now, we shall praise Him forever and ever.

In Ecclesiastes we read, “I know that whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever” (Eccl. 3:14). The work accomplished at Calvary will stand to all eternity. What He has done for our soul will endure to the ages of ages.

Reader! are you saved? If so, Hallelujah! you are saved forever. Live for Jesus now, and soon it will be yours in actuality to live with Him where He is. If you are not saved, you are lost: death is ahead of you, eternity looms near; hell must be your awful portion. Oh, dear reader! wake up wake up!! WAKE UP!!! Just as you are, in your sins, your ruin, your need—come to Jesus just right away. “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31).

W. B. D.

Christian Truth: Volume 29, Christ I Love Thee: Psalm 63:8

"My soul followeth hard after Thee" (Ps. 63:8).

May we have hearts that seek and desire nothing above the Lord; hearts which do not make a show before the world of their feelings, or of their consecration to God, but which say to Christ in the silence of His own presence, and in accents which His ear alone can hear, I love Thee because Thou hast first loved me.

Christian Truth: Volume 20, Trust in Him at All Times

Psalm 62:8

God always desires us to trust in Him, and He is at all times worthy of our trust. Let us trust Him, and we shall conquer our fears; patiently endure our trials; successfully pursue our work; rise above our cares, and overcome our foes.

That we may trust Him, He has revealed His character, pledged His word, told us that He will not be wroth with us, and assured us that He is unchangeable.

The Christian Shepherd: 2004, Fragment: Trusting God

“Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us. Selah” (Psa. 62:8).

God always desires us to trust in Him, and He is at all times worthy of our trust. Let us trust Him, and we shall conquer our fears, patiently endure our trials, successfully pursue our work, rise above our cares, and overcome our foes.

That we may trust Him, He has revealed His character, pledged His word, told us that He will not be wroth with us, and assured us that He is unchangeable.

“I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (Mal. 3:6).

Christian Truth (Vol. 20; 1967)

Young Christian: Volume 27, 1937, Trust in Him at All Times

Psalms 62:8

He always warrants us to trust in Him, and He is at all times worthy of our trust. Let us trust Him and we shall conquer our fears; patiently endure our trials; successfully pursue our work; rise above our cares, and overcome our foes.

That we may trust Him, He has revealed His character, pledged His Word, sworn that He will not be wrath with us, and assured us that He is unchangeable.

Echoes of Grace: 1955, Afraid?

"What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee." Psa. 56:3.

Very few really brave men would not be willing to admit that they have known what it is to be desperately afraid. Many incidents occurring during the American Civil War and related afterward have manifested the fact that even the stoutest heart must often rely on a power outside himself in times of danger. It is indeed blessed when that heart is in God's keeping and its refuge is under His wings.

A few years after this bloody conflict ended, a former Federal officer was on board an ocean liner. On a Sunday afternoon he was feeling especially alone and burdened, and he longed with all his soul for a sense of peace and rest. Although he had realized his ambitions and had gained high position in the world, he was still a stranger to Him who "satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.”

As he restlessly paced the deck, he heard voices singing. He went below and found a man seated at a piano with a few of the passengers gathered around him. This man's voice, hauntingly sweet, soared heavenward as they sang:

"Jesus, Lover of my soul,Let me to Thy bosom fly,While the nearer waters roll,While the tempest still is high!Hide me, O my Savior, hide,Till the storm of life is past,Safe into the haven guide;O receive my soul at last.”

Ah, those lovely words! But the voice—that man's grand voice—where had he heard it before?

"Other refuge have I none,Hangs my helpless soul on Thee!Leave, ah! leave me not alone,Still support and comfort me!All my trust on Thee is stayed,All my help from Thee I bring;Cover my defenseless headWith the shadow of Thy wing.”

The last two lines brought back the memory. Waiting till the hymn was finished, the listener approached the singer. "Pardon me, sir; but were you on sentry duty during the war?" He mentioned a time and place.

"Yes," was the answer.

Then the questioner stated that he too had been there, but on the other side. On the night mentioned he had led a detail of men on a scouting expedition. In the darkness he and his men had come suddenly near a sentry, and had even seen his figure outlined against the sky.

"We watched you," he said, "and just as we were about to fire, we heard singing. You sang the first verse of 'Jesus, Lover of my soul.' The order to 'fire' was withheld while we listened. Then came clear and sweet on the air the second verse; but when you came to 'Cover my defenseless head,' I could stand it no longer. 'Guns down, boys,' I ordered. 'Back to camp!' Do you remember that night?”

"Yes." And now it was the turn of the astonished singer to relate his side of the story: "On that evening I experienced a sudden dread of the darkness, and horror overwhelmed me at the thought of what might overtake me. I felt utterly helpless. But I remembered the One who had died for me. He had borne all my sins on Calvary's tree, and His own lips had promised to go with me 'all the way.' Why should I be afraid? I cried in spirit to God, and I prayed in the words of the hymn you heard. I had no thought that anyone heard me but God. But after I had sung that hymn I shall never forget the blessed assurance I had that I was safe under the shadow of His wings.”

What a testimony to the keeping power of the Almighty! During the rest of the voyage the two men were much together. The Christian singer soon sensed the unhappy state of his companion and seized every opportunity to bring Christ before him. Ere they disembarked God graciously rewarded his efforts, and the weary heart found peace and rest in the Savior's love.

"Plenteous grace with Thee is found,Grace to cover all my sin;Let the healing streams abound,Make and keep me pure within.Thou of life the fountain art:Freely let me take of Thee;Spring Thou up within my heart,Rise to all eternity.”

Christian Treasury: Volume 2, Trust Him Fully

“Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psa. 55:22.

Are you at this moment in any pressure, trial, need, or difficulty? If so, look simply and solely to the living God. Turn away your eyes completely from the creature. "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils." Isa. 2:22. Let your faith take hold now on the strength of God Himself. Put your whole case in His omnipotent hand. Cast your burden, whatever it is, upon Him. Let there be no reserve. He is as willing as He is able, and as able as He is willing to bear all. Trust Him fully. He loves to be trusted— loves to meet our needs.

Echoes of Grace: 1979, Whiter Than Snow

One winter day in Canada some children were amusing themselves during the noon hour at a country school by asking riddles. They had some good ones, but their stock soon ran out. Just as they got stuck for a new riddle, one of their school mates came back from her dinner and there was a general cry: "Mary, ask us a riddle! Ask us a riddle!"

Mary thought a moment and then asked, "What is whiter than snow?"

"My handkerchief!" cried one boy, but when he compared it to the snow, it looked quite yellow.

"Fresh whitewash!" guessed another boy, but all agreed he was wrong.

"My best dress!" ventured a small girl, but she was wrong.

"I don't believe there is anything whiter than snow!" said one of the older children indignantly.

"Yes, there is," said Mary. "There is just one thing in all the world that is whiter than snow, only one thing."

At last they all cried, "We give up. Tell us!" "A sinner washed in the blood of Jesus!"

Yes, Mary was right. There is one, and only one, thing in all the world that is whiter than snow. Think of a black-hearted sinner, a swearing, drinking, useless waster. That same man can be washed whiter than snow. All the past can be blotted out, so that God Himself says, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

As the year draws to a close, stop and take stock of how you have spent it. What has there been for God in the year that has gone? How about those deep, dark sins of the past year? How can you do better than to end this year by coming to the Savior? By trusting in His precious blood you can start the New Year with a clean sheet, all the old blotted out. Then even in the sight of God you will be whiter than snow.

"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psa. 51:7.

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7.

Bible Treasury: Volume N9, Scripture Queries and Answers.

Q.-What is the teaching of Holy Scripture as to Sheol or Hades?

1. Does the “three days the Son of man was in the heart of the earth,” and our Lord's descent “into the lower parts of the earth,” refer to anything more than, in the former the grave; and in the latter the dust of death and the grave?

2. Would it be according to scripture to say that Sheol or Hades (including Abraham's bosom, and Paradise) were below the earth? and that the Lord Jesus went there and emptied one compartment of it taking them on high? Or was Paradise or Abraham's bosom always in heaven, and never below the earth even in Old Testament times?

3. If so what is the force of such expressions as going down into Sheol?

4. Is the “bottomless pit” distinct from Hades?

5. Could the word Sheol or Hades be applied to heaven in that it also was part of the unseen?

J. C. B.

A.-The Old Testament word “Sheol” occurs sixty-five times and is translated in our Authorized Version thirty-one times by “grave,” three times by “pit,” and thirty-one times by “hell"; so that our excellent translators of 1611 did not consider the word of uniform signification.

It is represented in the Greek Version sixty-one times by Hades (); twice (2 Samuel 22:6; Proverbs 23:14) by “death” (); whilst in two passages (Job 24:19; Ezekiel 32:21) no exact counterpart of the Hebrew clauses is reproduced in the Septuagint, and so the rendering of the word in these instances does not appear.

Now in the following passages (to give no more), Genesis 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; Numbers 16:30, 33; 1 Kings 2:6, 9; Psalm 49:15 his; 141:7, Sheol cannot well mean anything but “the grave,” and is so rendered in our Authorized Version (excepting Num. 16, where they say “pit"); whilst elsewhere for the most part its general reference is to the place of departed spirits. The grave receives the inanimate body. Thus in the Old Testament Sheol is used for both receptacles.

When, however, we turn to the New Testament this indefiniteness disappears. For life and incorruptibility are now brought to light through the gospel. Hades, the general representative of the word Sheol, is in the New Testament restricted to the unseen world of separate spirits, as “death,” or the grave, applies (Rev. 20) only to the body, and not to soul nor to spirit. It is the body that dies; whilst the spirit returns to God who gave it. The spirit and soul never cease to exist, whether for weal or for woe. Further, Hades receives only the wicked; the believer, if called to die, goes not to Hades, but to paradise.

Yet it has been supposed that to Hades both good and bad alike go, at death, with the two classes nevertheless separated there by a great gulf; but scripture nowhere speaks of the good being in Hades, but rather as “afar off” from those there. Certainly, if Psalm 16:10 (twice quoted in the Acts, chap. 2) be considered as teaching that our Lord on dying did go to Sheol, or Hades, His soul being not left there then—as we know He went to paradise (a garden of delight, not of darkness), where also the dying robber was received—there must in that case have been two parts for good and bad respectively. But this mistake arises from a faulty translation of the Psalm in our 1611 version. What the verse does say is, Thou wilt not leave (abandon, or, relegate) my soul to (not in) Sheol (see R.V.), and this rendering is confirmed also by the corrected text of Acts 2:27 (accepted by the Critical Editors Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, and the Revisers.1

Again, Hades is never spoken of in the New Testament in a good sense. If there was a good part of Hades, as well as a bad part, why should we read of its allotment to the wicked invariably, whilst no hint is given of the good being there also?

By “the heart,” or “lower parts,” of the earth, we understand the grave. Our Lord not only died, but “was buried” and “rose again the third day.” Of this Jonah was a sign. Psalm 139:15 may serve to guard us from a too literal interpretation of the words which would seem to indicate that by the lowest parts of the earth is meant what is plainly out of sight— “in secret.” The sepulcher was made sure and the stone sealed (Matthew 27:66). Thus no human eye should peer into that holy domain where lay the body of Jesus.

Before the Savior came Abraham's bosom represented the acme of bliss to the pious Jew, seeing that Abraham was called the friend of God! To be “with Christ” is the Christian's blissful prospect as now revealed. This is in the paradise of God, above. Paradise is not Hades, nor was Abraham in Hades, but seen “afar off” by the tormented soul that was in Hades. It is a dream of man that our Lord went to Hades and delivered any there from. Not to Hades but to paradise the Lord went. Nor does scripture give any hint of deliverance from Hades. Judges 5:12; Psalm 68:18; Ephesians 4:8 speak not of the liberating of prisoners, but of the leading captive the oppressive powers of evil, here called “captivity.” Christ has spoiled the [wicked] principalities and the powers and made a show of them openly, in His triumph over them (Col. 2:15). He led captivity captive; not a word as to setting free hell's captives, as some would make out.

“Going down” to Sheol—the grave or the pit being ocularly beneath us.

The bottomless pit (Revelation 20) is not where man is but where Satan will be bound for a thousand years, preliminary to his being cast into the lake of fire for eternity; whereas Hades receives the spirits of those who have died—the wicked dead whose spirits once inhabited a mortal body. The soul and spirit go to Hades, whilst the body made of dust has meanwhile its part in “the grave” (whether it be sea or land), awaiting its resurrection to judgment. When “man” is raised, the earth and heavens being no more, he is cast—not into Hades (which finds place no longer), but into the lake of fire prepared (not for man but) for the devil and his angels. The believer, if put to sleep, is raised, not for judgment, but for glory (Philippians 3:20, 21).

Sheol or Hades cannot be applied to heaven, but is in contrast with heaven, as it is its opposite.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Scarlet-Crimson, Snow-Wool; Psa. 49:8

Ques. Can you tell me the difference between "scarlet," and "red like crimson," and "white as snow," and "wool," in Isa. 1:18?

Ans. "Crimson" is a deeper dye than "scarlet." We are informed that it is obtained by a more intense process. So, scarlet in this verse would represent one whose sins were glaringly bad, sins that every one could see that had eyes, to see. But "crimson" would show how those sins and evil ways had been long enslaving the soul. Yet there is power in the grace of God through the blood of Christ to deliver the one who is most deeply enslaved. "White as snow" expresses how clean the scarlet sinner, who believes on the Lord, is washed. "As wool" tells how every difficulty is overcome..The hopeless, helpless sinner who comes to the Savior, is not (July cleansed, every whit made clean, but is also set free from the slavery of sin and Satan's power. (Luke 8:35.)

Ques. What does Psa. 49:8, "The redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever," mean? A. B. S.

Ans. This parenthetical verse is put in where men are seeking after riches and trusting in them. (Read Matt. 16:26; Mark 8:36, 37; Luke 12:20, 21.) How precious the redemption of the soul is compared with the obtaining' of the perishing things of earth. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

"And it ceaseth forever." When the narrow boundary line of this life is passed, eternity to the soul has begun, and no change can come. The die is cast, the soul is lost or saved, there is no redemption beyond death. "After this the judgment." How solemn.

"Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6:2. Beyond death there is a great gulf fixed between the saved and the unsaved. (Heb. 9:27; Luke 16:26.)

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Reigning Over, Not on, the Earth?

Question: Rev. 5:10. It is alleged that the Sept. Psa. 46:8, and Matt. 6:10, render doubtful the view that the text in the Revelation means reigning over, rather than on, the earth. Is it really so?

S.

Answer: The accusative is used for the object where activity was to be expressed. The propriety of this as to the nations is plain. The dative (among other senses) is employed for fixed relationship where it is not condition, occasion, or circumstance. The genitive expresses rather the simple fact. But there is another element in the text, which distinguishes it from Matt. 6:10, the usage of the preposition with verbs of governing; and the Septuagint abounds with proofs that, as is used for the locality where the king lived, is for the sphere of his reign.

Young Christian: Volume 24, 1934, Worship Thou Him

“Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house;

So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for He is thy Lord; and worship thou Him.” (Psa. 45:10-11).

Dorothy Conference: 1997, Psalm 40:1-3

Reading

Oregon. They're going to change our alarms, et cetera. I think so. I want to play. In our life. Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

Psalm 40. To the chief musician of Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined us, and he had heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my going. And here for a new storm in my mouth, even praise unto our God, Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies many. O Lord, my God, are thy wonderful words, which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us were they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee. If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. Sacrifice and offering out it's not desire. Mine ears hast thou open burnt offering and sin offering? Hast thou not required? Then should I law? I come in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will. Oh my God, yeah, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation law. I have not refrained my lips. O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart. I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. I have not concealed Thy loving kindness and Thy truth from the great congregation. Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me. O Lord, let thy loving kindness and thy truth continually preserve me. For innumerable evils have compassed me about mine. Iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up. They are more than the hairs of mine head. Therefore my heart faileth me. Be pleased, oh Lord, to deliver me, oh Lord, make haste to help me. Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it. Let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil. Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame. That said to me, Aha, aha. Let all those that seek thee rejoice, and be glad in thee. Let such as love thy salvation, say continually. The Lord be magnified, but I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me. Thou art my help, and my deliverer make no terrain, Oh my God. Just consider these words in verse eight. I delight to do thy will. Oh my God. We think of the one who could utter these words in the past eternity. And say his delights were with the sons of men. Oh, we look at this glorious person. The delight of the Father's heart and the heavens were opened. And he said, This is my beloved Son, in whom all is my delight. He can be filled with praise as we think of the things that. Are presented to us in this song. Joy it is to think of the one who has brought us up, and we're surely waiting. To be taken up. So.

We think of the last words of verse 16. The Lord be magnified, the Lord be magnified. May that be our desire. We were singing the opening of this meeting, but going through the veil of sorrow, and I couldn't help but think that we have great joy in being here. There's a veil of sorrow. We've been praying for many that are going through trials, and yet we have joy. And it's in this one who is to be magnified and the one who

lifted us up out of the horrible pit. And the one who was willing to come down here on our behalf? The. Take our sins upon him and carry them away. Fear the punishment of them, so we do have joy, don't we even in the veil of sorrow beautiful to be able to look up beyond the sorrows and enjoy the person? Before we get too quiet. I understand that all the psalms are set to metric, that is so that they could be some. And. There was indeed these that had. A rule in this line of things, I like to think that the chief musician. There's only one chief musician that can bring melody to our hearts. We know who that is, and a Psalm of David would of course be a personal experience. We can relate to that in a personal way. There's also a line in one hymn. Excuse me. That speaks of the name bringing Swedish music to God's heart, and so that precious name of Jesus. And to him he is precious, and to us is this precious is made good. David is really the one that established the courses. That is, he had the singers and the porters. Connected with the temple. And the singers. Are important. We need our hearts touched and moved. But we don't want to forget the importance of the porters to those that are exercised in a watchful way in the Assembly. So those two things are brought out before us. I believe it's in. Chronicles, isn't it? First Chronicles. 26 time Which one quarters is the 26th? 26, yeah. I think they're mentioned together somewhere. Is that 26? Anyway. They are mentioned as being established of David in the temple worship. Particularly a thought as to why it was David and not Solomon. Do you, Neil? Would you repeat then, Neil, I didn't hear. I think it's a nice thing that you pointed out the establishment of the quarters and the singers was the establishment of David, not Saul. Rejection that these things were established supporters for the temple and the singers. On earth, the song begins in having more sweet and loud, and it's here we're learning those two things, Faithfulness that's connected with the porters and the singing, which is connected with our joy.

Connection with David and his authority and his rejection. I don't know if it's the one John was looking for, but in First Chronicles 23 Five, it says. Moreover, 4000 reporters and 4000 praise the Lord with instruments which I made that David appraised with, there were an equal number of quarters and singers, praisers. We know that David really had it upon his heart to build the temple. His motive was right and pure and. The Lord turned that around and said, now David, I'm going to build up your house. And David was astounded by that and overwhelmed with the grace of God that would single out his house in that way. And David fully recognized the failure of his house. But. David, it seems from that point on, that is from that expressed desire to build the temple. And when he was told that he couldn't build it, he'd been a man of blood. But we see that from that point on, David did everything he could towards the construction of that temple and towards the temple service. He it's as though he was getting everything in preparation for that millennial day. It's beautiful to see the exercise of heart. I think he amassed something like about $26 billion in gold alone just for the temple, as well as making preparation for so many things. So we see that David through all the hard experiences he had. He could relate to these things, and we see how many Psalms of David we have, and in this first book of the Psalms he certainly voices the the experiences and the troubles of the godly ones that they will experience in the coming day. But. The thought of the evenness in the porters and singers. Is good exercise for our hearts. And it's nice to to join together in Deuteronomy or in numbers, for I think it is. It speaks there about the the service, the burden of service. But the Levites laid down their burdens. But in First Corinthians, the First Chronicles 631, I think it is. It speaks of David appointing them. In service of song. And it's lovely to realize that. We have work to do here, and it's a service, but it should lead on into the service of song. And if our hearts are fixed upon Christ, out of our hearts will come that service of song now to the Lord. Isn't it very precious to see that? All the things written before time, which we're reading here in the in the Psalms were written for our learning and we have something we can learn here as we read this portion. I just, I'm not going to read the I just, I want to don't pass up verses but I just want to drop down to verse four. Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord His trust. David had just been saying, I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and he heard my cry. And he goes on and tells where he was, where he was brought up out of the miry clay. And it isn't that the path of each one of us. And as we have these examples brought before us, God, there's a purpose in all this. We have a divine record here of what has been done, And God sends the message to us in this present day for us to see blessed or happy. Is the man that maketh the Lord is trust. Am I making the Lord my trust, as David did at this point? That's the point here, isn't it? To see this, to apply it practically in our lives. Because if we read it just as to its historical era, we can be confused at many times on that. But when we see the example that God has given us to point to each one as I read it, he's looking at me and he's saying you are It should be exercised, as David was.

So I think there's something very precious in all this. The Lord Jesus is the example as a dependent man trusting in God and. Taste this scripture. The righteous trusted even in the you know, it's beautiful to see that that was not only characteristic throughout all of his life, even when he was on the cross, you know he turns to God and none but God. Although he could not receive any answer, when under the punishment of God, God did answer him. Thou hast hurt me from the horns of the unicorns. It should encourage us that when we go through difficult circumstances that we continue to cleave to him with confidence and trust, and while his life of obedience was. No doubt a great delight to the heart of God, don't you think? It was a great delight to him when he turns to him, even when under the punishment of God. And I think we can learn from that blessed Lord he perfectly trusted. We see in Job a beautiful picture of it too, in difficult circumstances. Well, there are things in this Psalm that we would not apply to the Lord Himself personally, would we? But there are things that we cannot but understand when we apply it to the Lord Jesus. And Speaking of having been heard from the horns of the Unicorn, I believe it would suggest to our minds that he cried with a loud voice. It is finished. The horn of the Unicorn would indicate all the wrath and judgment that was due, our sins, having been expended against that blessed man, having endured the cross, having waited patiently until every stroke of judgment had been laid on him. Then he said, it's finished. He cried with a loud voice. He was in the full vigor of the intelligence of his faculty, and then having expressed its. Finish. In absolute confidence, he says, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit, waiting upon the Lord to give an answer. And he did. In the resurrection of that Blessed One. Just think of God's patience. For 4000 years waiting till his son would come and to lay down his life in the cross of Calvary. And then we think of his patience and waiting nearly 2000 more years. And we read in the second Thessalonians of the patience of Christ waiting to come and claim his bride. And he's waited in long-suffering, because he's not willing that any should perish. And I'm glad he waited for me. I'm sure you are too. He's waiting for some still to come in, but we've been called home by now. One of the hardest things for us to do is to wait, isn't it? There are many young people here, and you know what characterizes the young? Impatience. They want to move quickly and when they do, generally make a mistake. Or fail. But I just thought of this little opening verse here. I waited patiently for the Lord. And he inclined unto me. It indicates to me that there was time given. He waited patiently for the Lord. He might have waited for quite a while. But I you you can talk to some of the young and some of them are here that. We we've got to do it now. We've got to do it right. This is the now generation. And I believe really what we need is to wait patiently, for the Lord doesn't move. As quickly as we do, because he has a design in view, He has something in view for us. We move because we want to. But God has a purpose, and his purpose is to bless us even while we're here. And the end is eternal glory. So I think it's lovely to just just meditating a little on this. For I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me. There was time given He. He listened. He waited, and and he said, He inclined unto me. He listened.

You wanted to hear? And he heard my cry. Well, that's a that's a little answer to it, isn't it? If we wait patiently on the Lord, he's going to, he's going to hear it. But we don't he he doesn't want us to jump into these things and do them in a in a quick way or a half haphazard way. So I think that in a practical way as I look at this verse, I think. Of how beautiful it is to just to wait and be patient. Patience is a virtue that very, very few of us possess. So I think it's a good thing to know that not only the younger ones, we as older ones have that problem. Unfortunately, many times the story goes that this older brother said to his brethren, pray for me, I need patience. And the brethren prayed for him. But you know what they prayed. Sent his brother Tribulation. The brother said. I didn't ask for that. They said you forget that tribulation workers patient, you know, and that's the way it works in our lives, beloved brother. We need that because some of us by nature are more impetuous and have more of a problem with it. But the Lord knows what to bring into our lives to teach us that lesson, perhaps over and over again. He said that Brother Heinz, because I was about to ask Brother Charles if he would allow a brother that's not a young brother to confess that I have a problem with that and I'm thankful you. You mentioned that I'm apparently not the only one. It's a verse in Isaiah number chapter 40. I like to read it. He giveth power to the faint verse. 29 And to them that have no mighty increases strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary. And the young men shall utterly fail, but they that wait upon the Lord might renew their strength. That I said, right? They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. It's the positive. And this is a wonderful thing, brother, that when we wait on the Lord and we pray, the Lord comes in and he answers our prayers, and we bring the Lord into the circumstances, and then we see the way the Lord works it out. But this, I think, is one of those keys. And so the next verse has got the wonderful result it says. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as Eagles. How high does an eagle mount up? I had a friend of mine, he was flying a glider up at about 20,000 feet, and the southwest neglected us to make a noise like an airplane. And all of a sudden on the wing comes this big eagle flying right along with him in the thermals, those thermal updrafts that the eagle uses. You know you can't see a thermal updraft, but you can sure feel it when you're in an airplane. These bigger planes that go up high, they bump up every once in a while. You hit a thermal at a high speed and it goes like a bump. But when you're in a glider, you circle around in the glider, rises on the thermals. They found that out years ago, these glider pilots. Well, what do you think about the Eagle? What do you think? He flies on the same updrafts that menus with gliders. And this friend of mine told me that Eagle came over by my wing, and he looked at me as much as to say hello. What are you doing up here? You know the wonderful thing about it? He says. And that Eagle flew along with me for a while, and finally he said that all of a sudden it went higher. I had to go down, but he had the intelligence to go a little further higher. He had a longer glide ratio than I did. Who gave the eagle the glide ratio that was longer? You know who gives you and me the glide ratio? If I could bring it into that analogy to go how high? Oh, you know, if I stand up into the heavens out there. That's what that 139th Psalm tells us. So look what it says here. They shall mount up as Eagles with wings. They shall run and not be worried. They shall walk and not be faint. This is that Pilgrim path that we've been singing about, the path that the Saints are treading, and the secret of them is with the Lord. And that's where we have that heavenly, heavenly fellowship with the man that was here once in this world, rejected now in the glory and our hearts and our desires, the Spirit of God, would you want you and me to be in communion with that blessed man?

Like to point something out in connection with your comment and Brother Littles comment vocation. And in Ezekiel there where you have the four faces of the beast which show the character of God and how the government wheels of God's government move slowly and patiently, you have four creatures and if you could just look at it because there's a difference there between. Ezekiel and the Book of Revelation. See till chapter one. In verse 10. And for the likeness of their faces, they forehead the face of a man and the face of a lion on the right side and they 4/4 had the face of an ox on the left side and they four also had the face of an eagle. I understand an eagle from a very high height can see a mouse or and just come right down on a very small object. He doesn't miss anything. What would particularly arrested my comment. My thoughts about this in connection with Brother Little's comment was that here we have an ox, but in Revelation we have a calf. And so in Revelation, it's the restless energy of a calf. But here now it's to place patient plotting of an ox. We've all seen an ox, and there's patience and slowness, so to speak, in deliberateness if you've ever seen an ox turning the millstone. But today is going to come when we're going to see it as the restless energy of a calf. I think of this horrible pit. And I believe we can all look back in our lives and realize. We were an enemy of God. We hated God. Without a cause. We were without God, but we hated God. We didn't want the knowledge of God. God in his wondrous grace. Has brought us up under this horrible pit. He thought of the Lord Jesus. And then in his sins and he said, let's kill him. The Darling. The heart of God. We hated him that much. That he will crucify him on that cross. We hated it. We don't realize how deep the pit we were in. Having to answer to God. But the Psalmist could say he brought me up. And with God, it's all up, isn't it? He brought us up. He established our goings. He's keeping us up. And we're looking to the day when he will take us out. My path is to take me away from God, in myself. And go my own way. But God loves me so much that I have one that's there for me as God is for me and He's. Taking me along a road that would fill me with praise to God and to Thanksgiving. What a path this is a service of praise to God. And how he delights in that which he exalts his beloved son. The Marie Clay. And the horrible pit showed to you and me the extent to which the Lord Jesus Christ took your place in mind. He went down underneath. However, deep sin may have plunged me, and there is where he dealt with God as to the entire question of sin and my guilt. And so when he has come out, we got him in the six feet Psalm. That he would not be left in that place, the place that he took in love from my soul and yours. In love to the Father, and going down underneath the load of sins and guilt. And so he is in that 16th song shown the way of life and burnt up out of the horrible pit. And he says at thy right hand, that's the extent to which he is exalted. Given a place, a name that is above every name, that is name every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that he is the Christ to the glory of God the Father. He is the Lord. So here we have the complete cycle of the Lord Jesus going down underneath the weight and load of all of our sins and guilt and being brought up out of that pit.

God found us in the pit of our sins, unprofitable altogether. There we have it. And so the Lord went into that place and answered to God paid the full price of your redemption in mine. Now he's brought up, and his going has been established. He's at the right hand of God forever more. It's a good comparison with the. Ephesians chapter one, where we have the richest. Revelation of of the Father, Son, the Holy Spirit. And when they come to the second chapter, it's like the second verse here it's a backward look and it's a good thing for us, each one of us, to remember where we have come from. So when you read the second of Ephesians, think of the second verse and that tells us, reminds us constantly of where we have been lifted up from. You should read the verse to his brother. Read that verse to Ephesians 2. Well, the whole the whole chapter of Ephesians 2 is. You happy quickened, Who were what In trespasses and in sin? Yes, That's the thought that Yes. Yes. Sometimes we go over these precious truths. Remember, one said to me well. We know all that. Do we know it? Ask yourself the question. How much do you know of the grace of God? How much do I know of the Precious Savior? Am I really acquainted with him? I believe that the more we go over these precious things. They're simple. They're what they call elementary, aren't they? Because it's that which God has already done for us, just noticing here. Verses two and three he brought me up. Out of a miry play, horrible pit in a miracle, he set my feet. I'm going to put the word he in there upon a rock. He established my goings. He has put a new song in my mouth. Even praise to our God. Do we respond when I think of that blessed one And what he endured for me on the cross bowed his holy head in death. It isn't just for this, for

one hour on Lord's Day morning, that we should be praising him. We should praise him every moment of the day, every day of our lives. And that day isn't far off. When every eye is going to praise me, every voice is going to praise him, every eye will see him. But now while we wait. But I just thought how, how precious it is. He is the one who accomplished it all for me. What is my response? I just asked myself, he has put a new song in my mouth. He. Praise unto our God, Do we sing that song, we just sing the words or does the song mean something for us? I really believe that what he's saying here, he has put a new song in my mouth and. I'd like to think of it in my heart, too. Someone was recently telling me the man who had lived a very wicked life and he was hearing the gospel and he said, well, I just be satisfied to be forgiven. And I was thinking of the words of Mrs. Bevins, him trembling. We had hoped for mercy, some lone placed within his door. But the crown, the throne, the mansion, all were ready long before. It might have suited that man just to be forgiven, but it wouldn't be suitable for God. God has higher thoughts for us, and so he has the the establishing of our goings, and a song in our mouth, not just to be forgiven, but a song in our mouth even praised. For our God. So he's given us many more things to rejoice in and give him praise for and simply to be forgiven. That's that's important. That's number one. But he piles a lot more on top of that. Although The Blessings of Ephesians one, for example. You're thinking of the Lord Jesus said that he could. As the stones, the worst of him. But that isn't what he wanted. God wanted worshippers.

And so he has chosen us. And surely as we think of that, we think of. What he is to us as our Father and what the Lord Jesus is as our Savior. We think of the reality of this that. These hymns that we have and those who have. These hymns for us. And the Spirit of God. It caused us to be worshippers to be able to. Come into the presence of God to present that sacrifice to God. The fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name, presenting Christ to God. And I believe it's only when I. Condone. Through this glorious person is. The I am the one from eternity. The one who is the same yesterday, today and forever. And I was young, like the Apostle Paul, who said that I might know him. But an object we have. Very object that God himself has, He's given to us, His beloved Son. We should be directed by the Spirit of God into the reality. Of who this glorious person is, what he has done, and all of this though that our lips might overflow and our hearts might overflow with praise and worship to him. And so we come, and we're here, and we're here as worshippers. We're priests here to praise and to adore him. Brother John, I like to think of myself as one of those stones cried out. You know, my heart was a stone. And if you didn't get praise from Israel, he'd make the stones cry out. And we were without hope and without God in the world, and he put a song in our heart, and I think of that. But I just like to come back to what Brother Don said at the beginning of this. Maybe we skipped over this because I think it's important in helping us to apply these Psalms to ourselves. And that is to understand rightly the difference between Solomon and David, the character of what Solomon was doing. And This is why I believe David could have a real. Song in his heart, though denied to do what he originally wanted to do. And together I'm Speaking of things that are well known to many. But David and solemn together form a picture of the reign of Christ. And it's most interesting and that David had not died at the time that Solomon took the throne. And so it really cements in our thoughts the thought that it is one continuous rain, but there are two characters to it now. And now we follow a rejected Savior. And So what is God doing? Is he building? Outwardly something here now Or is he as you were pointing out? Is he appointing the porters and the singers? And that's really what God is doing. And we get our hearts into a lot of trouble if we don't realize what God is doing in an outward way. In the present time. It was for Solomon, when the Lord reigned in power that the whole assembled thing, so to speak, is going to be put together. And that's a rapture. Every St. is going to be a gathered St. at the rapture. I beseech you by our gathering together unto Him. Coming of our Lord and our gathering together unto him. That the Lord, when he comes, it's going to he's going to, so to speak, assemble the whole thing in an outward visible way. But now what God is doing is He's doing these two things. He's appointing the porters to watch. That comes from the French word faulter door. We think of them as somebody who carries the luggage in the hotel. But a Porter is a Porter's a door and it's one that watches the door. And then there was a there was the singers that is to sing praise to our God. And he was happy, though denied as you pointed out, what he wanted to do. But he had a very fruitful work for God in preparing for what was going to be open in the manifestation of God. I just point that out because there are those two characters, and if we don't understand what God is doing in our present dispensation, where we're robbed of joy and we're robbed of the privilege of serving the Lord in the way that he's really desired and set out for us. Try to build something up in the world until we get in this first year that blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust and respect is not the proud nor such as turn aside to lives and you'll notice what the Lord said to the assembly of Philadelphia that He would make those that say they were Jews but are not but do lot. There's a lot of pride that we want a place we want to save or something that we're not in the world and we're nothing the.

If I may apply this to our own hearts, is that for a testimony to nothing but the ruin and broken state of things. And David really had a heart after God, and so he recognized that he was a man of blood, that there was failure there, and that he was going to occupy the place. And that's really what caused him to sing and really filled his heart with joy. But we'll get ourselves miserable if we don't see that. So important that we that we realize some of the truths that we've been looking at. Where were we before he picked us up? We were in the pit of destruction. We were in a place described as miry clay, where there's no sure footing, no real place to stand. And then he sets us on a rock, and that rock is Christ. He is now put us in Him. I think of Ephesians to remember that ye were Gentiles in the flesh, the uncircumcision strangers from the Commonwealth of Israel and from the covenants of promise, having no hope without God in the world, but now in Christ Jesus. We are now in a new place set on the rock. And then it says He established our goings. How important to realize, as he said, that without me you can do nothing. The way of man is knotted himself. It is not in man that Walketh to direct his steps. Do you know that? Do we really realize that? That you can't find your way through this world, this maze of confusion that we're passing through, But he? Directs our steps. Now how precious that is. He establishes our goings and we can't find our way, but he knows the way and he leads us and guides us. Well, I'm just making application to the Christian life from these verses. We haven't gotten very far into the sound, but it's very precious what we're considering. Chuck, what you give us? Explanation. On these verses here verse six about. Sacrifices and offering, though it's not desire. Mine ears hast thou opened or digged? That most certainly refers to the Blessed Lord to these following verses. It doesn't mean, does it, that he did not prescribe these sacrifices. Would you agree that he was looking forward? To that of which these sacrifices spoke and of the one who would bring the sacrifice and what was especially to the delight of God, was his obedience. And I think that's a good principle for us to recognize. You know, a lot of people want to worship God, but what about their obedience to do the will of God in their life individually? But there is especially explanation needed as to. My ears hairstyle ***** right? That's beautiful to see. That's in the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation. About 180 years before Christ. In Alexandria, Egypt, a group of scholars translated from Hebrew to Greek. And they translated that instead of my nearest Hast thou opened or digged a body, hast thou prepared me? And that's exactly what you get in Hebrews 10 That is the author of Hebrews the apostle Paul, I think. Quotes from the Septuagint translation, Or at least he gives it exactly the same as found there, which shows that that's the thought of the Spirit of God. When the Lord became Incarnate, his ears were open to hear the voice of God his Father and to respond to it. And when he had a body prepared him, he came into the place of dependence and submission and obedience. And he did it in perfection, did he not? That's what delights the heart of God, not bringing these sacrifices and going through all the ritual and the ordinances of the Old Testament, but what they pointed to, what the substance was, was Christ himself when He came.

His ears were digged. He had a body prepared him so that he now, for the first time in his uncreated existence as the eternal God, the Eternal Son, He now takes the place of a servant and has his ears digged to respond and in obedience to the voice of God his Father. That's that's really what that's looking on to, isn't it? The previous comment really explains the fifth verse about not being able to direct our paths because they just point out there in the fifth verse. Many, O Lord, my God, are thy wonderful works, not my wonderful works. And there's a lot of talking about my wonderful works, but thy wonderful works. Paul prayed that he might labor according to his working and also not our thoughts towards him, but his thoughts towards us. That was really what we want to be occupied with. Just like to say a word for the younger ones. And that is the it's good for us as we sit here and listen that all blessing, every blessing, comes down from God. And if you and I, younger ones here, older ones if we live in what we have heard. We live in it in our daily life. It's going to go back to God in praise and worship and adoration. The circuitry is completed. It's not how much we know here as we sit here. It's how much I'm living. What I do know, Luke 818. To him that has shall more be given if you and I are living what we know might be small or it might be great. But if we're living that God is going to give me more. But then the rest of the verse says to him that has not from him shall be taken, even that which he seemed to have. If I'm not living what I am saying, God is going to take away from me what I seem to have. Very interesting. Not to belabor this thought of a song or singing, but are just going back to this verse again. In our chapter, verse three, he has put a new song in my mouth. Who put the song there? God did. Then let's go over to Psalm 96. Verse 10 Sing unto the Lord a new song. Sing unto the Lord all the earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless his name, Show forth his salvation from day-to-day. Now he's put that song there and wants to hear it. So that's Psalm 96. Then go over to Psalm 144. And we see a nice response here. I've enjoyed this. Verse nine, I will sing a new song unto thee, O God. Just putting those three things together, I've enjoyed that. To see that as was has been said, that the truth of God flows into our hearts and it flows in absolutely perfect. It's in all perfection. Whatever God does for us is in all perfection. But what is the response? As it comes out, it's checkered in many ways. It doesn't come out the same way. That it went in. So I think it's good to be reminded of these things over and over again, isn't it? There's another one in the 5th chapter of Revelation, Charles. And they sung a new song saying thou art worthy. That's what we're looking forward to in the heavenly choir, but we're in the enjoyment of it now. Brother Mearns, you gave us a nice thought on the new song in Revelation. It isn't just one particular song repeated over and over again, is it? What was your thought again? My thought was that God is infinite in his resources. We learned that at school that a study was made of snowflakes, and they found that there weren't 2 snowflakes alike and we can apply that to the sand of the sea or the grass in the middle and so on. And so with the Lord Jesus, when we get to glory, I believe that there be a continual unfolding of beauties and graces and loveliness.

Proceeding from him by the Spirit to you and I, and this, I think, will form the basis of our new song. We learn a new song down here and we sing it maybe six or seven times. Is not new anymore, but up in glory. There be a provision made through these continual duties being unfolded from the Lord which will so enthrall us that we'll put it into song and it'll continue on for eternity. Thank you. That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of His grace and His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus. There it is, isn't it? The fruit of the Spirit. In the 5th of Ephesians. Ephesians 5 and. Speaking to yourselves in Psalms. Then hymns and spiritual songs, This place we see that. Truth that to be filled with the Spirit. Verse 18 But be filled with the Spirit speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. We sing. Jesus Loves Me. We sing many children's hymns. We enter into those things. And they warm our hearts, don't they? Spirit of God. Before us in this. Hymn book that we have for this glorious person and as the Spirit of God. Causes us to. Enter into that speaking to yourselves. They speak something to us individually, but when we sing them together, we enjoy them individually and collectively. So this new song and what a. A day of eternity, eternal day we speak on. I knew some that we will sing together, but individually and we will be individuals up there. I believe we'll enter into it as well. Collectively, we're singing out in praise to him. Just thinking of this expression in the 9th and 10th, 1St, both the great congregation that David speaks about and what answers to it, we know that Israel had 12 tribes and there were 12 loaves on the table of showbread that represented each one of the tribes. And now when we meet as gathered to the Lord's name, there's one loaf that speaks of one body. And if you return over later in the book of the Psalms. We have an expression, I believe that is our continual privilege. Connection with this in the 116th song. Verse nine, I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believe therefore I have spoken. I was greatly afflicted. I said in my haste, that all men are liars. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation. I will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord in the presence of all his people. Well, I just point that out that David Dole here in the Psalm, that now there was a fractured state of things, that the 10 tribes have been separated, they've gone off today. They don't know where they are for the most part. There were few that had come back. Tribe of Asher and so on. But they don't know where they are. And yet here he could say, I said my haste, that all men were liars, and we may have to say that too, as we look around and we see the broken state of things. But he said, I'll pay my choice vows in the presence of all his people and the great congregation. And though we don't see things outwardly now in that state, that in spirit and in practice we can be at the Lord's table where every child of God is represented.

And being at the Lord's table is the only place where we can bring our praise our songs to the Lord in the presence of all his people. We've heard that said, you know, brother, I think it was from Smith's Falls, he said. To a Christian, he said, I saw you last Lord's Day at the. Break your bread. And he said, well, I wasn't there. He said, I saw you there. And we do. We see every believer there. And so it is. Well, outwardly it's things have broken down. We can say I pay my choice vows in the presence of all his people. And I believe that that's what the great congregation answers to it. We don't. Our hearts haven't narrowed us to that. But there is a place where we can do that. There was a place in Israel where they could do that. So the tribes were scattered and there's a place for us where we can do that now. That's where the quarters come in to come back to. That is the porters come in back to that is that in faithfulness that that place be preserved the Lord will. Maintain a light in Jerusalem for David his servants sake. But the quarters are necessary to maintain that place and that's where responsibility comes in, in connection with that, that there might be a clean place where we can come and sing and to to speak of these things. Tender mercies towards us and so on. In respect to singing, and I'm almost fearful to even refer to it, but there needs to be a real exercise that what we sing. Is founded upon the word of God, and, as has been suggested, is the outflow of the enjoyment of the truth of God we saw in speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. In Colossians, it tells us that we are to admonish one another and to encourage one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual. So on As a result of the Word of Christ dwelling in our hearts richly. So it's very important what we sing. We notice, and many of us have enjoyed over the years, the fact that real singing only began after the children of Israel were delivered from Egypt. And so when we come into the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and realize that the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ has introduced us in the presence of God, it certainly incites our hearts to song. But we dearly be exercised about what we sing, so that it builds up the Saints, so that it lifts the Spirit of the Saints to be occupied with the Lord Jesus Christ their needs dearly to be substance to what we sing. And in connection with what you just said, your verses like verse 14 and 15, let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it. Let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil. Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me a ha ha, Those are not Christian sentiments. They apply to the Jewish remnant. And it would be proper for them to so

speak and sing. But as you were saying, we ought to sing with intelligence. That wouldn't be something we'd sing because we're Christians, we're not Jews. And it's important that we realize that when we're singing, we're giving expression to the truth of God and to the position that he set us in. And it's a different one entirely, is it not from Judaism. So it's good to make that distinction. Not everything that's in the Psalms can be taken up. And become the experience of a Christian. It wouldn't be so. There are expressions in the Psalms that are anti Christian. Actually we are to pray for our enemies and to do good that hate us and to them that hate us and so on. But for the Jew who was surrounded by enemies and they were earthly enemies, these sediments are proper. They can't come into their blessing until the enemy is destroyed and punished and judged. But our enemies already been destroyed and judged at the cross. And we come into our blessings. Now we have them. Now we're just waiting for that crowning day when we'll have it. Even in our bodies. Our bodies will be redeemed. And when it says in Ephesians with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, that doesn't mean literally psalms from the Old Testament.

I know there are different thoughts as to. How to explain? That verse in the New Testament, but I have enjoyed that It speaks of our experiences that we go through the difficulties and we have a lot of hymns that express that line of things and what the Lord is to us in our difficulties. I know others think that it has to do with expressing scriptural truth, right? But still I enjoy both thoughts. There are those. Christians who try to literally take that and put the sounds the Old Testament Psalms into melody and sing them. There are a lot of things that we can express even as Christians that are given in the Psalms, but we have to use spiritual discernment as to what is suitable for us as Christians and what is not seeing number 95 together. 242. Seen allowed to God our strength, our strength. He has brought us hitherto. Thing with wonder of his love, he is. Sing no loud to God. Right here. All of you, and you're speaking well. And I swore out of that time when I will walk I fall in heaven to do. That you had number 95. Number 95. Break forth and sing.

Every heart and I understand she will pray last day to our managing. Oh.

Bible Subjects for the Household of Faith: Volume 1, 1863, All My Desire Is Before Thee

Psalm 38: 9.1

FATHER! to thee I raise mine eye,

(Pleading word, that thou art nigh To all that call in truth) and cry,

O! let me live before thee.

Thy saints—O! I would seek their weal;

Would wipe their tears, their sorrows feel;

To serve with love, their wounds to heal,

O! let me live before thee.

To comfort with thy words of love,

And clouds of gloomy care remove,

Or raise their souls the clouds above,

O! let me live before thee.

Should e’er their eyes upon me rest;

Their hearts’ desire be thus express’d,

“Be thou with his rich blessing bless’d,”

Then be the breathing of my breast,

O! let me live before thee.

Alone content to have thy smile;

To bear thee fruit the “little while”

Thou bidst me suffer here or toil:

Then let me live before thee.

Whene’er I mingle with them, Lord,

More secret, or (to own thy word)

Our fellowship of hearts record,

Then let me live before thee.

The world: who knows or loves thee there?

Or who to please thee bath a care?

To keep me from its every snare,

O! let me live before thee.

And yet thou lovest it, how well!

Thy love, how vast! unsearchable!

To love as thou, thy pity tell,

O! let me live before thee.

Faith's Resting Place, Faith's Resting Place

"MY GROANING." (Psa. 38:9).—A groan to God, however deep the misery, however prostrate the spirit, however unconscious that we are heard, is always received above as the intercession of the Spirit, and answered according to the perfectness of God's purpose concerning us in Christ. Therefore the charge is, "They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds." There is no consequence of sin which is beyond the reach of this groaning to God, nothing but the self-will which will not groan to Him at all. This is a blessed thought! Such is our intercourse with God in joy and in sorrow; and I doubt not that in us poor blessed creatures, the truest, the most blessed (what will shine most when all things shine before God), are these groans to Him; they cannot, indeed, be in their fullness but where the knowledge of the glory of blessing is. I can see them precede the greatest works and words of Jesus. The sense of the wilderness, taken into His heart, made but the streams which could refresh it flow forth in the sympathy of the Spirit which it called forth; and now the Spirit is IN US.

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Echoes of Grace: 1982, Three Looks at the Wicked

The first look is David's: "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." Psalm 37:35, 36.

The second look is Solomon's: "I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done." Ecclesiastes 8:10.

The third look is John's: "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Revelation 20:12.

Each sight as it is brought before us becomes more intensely solemn.

To live in your wickedness is bad.

To die in your wickedness is still worse.

But to stand before God in your wickedness is past imagining.

It is bad enough to see an unconverted sinner buried, but it must be an awful sight to see him rise again, to see him stand before God in judgment.

Did you ever think who it is that will pass sentence on a sinner? It is Jesus! He who pleaded on the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," that One who wept over Jerusalem and said, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" is the One who will pass sentence on your soul if you die unconverted.

Oh, what a thought! What could be more appalling? Yes, there is no question but that, of all solemn sights other than dark Calvary, John saw the most solemn of all.

Just think over those sights once more, and may the Spirit of God constrain you to believe the message of God's amazing love in Christ. Receiving it into your heart, you will have "joy and peace in believing" on this side of the grave, a bright, bright hope beyond it, and "boldness in the day of judgment."

Young Christian: Volume 27, 1937, His All-Seeing Eye

“The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry.” (Psa. 34:15).

Jesus knew where the animal stood that was to carry Him into Jerusalem. He knew where His prophet Jonah tried to hide. He needed no one to direct Him to Abraham’s tent. None had to tell Him that Nathanael had been under the fig tree. He knew beforehand the plight of the Syrophoenician woman and for the purpose of helping her He went all the way up into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

He knows, He loves, He cares.

Food for the Flock: Volume 5, Nature of the Change Effected by Grace, The

UK 10: 29-35{

enjoys

done

I take up, then, the simplest passage I can find, in order to bring out what the grace of God makes of a man on earth, not in heaven, what the grace of God makes of a poor sinner who believes in Christ on earth. What has He done for such a man? This is what I would simply bring before you.

The first statement you get in this Psalm is quoted by the apostle Paul in the Epistle to the Romans: " Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." This declares to us what God is: it is God coming out. It is God's glory and happiness to say, Poor, wretched sinner, I can clear you entirely. It is a great matter to get this simple thing impressed on the soul-the delight that God has in clearing us. See how the Lord speaks to His disciples about the woman of Samaria. No, He says, I cannot eat. They wonder and are surprised that He should do such an uncourteous thing as to refuse the meat that they had brought Him. But He had come " to finish His work," and that was His meat. Many a time I thought it was her work.

Has it ever entered into your heart the delight that it is to God to clear you? The thing that has come out, which is so insisted on in Hebrews, and which God announced in the flood, is, " The end of all flesh is come before me." For one moment it was so: all was either covered or drowned; a figure of what grace is. All is now gone judicially in the cross; and " He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified; " He does not impute sin to them. " The worshippers once purged have no more conscience of sins. This is a very important verse to get correctly in the soul. God has no claim for sin; sin once gone in the cross of Christ, God never imputes it again. Do you mean I never do it? No; nor does God say the end of all flesh is come before you If I say it is come before my own eye, I know it is not; but, if God is the one I have offended, am I solicitous that the one I have offended should be satisfied as to my offense? If.I have offended an affectionate father, I want to know how he feels about my conduct; if he says, I have removed it all myself, I am at perfect ease in his presence.

I put it to every soul here, Are you really re sting in heart on this, that God can never impute a sin to you again? And a much greater thing than that too, He has liberated His own heart. Do not talk about committing sin, but get the sense that you have a purged conscience. A purged conscience is that God does not impute sin to me.

But I often find people saying, I feel that I am not as I used to be; I feel that there is something wrong. Well, what have you been doing? Oh, I have been drawn away by polities, by painting, or the like. But, have you stopped it? No. Then you are still entertaining the thing that revived the flesh.

What I insist upon is, that you must get hold of what God has said; "To whom the Lord doth not impute sin." It is the main point of everything. “He died for our sins." What for? to satisfy my conscience? Not merely; but to satisfy God. Nothing can be simpler! " Our old man has been crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." The moment you get the cross it is judicial; He has fulfilled in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ that which was foreshadowed in the deluge; the end of all flesh has come before Him. It is a wonderful moment: I have got into the holiest of all; the clothes of the old country are gone; the prodigal is in the Father's house.

But is not the great thing the gospel of the glory I answer, everything comes from the glory, and from nowhere else. But what do you get in Saul of Tarsus? That the cross is what brings in the glory. Everyone that is saved has the light of the glory, but it is not everyone who sees it. It took Saul three days to learn the effect of the cross, before he could rest in the glory.

What I want to leave distinctly on every heart is, the relief that there is to the heart of God when He can say, I do not see a spot on you. But how can I get on such ground as that? I come in "by a new and living way," not merely by the blood; it is "through the veil, that is to say his flesh," and having done that, I have got rid of Adam. What will heaven be? Why, not a bit of flesh left! and that is what heaven is now; that is the residence for a soul now. What puts me into the bliss of heaven is Gilgal—cutting off the flesh. I have got in and I reside there. What is the character of the place? No admittance to the flesh. You have not to combat the flesh here, but to speak of what God is.

God has brought in the perfect liberation of His own heart. Ibis Son said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am straitened till it be accomplished." But now God has liberated Himself, He is free to go out to poor sinners. I am perfectly at a loss for words to convey the magnificence of the love of God, that could come down to such a world as this, to rid me of all that stood between me and Him. And how did He do it? by a stroke of His hand? That would have been like a king, to pass by a transgression; but He did it in righteousness. He brought in the end of flesh by the cross of His own Son. Do you think God will ever let flesh go? No, never! He will even "deliver to Satan for the destruction of the flesh." A child of God may be in a house where wickedness is going on, and, if that house fall, the first one to be stricken down in it will most likely be His own child.

God, then, has seated me at His own board, at the King's table: " While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof;" I am in the enjoyment of the wonderful position He has set me in. This is the first point, and it is a great thing to get hold of it, because it is grace.

God forgives, and never imputes. He forgives what you have done, and He does not impute what you are. Real repentance is, that I put my flesh as far from the eye of God as He has put it from Himself. I do not really sorrow unto repentance if I do not.

In the New Testament we see this figuratively brought out in the parable of the man who fell among the thieves. Here we find the state of the soul of a wretched sinner. What is a state for grace? A state of grace, we often hear of. Now, there are two things that form a state for grace: one is, that you do not resist the grace; and the other is, that you do not conceal your need of it. The man who had fallen among the thieves was in this wretched condition, and he did not resist any offer of kindness, neither did he conceal his need of it. Many a man who does not resist God's offers of forgiveness, yet conceals the extent of his need. This is the third verse of our Psalm: " When I kept silence, my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long; " but then he comes to saying, " I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I

not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." This is the great evidence of having no concealment. If everything be cleared away there is nothing to cover. You may say what you like to me, I have settled it all with God. That is the proof of a man really forgiven; but what brings about this state of no guile is, that there is full confession; if you have the title to forgiveness and you are not quite happy, it is that you have not throughly confessed all. The man in Luke does not say, I had six wounds, and I covered up three, and let the other three be healed, and I am well of those but not of the others, for I can see them still. What is the use of grace if you do not want it? Suppose I were to say to a man deeply in debt, that I would pay all that he owed; and he were to bring his account books to go through with me, and set to work turning over three or four pages at a time so that I might not see the contents, and, upon my remonstrating with him, I received for answer that, They are gambling debts and the like, and I do not want you to see them. This is just what many do as to their sins. Says the psalmist, " When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring." " If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Many a one goes wrong in this way; many a one has never made a clean breast with God, and so is walking with an appearance of ease that he does not possess in His presence. Just as a bird will go hovering about over any part of the field but where its nest is, to draw away the dogs from it, so many a soul tries to conceal one thing or another from God's eye.

Now God has not a claim on me for sin, but He has a claim on me for holiness; He will have holiness and truth in His people. " For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him." That is, he shall be preserved in the midst of all that is contrary to him here. It is the actual state of a person placed in this world; as we get it in our parable, " He set him on his own beast." This opens up a wonderful field as to where the forgiven soul is set upon the earth. But, I add, if there be partial ignorance as to the first point, there is also ignorance as to the second-the position in which the forgiven soul is placed.

God's Son not only came down by Himself to clear away everything from me that could offend the eye of a holy God; but, when He was exalted to God's right hand, as Peter says, " He shed forth this which ye now see and hear: " He has sent the Holy Ghost to be the power in His saints. It is given in striking figure in Luke: "He set him on his own beast."

Without a spot upon me, liberated in my conscience, but in the very scene of my suffering, in the very place that tells of my shame and my degradation, I am in divine power. It was not that he walked a few steps, and then went a few steps on the horse. No, " We are more than conquerors." And I believe that it is not a question whether we arc up to it, but whether we know it. I like a child who gets on the table and says, " I am as high as my father." He, anyhow, knows the height he is aiming at.

A man who is walking in divine order in daily life, is a man of power. Many do the right thing in the wrong way; that is not being a man of power. Doing everything in the right way at the right time, that is power. It is not simply doing a good thing that is necessarily power. The old prophet brought back the young one very kindly, but there was no power on either side. Paul says, " I can do all things through him who strengtheneth me; " that is power.

We have wonderfully lost hold of the fact that the Holy Ghost has come down to be power in the believer-power for action. "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." " Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts

and minds through Christ Jesus." Do you believe you are in favor when you are praying?

If I may make the distinction, there are two ways in which I get to God in prayer; one is, that I tell Him my need; the other, that He hears me. It says, " Let your moderation be known unto all men." The word " known " there, means that I do not publish it, neither do I keep it secret. But in the next verse, " Let your requests be made known," means that I do declare it; that I go to God several times about it, until I can say, I know that I have made it known. I may not know what I am to do about it, but this I do know, that I have got His ear, and I come back into the midst of all my troubles, at perfect peace. Is it that there is any change in them? None at all; but I have made them known to Him, and I have got His peace about them. I am like a mountain, the sun gone, and the winds and storms around me, but I am looking up to God through all, and I have got power.

But do you never have temptations? If I do, I have that which is a well of water springing up into eternal life, and which causes that I shall never thirst. I pass by a shop window, and I see a book that I would like, but do I go down the street disconsolate because I have not got it? Not a bit! I have the Spirit of God; I have inexhaustible resources; the temptation has only this effect on me, that I say to myself, The Spirit of God does not want that, and I am just as happy without it. When Abraham returned from the battle, having refused the goods of the king of Sodom, Melchisedec met him and blessed him; and I believe there is no man who suffers ever so little for Christ, but a special messenger is sent to him to minister blessing to him. " Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." Do you think the Lord had not a halo round Him wherever He was on this earth? Then outwardly? " He anointeth my head with oil; " in a scene of sadness I have the oil of gladness. And inside? " My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

In saying this I am not talking of serving at all No one can serve until he enjoys. When a man can tell me what a passage has done for him-when he can say, This is what this passage can do; then, I say, he can help me with it. I can only take you as far as I have gone myself.

Thus, in the very place in which I am forgiven, God has sent clown to me the new wine, and set me up in power; I often ask myself, " Is the Holy Ghost dwelling in you?" I look up to God, and thank Him with my whole heart for setting me on the earth in this most wonderful position. The great work in the present day is not to be refuting infidelity, but to be taking up your bed and walking-showing power in the place where you had none. The man who was healed carried his bed, not to prove that he was forgiven to himself, but to the bystanders, Let me see in any place one faithful man walking with divine power, and I know there will be a wonderful effect from it in that place.

Now I turn to the third and last point: " He brought him to an inn." " Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." I will say here, what may surprise you a good deal, namely, that no one has the third, who has not the second; very few people know that the Lord cares for them; they have not got to the inn yet. And it will not do to go there on foot. Paul says, "Everywhere, and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry; " I am perfectly happy in the care of the Lord. " He brought him to an inn!" That is a place for travelers, it is not heaven. What can be more interesting than the knowledge that I am altogether in

the care of the Lord here on earth? So many saints are disturbed, so many are restless, because they are not living in the knowledge that they are under the care of the Lord; and then there is no power to walk. Why have you no power in walk or in service? It is because you are not clear that the Lord is caring for you, that He is in all watchfulness over you, that He has let down the strong quills of His protecting care till they sweep the ground around you, and, if you are wise, you will creep up close under His wing, into the very down.

There is a reality in these things. My heart delights in the extent of what God has done for a poor soul when he puts one in power on the earth. I have not said a word about heaven; I am simply dwelling upon that which I want very distinctly to bring out, what God's grace has done for a believer on the earth. I say, he is cured, he is carried, and he is cared for.

The Lord grant that this little word may not be without its value to our souls. He says, the cross of my Son has cleared away everything from my eye that was against you, and now down here I leave you to walk through this scene in the power of Him who died for you. Thus I walk through an unreconciled scene, a reconciled person. May each of us have a more correct sense of the magnificence of the state in which God sets us on this earth for His name's sake. Amen.

(J. B. S.)

Present Testimony: Volume 3, 1851, Psalm 32:8-9

I win instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

Christian Truth: Volume 6, God and the Conscience Satisfied

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." Psalm 32:1.

I much question if the bare idea of forgiveness of transgression, apart from the solid groundwork on which it rests, namely, the infinite atonement of Christ-"forgiveness in His name"-would ever satisfy the conscience. T h e groveling thought of escape is, indeed, the careless thought of the unbelieving mass, without one just thought, either of the character of God, or of the evil of sin. But if such a manner of forgiveness were possible, it would leave the recipient of it in that state of uneasiness which a man feels who finds himself in the presence of one whom he has injured, yet who has forgiven him. He would be under the conscious sense of degradation. Such a condition would be the very opposite of being "blessed." It is the mode of forgiveness, bringing the person forgiven to stand at ease in the presence of God, declared to be just, while He is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus, which constitutes the blessedness. The atonement of Christ is indeed the remedy, the only remedy, the divine remedy for the forgiveness of transgression; but it is more, it is the great medium of the display of the moral glory of God. Angels look into these things and learn the glory of their God by means of His dealing with sinners. And it is a wondrous thought that man's necessity as a sinner, and the manifestation of the divine glory, find their one and only meeting point in the cross of Christ. Yes, blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and so forgiven that God is glorified. Oh, what riddance of anxiety to the soul, when its salvation is thus taken from off its own responsibility, and it is no longer the question, Shall I be saved? but, Shall G o d be glorified? Blessed peace, indeed! surpassing all understanding, when God and the conscience are alike satisfied.

Christian Truth: Volume 16, Forgiveness on a Righteous Foundation

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Psalm 32:1, 2.

The simplest truths of the gospel become of growing value to our souls as we advance onward along the Christian pathway. Truths which are at first received authoritatively, on the evidence of Scripture, become commended to us by their own beauty. What we receive at first, as it were, by force of our own necessity, becomes in our progress that which manifests the glory of Christ. Then we are able in measure to contemplate it apart from selfishness, and to see it in the light in which God Himself sees it. I think I discern this feature in apostolic teachings; while they unfold mysteries, or develop practical truth, they also (designedly) connect all with the primary truths of the gospel, thus bringing them into constant prominence. And this marks the teaching of the Holy Ghost.

It is human to handle a particular truth as a subject, but the object of the Holy Ghost is to hold up prominently to view the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The soul becomes unsettled from its steadfastness, when the mind takes the lead in learning even the truth of God. The Spirit, who leads into all truth, connects everything in His teaching with those great primary truths, the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The mind may get hold of something new, and be interested in it, as if it were more wonderful than the truth already received. I do not wonder at the Apostle saying, "so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." In the gospel of the grace of God the Apostle saw a deep and most blessed truth. Later he says to Timothy, "Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." It is an unhealthy symptom when the simple gospel is not relished. It shows that the mind is at work, rather than the conscience exercised before God, or the affections engaged with Christ.

There are indeed wonderful discoveries made to us in the Scriptures of the grace and purpose of God to the Church; yet when all the counsels of God are manifested, and glory enjoyed without hindrance, then the primary truths of the gospel will be seen in all their brilliance. All will center in the Person and work of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, the object of adoration, admiration, and praise throughout eternity. It is with these thoughts I now turn to the great fundamental truth of the gospel—"righteousness without works"—a doctrine which has not only been controverted by Christians, and contemned by the wisdom of this world, but on which even many of the children of God have only

become settled after much bitter experience of themselves.

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity." On this statement the Holy Ghost Himself, by the Apostle Paul, has thus commented: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." "The blessedness"—we almost need to have this English word translated to us, so slow of heart are we to believe His goodness when God Himself proclaims it to us. Happiness, our being's end and aim, is proclaimed by this oracle; and yet men are deaf to it. "Blessed [happy] is he whose transgression is forgiven"! This is happiness—the alone happiness of which man as a sinner is capable—because nothing but this can bring a sinner to God, in whose presence there is fullness of joy.

There is indeed a happiness proclaimed in the first Psalm: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." But where is such a man to be found? This blessedness only attached to the Holy One of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the righteous One—a righteousness because He is what He is. But as for us, it is not anything that we can do which can make us happy, but that which God does for us. It is man's impossibility to make himself happy; it is God's possibility to make a sinner happy. And this oracle is the declaration of a sinner's happiness, by means of the work of God Himself.

It is very doubtful if the bare idea of forgiveness of transgression, apart from the solid groundwork on which it rests—the infinite atonement of Christ, "forgiveness in His name"—would ever satisfy the conscience. The groveling thought of escape is indeed the careless thought of the unbelieving mass, without one just thought either of the character of God or of the evil of sin. But if such a manner of forgiveness w e r e possible, it would leave the recipient of it in that state of uneasiness which a man feels who finds himself in the presence of one whom he had injured, yet who had forgiven him. He would be under the conscious sense of degradation.

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"Blessed is he... whose sin is covered." It is not the manner of the Holy Ghost to use redundant expressions. We often use many words where few would suffice. But "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." And man lives "by every word

that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD."

Contemplate these words: "Whose sin is covered." Who would not faint under the struggle, if it were not so? God Himself has covered sin up out of His own sight, and this is what we need. How man tries to veil his heart from his fellow man! Yet even human sagacity can often pierce through the hollow covering, and man himself is ill satisfied with it. Witness his round of religious duties to try to cover it, and his natural proneness to superstition. But it is the atonement of Christ which covers sin before God. It is God Himself who has set forth Christ as a propitiation through faith in His blood. Here, when we discover sin, we can yet meet God, not in anger, but in mercy; for the sin which we have discovered is covered up before Him.

"Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity." How needed is this clause for the peace of an awakened soul! There is the consciousness of iniquity; and the announcement is that, although the Lord knows iniquity to be there, He does not impute it. And wherefore? Surely, because "He hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." God has seen sin there, and He has judged it there. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." The cross of Christ is to us the marked expression of the love of God toward sinners. "God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

The cross, further, is the declaration to us of the righteousness of God. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness."

Again, it shows the infinite hatefulness of sin in the judgment of God. The cup could not pass •away from Jesus. He bowed His head, and drank it. And God hid His face from Him, and made Him to know on the cross, in bitterest experience, what sin was-"God made Him to be sin for us."

The cross is both the way for God to come nigh to man as a sinner without destroying him by His presence—"And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself"—and also the way for man as a sinner to come near to God—"Ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

All these several aspects of the cross, deeply important and interesting as they are, would fail of giving settled peace to the soul, if the truth of the actual substitution of Christ for the sinner were kept out of sight. "Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Here we find solid ground on which to rest our souls. The wonder of the Holy One of God being made sin on the cross is far greater than the wonder that any measure of guilt should by it be "forgiven," yes, also "covered." But there is more than this.

The idea of simple pardon is at the best negative; blessed indeed, even in that view, that iniquity, although committed, is not imputed. Speaking humanly, we have the idea of a free pardon emanating from the grace of the sovereign; we have the idea also of an amnesty; but we cannot get the idea of justification. It is the idea which God alone can present, because He alone can justify the ungodly; and this is the new and blessed idea here presented. "David describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Rom. 4:6-8.

JUST before conversion we were full of fears and questionings. The fact is, our consciences were at work and well we may thank God that they were. Our sins rose up before our memories. They witnessed against us and we found ourselves impeached by the unerring Word of God, and consequently, conscience spoke against us with an accusing voice.

Every Christian reader has known something of this. There is no such thing as cleansing from sin without there being conviction of sin. First sin is confessed by man, then it is covered by God. As David put it, “I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin” (Psa. 32:5). The

ACCUSINGS OF CONSCIENCE

are a very real and pressing thing and once really produced by the action of the Spirit of God there is no true rest until they are silenced.

What silenced them? One thing, and one thing only—the knowledge of the finished work of Christ. We probably turned first of all to our own works. They were but human, imperfect and unfinished. The atoning sacrifice of Christ was divine, perfect and complete. Hence His dying cry,

“IT IS FINISHED” (John 19:30).

Here was that which presented a full answer to the accusing’s of our consciences. “Who is he that condemneth?” asks the apostle. Can even our own consciences condemn? NO, for “ It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God” (Rom. 8:34).

Having turned to God and got free of the accusing’s of conscience many of us, hover, fell victims to

MISGIVINGS OF HEART,

and hence, just after conversion, we found ourselves not as happy as we knew we rightly should be. Some may be a prey to these misgivings today—even as you read these lines. If so, it is because you are in some way seeking a point of assurance and repose in yourself.

You are not seeking any merit in yourself. Doubtless you are clear as to that and have learned to look away from yourself and wholly to Christ in that connection. But are you seeking stability and constancy and fixity in yourself? Something so constant and stable that you might be able to congratulate yourself as being unquestionably one of the people of God because things are so satisfactory in the realm of your feelings!

You are bound to be disappointed in that direction. A far more advanced Christian than either you or I had to write,

And just as he could not find any point of assurance or anchorage in himself and his spiritual state and feelings neither can we.

The fact is, God does not want us to find anything in ourselves. Not what we are or can do, but the finished work of Christ silences all accusings; and so also not our feelings, but the definite and abiding Word of God dismisses all misgivings. If we would say goodbye to all misgivings we must know the force of the words,

“IT IS WRITTEN” (John 8:17; 10:34).

The Jews came to the Lord with a false insinuation. “How long lost Thou make us to doubt?” said they, “if Thou be the Christ tell us plainly.” His answer was, “I told you.” He gave them His spoken word which was the Word of God. A moment later they accused Him of blasphemy. His reply commenced thus— “Is it not written in your law”— referring them to the Scriptures. Today we have not the spoken Word of God. This ceased with the disappearance of the inspired apostles. The written Word of God remains and is the antidote to all doubts. It alone has authority.

There is no authority in our impressions or feelings—even those which may be produced by the Spirit of God. Nothing that fluctuates and changes can be authoritative. A clock which gained yesterday and lost today is not one by which people will set their watches, even if it happens to keep good time tomorrow. Somewhere there is laid up the authoritative yard measure. It is correct to the ten-thousandth part of an inch and deposited where it is beyond the reach of alteration or tampering. It is the authoritative standard by which all good measures may be tested. But then it is unalterable.

In things spiritual therefore, we need not have misgivings. He who has not really trusted in Christ should have none as to his position. He is not saved and should know it. We who have trusted in Him should have none. The Word of God declares we are justified. We know it, taking God at His Word.

Some of you would tell me that you are converted and have the assurance of your justification and place of favor before God, yet you are not really very happy. You have a vague sense of disappointment and emptiness and failure. The fact is, you have

LONGINGS OF SOUL,

and they are not satisfied.

Now listen! They never will be satisfied until you discover in Christ an Object to command your affections, a Master to control your life and service. When His disciples were in the storm on the lake they were filled with fears and longings for land, Jesus appeared and made Himself known to them in the words,

“IT IS I” (John 6:20),

that was enough. Their fears ceased and their longings were satisfied.

Have you ever yet, by faith, caught a soul-satisfying vision of Christ in His glory? Does He seem to you so attractive that you catch a little of Paul's spirit— "that I may will Christ... that I may know Him... that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:8-12)? Does His service occupy and delight you so that you can also say with Paul, "Whose I am and whom I serve" (Acts 27:23)? It so you will not be amongst those who drift on aimlessly and unhappily with the world's stream.

The aimless and objectless person is a sorry sight wherever you find him, and never more so than when it is an aimless and objectless believer that is before you. Be not thus, good Christian reader, we beech you. The Lord Jesus Himself is infinitely worthy not only of your heart's trust, but also of your heart's adoration and service. If hitherto you have been asleep as to this do not slumber on another hour. "Awake, thou that steepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," or "shine upon thee" (Eph. 5:9). Oh, what a transformation is wrought in the heart and life of one who comes into the shining of Christ!

Happy indeed it is if this blessedness is ours, not at the end of our careers, but at the beginning of them—just after conversion.

F. B. HOLE.

Bible Herald: 1878, "Sin Covered!"

The meaning of the Hebrew word in Psalms 32:1 is "covered." There seems to be no doubt but that the word kaphar also is to cover, to cover over. But who can cover sin before God? This was a question raised in the sanctuary, and victims appointed for man to offer; sacrifices various, too, for sins as they varied; the whole, I doubt not, essentially connected also with the great day of offering once a year, as given to us in Leviticus 16

Then the blood of the bullock was to be sprinkled upon the mercy-seat eastward, and before the mercy seat seven times and the blood of the goat had its place likewise. But the bodies of both were to be burned outside the camp. The year's sins were put away.

But though the mercy-seat and the way up to it, and the holy sanctuary and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, and the priests, and the people were thus yearly marked with blood, and so sin was passed over, itself was neither really covered over, nor did it meet its doom.

It was quite right to obey God, most surely, and do these things; but what really did this day show (besides the insufficiency of the sacrifices) but that God was a God who knew all about sin and sins, was minded at that time in patience to bear with man a sinner, and once a year to pass by the sins committed against Him, without saying why and how He could do so consistently (save that it was by blood-shedding and death) either with His own claims over man, or with the law. It was all a constant bringing of sins to mind as before God, and as constant a reminding of man, that no man could cover sin or sins.

But God has now shown the counterpart of all this; for once in the end of the world, His Son has been down here as a Man and has taken up the question of man's rebellion against God, of his sins and sin, and has brought full glory to God and blessing to the sinner that believes in connection with it. When He who knew no sin was made sin for us, God took occasion of sin to glorify Himself as to it: and He who was made sin knew how so to act as to glorify God whose servant He was.

The very brightest light now fills heaven, for the Lamb that was slain sits now upon the throne; that light shines down upon a dark and wicked race of men. Unto all the light comes and tells of what sin is as being against a God of mercy and compassion and love, who so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him might not perish but have everlasting life.

But that light enters to fill the soul that believes, and there it rests and abides, the blessing of eternal life. My sins are.... Where? Become the manifestation of the glory and excellency of the Saviour, of whom as faith sees Him in the holiest of all, on heaven's high throne, one learns both the infinite enormity of sin, and its having lost, to us who believe, all its condemnatory power forever.

Oh, the blessedness of transgression forgiven! Sin covered! Oh, the blessedness of "the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity and in whose spirit there is no guile!"

Christian Friend: Volume 11, My Times Are in Thy Hand Psalm 31:15

The text at the head of this paper is from a Psalm (31) in which the Spirit of Christ leads the soul into thorough confidence in the Lord, and that on the ground of righteousness. Mercy too being rejoiced in, and God known as a God of truth, everything is trusted with the Lord— "my spirit" (vs. 5), "my times." (vs. 15) Trials were there— fightings without, and fears within; but the One who is trusted "has known my soul in adversities," and in the sense that all is in His hands, the one who trusts has the present assurance of the goodness that is laid up for the faithful, and the hopers in Jehovah are strengthened and encouraged. (vs. 24)

Passing on to Psalms 32, we have the blessedness of a forgiven sinner. Not only does the exercised soul turn to the Lord as to the only confidence in the midst of times and troubles, but in this Psalm he learns to unburden his heart to Him in the confession of sin—the heart is emptied out to the Lord, and the burning fever within is assuaged by the forgiveness of transgressions and iniquity. Jehovah is known now as a hiding-place, instead of One to be hidden from. There is no fear where this is realized that the rest in "the secret of His presence" (Psalms 31:20) can be disturbed from within or from without. Jehovah compasses him about with songs of deliverance, instructs and leads him intelligently, and if necessary with bit and bridle. Trusting in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about, and in true uprightness of heart there is gladness and shouting for joy.

Psalms 33 takes up this joy; for it is not joy in self, or in circumstances, but in the Lord (comp. Philippians 4), and for the first time in the Psalms we have "a new song." The saint had been compassed about with songs of deliverance by the Lord; but God Himself is now become

the object of rejoicing and song. Not that this new song yet rises higher than the time-scene of this earth; but the great thing in it is that Jehovah is known and praised. Two special things are here celebrated—His word and His works (vs. 4); His righteousness, and His goodness or mercy. (vs. 5) True the scene around is full of the counsels of man—Psalms 2:2 tells us to what a height they rise; but the heart is not occupied with that, but with the Lord; His word is right, His works are truth. The heavens, the sea, the earth bear witness. He has counsels too as to His own creation, as to that which when He spake it was done, when He commanded it stood fast. Shall not they be carried out? Faith rejoicing in the Lord can say that the counsel of the heathen shall be brought to naught, and the devices of the people be made of none effect, but "the counsel of the Lord standeth forever: the thoughts of His heart to all generations." It is this "forever" which we may see spoken of in Ecclesiastes 3:14; and whatever may be the present apparent prosperity of the counsels of man, underlying it all we may be sure there is the work that God maketh from beginning to end. In Matthew 13:24-30 we see the outward effect of the enemy's work; but in Mark 4:26-29 we have described this underlying work done by the Son of man. Seed is cast into the ground, "times" of sunshine and storm doubtless pass over it, and it is as if the sower should sleep and rise night and day; but the seed springs and grows he knoweth not how, but eventually the fruit is brought forth, and the harvest comes. It is the work which God maketh from beginning to end.

The heart being thus assured that the counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the Spirit of God passes on in verse 12 to the happiness of those whose God is this Jehovah—of being the people whom He has chosen. He had purposes about them. They were to be His inheritance for the earth (even as the Church learns what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints who are associated with Him who is in the heavens, and in whom everything is to be headed up both in heaven and on earth). He took notice of all that was going on among men as He looked down from heaven; He saw the place of their confidence; but His eye was resting upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy. Not only do they know Him, but He knows them. (Comp. John 10:14; Galatians 4:9) They are the objects of His &are, and learn, while He allows men for a time to use His creation according to their own counsels, to wait for the Lord as well as to trust in Him—their help and shield. Thus while the heart rejoices in Him, trusting in His holy name, the patience of hope is produced in the soul. The "times" are running on, and they form the epoch between the declaration of the counsels of the Lord and their fulfillment, during which the counsels of men are sought to be established. These the Lord will eventually frustrate and bring to naught, so that the thoughts of His heart may stand to all generations. During these times faith is tried, a trial much more precious than of gold that perisheth, and the soul is exercised and chastened, and taught to wait for the Lord. How blessed to know there is One who passed through them perfectly, who could say, as come to do the will of God, "In waiting I waited for the Lord!" (Psalms 40:1) In perfect patience He waited until from the depth of sorrows He was heard, and brought up out of them with a new song in His mouth, even praise unto our God.

It is this One who speaks in Psalms 34 He is passing through the times in which He accomplished the will of God, and during which He attached to Himself those who, according to Psalms 16, were the excellent of the earth—the saints who, however feebly, were walking in the path of faith into which He in grace had entered, so that He might be with those in whom He had found His delight. "He who sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one." He it is who goes before the sheep when He leads them out. It is in the hearing of these companions—the humble who hear Him and are glad—that He thus speaks: "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord." Prophets and kings had desired to hear such things (Luke 10:24) as the disciples listened to "at that time." When standing by they heard Jesus say, in the hour of His rejection, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." It was at a time when city after city which had witnessed His mighty works refused to listen, and yet how perfectly does He "praise, bearing witness to His Father," because it was "well pleasing in His sight." What perfect bowing to His good pleasure! He knew the Father, whose good pleasure it was to carry out His ways by hiding these things from the wise and prudent—those who found their sphere in the present, and by revealing them to babes. Knowing thus the Father's mind, He invites the weary and heavy-laden—those who found that in the present scene "all things are full of labor," to come to Himself, where they would find His rest as this meek and lowly One. Those who thus found His company are the humble of Psalms 34, who hear Him and are glad. Personally, they are weak and feeble, and He knows it; and oft-times on earth He had to say to them, "O ye of little faith." And yet what company was like His? It had such attraction that it made Thomas say to his fellow-disciples, "Let us also go that we may die with Him." The attraction and the affection were there, though the flesh was weak; for as they were in the way going up to Jerusalem, though Jesus went before them, "they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid." (Mark 10:32) He had to speak to them of the times of suffering and rejection that He must pass through ere the time of rest and glory could be reached. It was necessary for the very maintenance of that glory that it should be so; but they were dull of hearing, and "understood none of these things." (Luke 18:34) Still it was His path, because it was the Father's will; and if they would go after Him they must take up the cross and follow.

We, as they, often fail to apprehend the holiness and righteousness, as well as the graciousness and mercy, of the ways of God. In His holy government it is right that man should reap, even in the present, that which he sows. The history of Israel developer these ways of His holy government. For ages they had been sowing to the flesh and turning their backs to God, and they had to receive at His hand double for all their sins. Moreover, they were guilty of refusing the One who had come in grace to bear their griefs and carry their sorrows. Mercy was thus rejected when it came to them in God's "Mercy One" (Psalms 89:19), and His lips, that spake such gracious words that all wondered, had to utter, "Woe to thee! woe to thee!" (Matthew 11); and while He wept, to foretell Jerusalem's coming desolation because she knew not the time of her visitation. She would be trodden down of the Gentiles according to the word of God, and Jesus Himself be delivered to them to be put to death, so completely did He enter into the sorrows and pathway of His people, whose sins obliged Jehovah to give the dearly beloved of His soul into the hand of her enemies. It is not of atonement that we are now speaking, well as we know that it was accomplished in the death of Jesus on the cross, where He did the will of God in that body which was prepared for Him, but of the ways of wisdom, by which He so orders that man should prove himself to be both a transgressor and a rejecter of God Himself in grace, notwithstanding all His long-suffering and patience, and by which He also displays Himself in His own unchangeable nature and character, while He manifests that He has no compromise with evil even in. His own people more than in the ungodly. With the latter His long-suffering will finally give way to judgment, after all His dealings to exercise the conscience and attract the heart have been of no avail, judgment which at the last will be full and final. By these same dealings the saints are taught to discern good and evil while they endure them as chastening for their profit, that they might be partakers of His holiness.

In Caleb and Joshua we learn how the saints may have to pass through the times during which God thus displays His ways and vindicates His character; but they become the opportunity by which God is better known to them, and the power of faith increased by its exercise. Thus Joshua is taught to be strong and very courageous, so that he may lead the people at last into the land with cities walled up to heaven; and Caleb attains a power of faith by which he takes possession of the inheritance on which his feet had trodden with a vigor unabated by forty years of wandering. God was better known to each as the One who had delight in His people, as well as in the confidence and faithfulness of

an individual saint.

While thus learning God we taste His compassions; for He knows our frame, He remembers we are dust, and He gives strong consolation to those whose eyes rest on the Forerunner who has gone before as the Leader and Completer of faith. He entered into the pathway through these “times,” and walked in it in the perfectness of faith in His Father and in obedience to His will even to death. We see, in Zechariah 13:5, how Messiah was brought by man into the same position in which he was as a tiller of the ground—a servant—and also into the place of death in the house of His friends. Man was in those circumstances, and Jesus entered into them in grace, thus to become, in the perfectness of His own walk in the midst of them, the sustainer of the hearts of those who were there. He could say to them, “Take my yoke, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls” —rest in being in company with Him, and learning to be of His spirit.” To say “I will bless the Lord at all times” would otherwise prove to be difficult, the words would tremble on our lips; but in company with Him, though realizing our own weakness, we hear them uttered by Him, and taste the marvelous grace which bids us join with Him in magnifying the Lord: “O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.” Thus have we the privilege of being in company, in spirit, with One who ever turned to His Father; of hearing Him say, “I thank thee, Father,” and for our encouragement in the needed exercises of these “times.” “I sought the Lord, and He heard me;” and again, “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard.” Hearing such words, He directs our hearts to His own refuge; and thus “they” (His companions) “looked unto Him” (Jehovah, for us the Father) “and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed.” We respond to His invitation, “O taste and see that the Lord is good,” and learn the blessedness of trusting in Him; or, as Peter puts it, for those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, “Unto you therefore which believe He is precious,” or “is the preciousness” of God’s chief cornerstone.

The present government of God has thus its effect in producing the state of heart and spirit which the Lord can be nigh unto. (vs. 18) No sorrow can go further than He pleases; for “my times are in thy hands.” It was needful that every wave of sorrow should dash against the blessed Lord, all must roll over Him, that, as Captain of salvation, He might be made perfect through sufferings, but not one that was not needed for the accomplishing of all things. He whose Spirit in the prophets of old had written of these sufferings was now passing through them, and when all were accomplished that His Spirit had foretold He could say, “It is finished” (John 19:28); and then not a bone of Him was broken. (John 19:36) “Many may be the afflictions of the righteous,” yet personally he is kept. “He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken;” and through delivering mercy it will be testified—

Yes; the Lord is gracious. Israel will by these psalms learn in their times of sorrow the deep sympathy of the Spirit of Christ, and be sustained by the knowledge of unchanging love— “I have loved thee with an everlasting love” (Jeremiah 31:3)—when Jehovah allures them again into the wilderness, and teaches them to sing there. How much more do we know that same eternal love, made known to us in the Son the Church too, as well as the individual, has her “times” of sorrow. Revelation 2 and 3 show us the “times” which pass over her, and it is well if, in the light of the searching eyes of the Son of man, any are awakened to know the times, and learn what Israel ought to do. (1 Chronicles 12:32) It is not to set up again that which has failed, but, in the sense of failure, to understand that these times also are “in thy hands.” There we can rest, holding fast that we have (through His grace) until He comes, in whom, as the faithful and true witness, all will yet be brought out in glory at His appearing, which in its own “times” He shall show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

It is on the ground of atonement that this blessed “forever” can take place. To that, as to all God’s works, “nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.” The smiting of Jehovah’s fellow, and the hiding of God’s face, when the holy soul of Jesus was made an offering for sin, form the basis of these ways of God, and of the work that He maketh from beginning to end, until all issues in a new heaven and a new earth, where the former things are passed away, and God’s “forever” takes the place of times and seasons.

T. H. R.

Things New and Old: Volume 31, Joy Cometh in the Morning

My dear Brother, I have often thought of you and the children, since I saw you, and we have asked the Lord to sustain and comfort you in this hour of deep trial and sorrow.

This, I am sure, He is able to do. There is no sorrow He has not passed through. As High Priest He was perfected through suffering (Heb. 5:7-9), and thus is able to sympathize with us, and sustain us, and bring us through to the end of our sorrows.

What an unspeakable comfort it is to know Him in the hour of sorrow! We sorrow not as those who have no hope. We do indeed sorrow, but it is sorrow of another sort, and even unspeakable joy mingles with it. And in our sorrow we know the power of a sympathy to which the world is an utter stranger. We know Him who wept with the weeping sisters at the grave of Lazarus; and who, at the same time, could say, “I am the Resurrection and the Life.”

What an unfolding of divine affections and sympathies we get in that scene! Sin was there, and death was there as the result, and man powerless able only to weep, in the presence of human misery. Jesus had healed the sick, made the lame to walk, opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the ears of the deaf, unloosed the tongues of the dumb. Must He stop here? Was this as far as He could go? No, blessed be God, even the grave must give up its dead. Lazarus, given back that day to his bereaved sisters, was the proof that One was there present who had power to abolish death and the grave. The resurrection of Lazarus was at once the proof of this power, and the revealing of a heart that feels all the sorrows of His own in this scene of suffering and death.

But where sin had come in, bringing death with it, something more was needed than mere power. Power was there to bring back the dead one; but death was not abolished, and sin was still there. Lazarus came back from the tomb at the bidding of Jesus, but he came “bound hand and foot with grave-clothes.” The emblems of death were still about him. He was brought back into the same condition he was in before he died, and was still subject to death. He had gone into the river, but came out on the same side as he had entered. He was still in the old creation. He had not passed over. Why was this? Why did not Lazarus, when raised up from the dead, at once pass into the eternal state of the blessed beyond death? Just because of this: The waters of the swelling Jordan must first be dried up. The Ark must enter the river, and stay the floods, before the people could pass over. The Lord said to Peter, “Whither I go, thou canst not, follow me now, but thou shalt follow

me afterward” (John 13:36.) So Jesus must first enter into death, and bear the judgment of God against sin, before any could pass over. This was why He groaned at the grave of Lazarus; for He not only wept in sympathy, but “He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.” This was more than mere sympathy. He was in the presence of death, but it was death as that which sin had brought in. How was this to be met? Mere power would not do. There was a moral question a question of the divine glory in the presence of man’s sin and Satan’s power. Mere power could not meet this. Jesus Himself must undergo death the death of the cross death under the awful weight of God’s judgment against sin. This He anticipated, and He groaned in spirit. Nothing short of this could take away sin. Would He meet the issue? Would He undergo the forsaking of God? Would He bow under the stroke of righteous judgment that was to atone for sin, so that God could deliver and bring His people to Himself? Blessed be God, He did. Nothing could turn Him back in the path of fulfilling His Father’s will, His Father’s glory, and the salvation of all the Father gave Him were before Him, and He would go on to the end. No storm could turn Him back. Human hatred and Satanic malice were alike powerless. Even through the storm of God’s wrath and judgment on sin He pressed forward, Such His devotedness to His Father’s glory; such His love to us. “Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end” (John 13:1).

What was the result? He rose from the dead; not bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, like Lazarus, but witnessing His eternal victory over sin, Satan, death, and the grave. Risen from the dead, He has entered a new order of things, into which He also brings His own people, even now. His relationships and associations are ours. “My Father and your Father; my God and your God,” He could say. Though our bodies still link us with a groaning creation, to faith, and in spirit, we have crossed the river. We are risen with Him, and even seated in Him in the heavenly places, and, in spirit, live in the eternal scene of blessedness He, as man, has entered. We still wait for the redemption of our bodies, but that will come ere long; and when it does come, it will not be bringing them back into the old scene of sin and death, like Lazarus, but raising them up into the eternal scene beyond, fashioned into the likeness of Christ’s body of glory, Thus, dear brother, we know Jesus, not only as One whose sympathy is perfect, but as One who is able to bring us out of this scene of sorrow altogether, and give us a place with Himself in a scene of divine joy and blessedness, where no tear shall ever be shed, and where no sorrow shall ever darken the eternal brightness. He has told His Father He wants us there: “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” (John 17:24.) And in order that He may take us there, He has dried up the waters of the Jordan, so that death cannot touch us. And, what is more, He is coming to complete the exhibition of His love surpassing all other loves by taking us home to the place His love has prepared for us in the Father’s house: “I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also”. How perfect, how infinite, is His love! Not a tear is unnoticed; not a sigh or groan of a wounded or broken heart is unheard. He sees all, hears all, feels all; and, blessed be His name; He pours into the sorrowing heart His own sympathy. This He does now, while we are here in the midst of the sorrow, and sustains us by His own blessed presence. But in a little while He will dry our tears forever, and turn our night of weeping into one long, bright, eternal day of joy.

Even now there is joy and blessing in the midst of the sorrow. Links are broken here; but fresh links are formed above. Strong ties of nature are severed, and the heart bleeds, and feels its own desolateness; but Jesus Himself comes to fill the void, and bind up the wounds He has made; and He does it so tenderly, and in such love! He wants the whole heart wants to live in it and will fill it with the brightness of His own presence, and make the desolate sing with a new joy.

And then it is only a moment, as it were, until we meet again those we loved so well. And what a meeting that will be! The parting was amid blinding tears, and with breaking hearts; the meeting will be in eternal sunshine, in the presence of Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, where parting will be no more.

The natural ties, indeed, are broken, and that forever, but the spiritual ties the ties that are in Christ abide; and all that we have been to each other spiritually will have place there. Paul could tell the Thessalonian saints, that they would be his “joy” and “crown of rejoicing,” “in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.” (1 Thess. 2:10.) The relationships of husband and wife, parents and children, &c, will have no place there. But those who have been in these relationships here, and have helped each other spiritually, will have the result of it there, and rejoice together, while owning only the links that are in Christ.

How blessed, then, to meet again those with whom we have walked here in the fear of the Lord, and whose spiritual conflicts, labors and trials we have shared! Only we must remember, that Christ will be all the glory in that eternal scene of blessedness.

How soon we may see His face! “We shall see: him as he is,” and then we shall he like Him. We shall hear His voice, and behold His glory. It may be today, or it may be to-morrow. It must be soon. At the most, only a few more tears, a few more weary sighs, a few more steps in the desert sands, and the end will be reached, the longings of the heart all satisfied in the presence of Him who loves us, and whose love never changes. His companions in the joy and glory of the Fathers house, never more to be separated from Him, or from each other “Forever with the Lord!”

Let us then have good courage, and press on to the goal of all our hopes that meeting in the air, when raised dead and changed living we shall once more meet one another, in the presence of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He will shorten our pilgrim journey by coming to meet us on the way.

With kindest love to yourself and all the children,

Your affectionate brother.

The Springing Well: Volume 5 (1902), Our Bible Portion: "Joy (Singing) Cometh in the Morning."

“His anger endureth but a moment: in His favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy [margin, singing] cometh in the morning.”—Ps. 30:5.

WE may sing in anticipation of the morning that shall follow the night. It was this that led the Psalmist to say, “The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and

In the Night His Song Shall Be With Me,

and my prayer unto the God of my life” (Ps. 42:8). At another time his spirit was overwhelmed, and he bitterly complained, “My sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.” But even then he adds, “I call to remembrance my song in the night” (Ps. 77:2, 6).

We can scarcely imagine a more trying position than that of two servants of Christ in a strange and heathen land, with bleeding backs gashed by the Roman lash, thrust into the inner prison, and their feet made fast in the stocks: but “at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God” (Acts 16:25). The nightingale sings at night, and most sweetly, it is said, when the thorn pierces its breast.

Let us observe that there is to be a wonderful song in the morning of the resurrection. “Thy dead men shall live, together with My dead body shall they arise.

Awake and Sing, Ye That Dwell in Dust,

for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead” (Isa. 27:19). The lark sings most loudly and sweetly the higher it ascends, and when no longer visible from the earth it floods the skies with its joyful melody, as we, too, shall do when caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:17). Then shall roll around redeemed creation the shout and song of triumph, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Cor. 15:55.)

She shall have a great leader of her song, for her glorious Bridegroom says to the Father,

“In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee” (Heb. 2:12).

Her warfare accomplished, and her victory achieved, her song shall blend harmoniously with the song of the elect of Israel standing on “a sea of glass mingled with fire.” It is glass, because the mystery of suffering will then be clear; it is of fire, because they (the elect of Israel) have come up through the great tribulation under Antichrist.

“And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of nations” (Rev. 15:3).

The sea is so bright that it reflects His glory, in which we shall shine for ever and ever, while we shall sing for ever and ever of Him who brought us out of night into everlasting light.

Then there is, of course, the song of the bride, “My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth: the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land” (Song Sol. 2:10-12).

During a recent conversation with a Christian lady in her own home, concerning the Lord, there suddenly floated through the room a strain of exquisite music. It was a succession of notes from a master’s composition, and the tones were exceedingly rich and delicious. Turning the head to discover the source of the charming melody, it was found to proceed from a beautiful little bird in a cage. “How,” it was asked, “was he taught to sing so sweetly?” “He was placed in the night,” the lady replied, “beside a fine music-box, and learned to imitate the sounds he heard in the dark.” Thus the Lord teaches His own to sing as one has done in the following lines:—

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Zion and Heaven

Question: It is acknowledged that the Lord will reign in Zion (Psa. 2; 99; Isa. 12; 24 &c.; Zech. 2; 8 &c.). Yet it is drawn from the N. T. that His or our especial scene of glory will be in heaven. How can this be? R.

Answer: Few truths are more important, whether one thinks of Christ or of the church. It is a question of the purpose of God, hidden in the ages and dispensations, but now brought to light formally and fully by the apostle Paul. Take Eph. 1:9-11 as a grand unfolding of it, where we learn that for the administration of the fullness of the times (or seasons) God will gather together (or head up) in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; in Him in Whom also we obtained (or were given) inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.

This rises incomparably beyond the kingdom in Zion, or the yet larger dominion of the Son of man, both of which will assuredly be accomplished “in that day.” It is even beyond all the promises to which the O.T. saints have just claim, and wherein no disappointment shall ever be. But grace gave to the apostle to reveal the divine counsel of setting Christ at the Head of all creation, the Heir as the Creator of all, now His (as the Epistle to the Colossians shows) on the ground of reconciliation. He is thus constituted the glorified Head over all, as we now know by faith. And “that day,” which proclaims Messiah’s reign over the land of promise with Israel renewed as His people, and all nations and tribes circling round Israel and subject to the Son of man, will make known the still more wondrous glory of our Lord over all things heavenly, angels, principalities, &c., with the church in the same glory His bride as now His body.

When this characteristic truth of the N. T. dawns on the soul, a crowd of scriptures confirm it. Thus in Matt. 6 our Lord taught His disciples to pray for “Thy” (i.e. the Father’s) kingdom to come, as well as His will to be done on earth. The Father’s kingdom is as distinctly heavenly as the Son of man’s is earthly: so Matt. 13:41-43 clearly proves. The risen saints shine as the sun, which is not earthly, in their Father’s kingdom; whereas the Son of man by His angels executes judgment on all offenses and unrighteous persons in His kingdom as manifestly on earth. But it will be the day for His exaltation manifested on high as well as here below, being the Son of the Father and set by God over all things heavenly and earthly.

Then John 14 is unmistakable that our special hope of blessedness is not merely reigning with Christ, as all suffering saints shall, but that He is coming to receive us to Himself in the Father’s house where He now is. And the great N. T. prophecy shows us (Rev. 21:9 to the end) the bride the Lamb’s wife the center of heavenly and universal glory; as the O. T. is equally clear that Zion will be for all the peoples of the earth, then owning Israel to be the seed which Jehovah has blessed and set at the head of all nations under the Great King, Himself Jehovah-Messiah.

So Rom. 8:16, 17, designates the Christians as God’s children. “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” This goes far beyond the earth; as Rom. 5:17 cannot be limited to the millennial reign.

Again, 1 Cor. 6:2, 3, teaches that we shall judge the world—nay more, judge angels. And chapter xv. 48, 49, distinctly calls us even now “heavenly” in title, after the pattern of the Heavenly One, and points on to our bearing that heavenly image, as we have now borne the image of the earthly (Adam’s).

But instead of gathering up other intimations, look at the glorious type of that day furnished by Gen. 14 where Melchizedek meets Abram victorious over the foe in the hour of their short triumph, and pronounces him blessed of the most High God, possessor of heaven and earth; as he blesses the most High God Who had delivered his enemies into his hand. Christ is even now, as the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches, priest forever after the order of Melchizedek; but He will exercise its privileges in the blessings of. that day of blessing. One might add many a glimpse in the types of Joseph, and of Moses, as well as in that of the sanctuary. But enough is said to show the blank left by looking no higher than the earth for the Lord in that day. If nature abhors a vacuum, the Christian in hope awaits glory in the heavens for Christ and the church, while fully assured that the glory of Jehovah and the knowledge of it shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Conversions in the Millennial Age

Question: Where in the Psalms or Prophets is justified the belief that there will be conversions in the Millennial age? J. C. J. (U. S. A.).

Answer: Almost every where that we find the work of divine goodness contemplated. Take Psa. 2:12: “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry... Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” All conversions past, present, or future, are in this way and no other. They alone are the righteous who fear God then as now. The gospel, which actually goes out in indiscriminate grace, the apostle vindicates to the Jewish objector in Rom. 9; 10 by testimonies from the Law, Psalms, and Prophets which anticipate that day. It will be the harvest. We are but a sort of first-fruits, though called to “some better thing,” as Heb. 11:40 speaks, as compared even with “the elders.” But the ingathering great as to extent awaits that day. All must bow to the Lord, “King over all the earth,” as well as “Head over all things;” but all are not converted even then, as Isa. 65 shows, and on a large scale Rev. 20:7-10. They will previously have rendered but a feigned obedience. Compare Psa. 18:44.

Christian Friend: Volume 14, Wait on the Lord

“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.”—Isaiah 40: 81.

“Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart.” —Psalms 27:14.

H. A. C.

The Christian Shepherd: 2003, Wholly Dependent on Him

“Teach me Thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path” (Psa. 27:11).

It is so exceedingly sweet to find ourselves wholly dependent upon One who finds infinite joy in blessing us.

Praying and planning will never do together. If I plan, I am leaning more or less on my plan, but when I pray, I should lean exclusively upon God. We often feel very well satisfied with ourselves when we add prayer to our arrangement, or when we have used all lawful means and called upon God to bless them. When this is the case, our prayers are worth about as much as our plans. We can never get to the end of our plans until we have been brought to the end of ourselves.

No matter what we may think of ourselves nor yet what man may think about us, the great question is, What does God think about us?

Food for the Desert

The Remembrancer: 1911, Fragment: Discovering God's Will

God has connected the discovery of the path of His will, His way, with the inward state of the soul: see Psa. 25;4;5; 9, 10.

Christian Truth: Volume 37, Path of Peace, The: A Word for Troubled Souls

"He leadeth me beside the still waters." Psalm 23:2.

Beside the still waters! What a place to lie in, beloved, in this world of trouble, of unrest, of aching, restless hearts! What fullness of meaning for the pilgrim's heart! The Shepherd has led many through this valley and shadow of death-led through this dry and thirsty land by an unseen hand, and supplied from an unseen source-many whose hearts have known the meaning of Peter's words, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Such is the sweet portion of those who, if need be, are in heaviness, through manifold temptations, for the trial of their faith.

Are you in trouble? Are your goods not increased enough? Do your friends lightly esteem you? Have you fears for tomorrow? Are you in debt, or sick, or bereaved? Is the thing come upon you which you feared? Is the Lord's hand heavy upon you so that though you might otherwise trust, yet now you must plan and scheme for yourself, hoping to trust when things are easier?

O beloved for whom Christ died, for whom God gave His Son, by those very trials, sore as they may be, and the full measure of which God knows and has meted out to you, He is, in infinite love, opening a way for you of deepening joy; Satan would only enlist your doubts and fears to close it against you. To whom will you yield yourself, beloved of God? Which path will you walk in, that of faith or sight? "While we look not at the things which are seen," says Paul. So he could say, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment."

The language of faith is always brave language because God is trusted and things seen do not occupy the mind. What trouble or perplexity or distrust is there that does not belong to things seen? Can you name one? Here is just the struggle, and what a momentous one, that is going on in each of us. Shall I look up or down; shall I give all attention to my troubles, or give heed to the Shepherd's voice? Shall I trust God who has saved me, or let Satan overwhelm me and drive me into the path of one who knows he is saved, but has lost communion, and is without "heart" or energy? There are trials in the path of faith, but the trial is the door to lessons of joy and peace in Christ. Do not shrink back at the entrance. He Himself, for the joy that was set before Him, endured =the cross. "Surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off." Pro. 23:18.

What were the things that men saw Paul passing through? They are' recorded in 2 Corinthians 4-"Troubled on every side," etc. Would nature have chosen them or gone through them? Might he not have chosen an easier path? How many have done so, but what a choice! Before Paul's eye there opened up, not the fear of fresh trials in the future, but the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the presence of Him who had chosen him. And this is how we make our calling and election sure; the heart gets familiar with the prospect of glory and then the aged warrior can say, "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded -that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

The trials are not to keep you from the still waters, but to bring you beside them in companionship with the Shepherd; they mark the way to glory. If trouble has taken away your happiness in the Lord, on what was your happiness based? Ask yourself, what is it that you want, that the heart is not quiet. Would its attainment restore the soul? Never. It is Satan who would tell you that. Be sure the place of quiet and refreshment is not found in that way. It is found by a shorter, quicker path, by a broken heart in the very circumstances in which you are. The Shepherd is waiting for that. His voice is calling. You do not need to take counsel with a friend or with your own heart, but bow down the proud heart before the Word of God-that Word so full of perfect and sweet assurance for faith against any day of evil, such an answer to every doubt, such a shield against the enemy's darts. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."

Then the song will be raised, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." The lessons of trial (they may be bitter) have taught the soul this sweet confidence, and a personal relationship is recognized between the individual and the Lord. It is not "the Lord is the Shepherd," as He is for all, but I have learned with delight that He is my Shepherd. It is not dry argument or reasoning, but a sweet assurance made good in the depth of the heart. What a refuge for the soul! The Lord-the Almighty-is my caretaker. It is true that it is in weakness we have to learn this trust, for trusting is acknowledged weakness, and that we shrink from. The flesh cannot do it, but when the lesson is learned, and the heart submissive and content to trust, what a source of strength the child of God has! What comparison between human and divine power! How infinitely strong the weakest child of God whose trust is in God! Do we realize it? Inasmuch as we do, peace, ineffable peace, dwells within, which changing circumstances cannot destroy.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee.... In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Isa. 26:3, 4.

What comparison is there between trust in horses and chariots, and in the living God? Are your circumstances such as you cannot trust in or get comfort in? Then know that the Lord is hedging you in that you may be forced to look up, since you cannot see over or through the difficulty. What if it hurts your pride and disappoints your expectations and upsets your plans; the Lord has a better thing for you. Think then of the love that patiently deals with us. We distrust Him, but He does not rest until He has opened our eyes to see His love. How wicked often is our unbelief when we only deem ourselves tried sufferers.

It is a great thing to be persuaded of the Lord's love. What a portion for the heart! The Lord of heaven and earth loves me. This indeed fills the heart and gives quietness every moment. "Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Because He loved me, He gave Himself for me. The springs are in Himself. I may forget myself then-it is no question of my faithfulness or of what I deserve-and dwell upon His love alone.

Let us not seek then to walk by sight; let us not be wearied of faith. To faith all is bright; the feet stand firm upon the solid, everlasting basis of God's promise, and we take heed to the word, "Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." Heb. 10:36. So long then as we are in this life, we remain so by "the will of God." Is there anything then we cannot sub it to, seeing it is His will? His will, whose will Christ id when he came and died for us on the cross. The trouble is only for a little while, "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb. 10:37. "Now the just shall live by faith"-a path which He Himself walked until the end, and in which He leads us by the hand-a sweet companionship. Beloved, He it is who leads, not we, and He it is who restores the soul. Not one bit of worry belongs to you, but let the heart be free to enjoy His love and speak His praise.

"Our Shepherd is the Lord,

The living Lord, who died;

With all His fullness can afford

We are supplied.

He richly feeds our souls

With blessings from above,

And leads us where the river rolls

Of endless love.

"Our souls He doth restore,

And keeps us in the way;

He makes our cup of joy run o'er

From day to day;

Through love so full, so deep,

Anointed is our head;

Mercy and goodness us shall keep,

Where'er we tread.

"When faith and hope shall cease, And love abide alone,Then shall we see Him face to face, And know as known.Still shall we lift our voice,His praise our song shall be; And we shall in His love rejoice, Who set us free."

Shepherds: September 2023, Lord Our Shepherd, The

Psalm 23; John 10:14

The Lord has made and does make Himself known to us in many ways, all precious to our souls, supplying our temporal and spiritual needs. He has made Himself known to us first of all as our Savior. The knowledge of His love to us, in that He died for our sins upon the cross, gave us much joy and caused us to love Him. Those who believe in Him should be certain of having eternal life, of having the forgiveness of sins, of being complete and accepted in Him, and they may be sure of being with Christ forever in glory (John 10:27-29; Eph. 1:6-7).

This is a settled matter and is now, and ever will be, our theme of praise. Besides this, it is blessed to know and enjoy Him as our Shepherd, supplying from His fullness all our needs and meeting us in all our varied states of soul. There are at least two things noticeable about the Lord as our Shepherd and His ways with us, “the sheep of His hand”: first, the Shepherd’s loving care for His sheep; second, the Shepherd’s presence is with His sheep in all the circumstances of their whole journey through this world to their home with Him.

The Shepherd’s Loving Care

Perfect, gracious and complete is the Shepherd’s care. We are all loved by Him with an eternal love, and He calls us, “My sheep”; none but Himself can call us that, and He forgets not the least nor the feeblest. In fact, the weakest are the special objects of His care, for He gathers them with His arm, carries them in His bosom, and gently leads them (Isa. 40:11; John 10:27 John 4:10; Rom. 8:28-30). What confidence in Him it gives us to be assured from His own lips that He knows our names and goes ahead of us, meeting every danger and every trial along the way before we come to it.

“He calleth His own sheep by name ... He goeth before them” (John 10:3-4). Many snares that are laid by the enemy of our souls to entrap us, He has seen and thrust aside. Many pitfalls His watchful eye detects, and carefully He leads us safely over them. Many a bypath, which would have taken us out of the way, He has conducted us past, and led us safely along the straight and narrow way. Such is our Shepherd’s loving and faithful care of us.

With such a Shepherd we shall not want. He tends His sheep; He does not leave them to a hireling. We are His flock, and not the flock of any man. “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.” These pastures are not an enclosure built on man’s opinions and doctrines, for neither the intellect and natural mind, nor the pursuit of worldly pleasures and pastimes are green pastures.

The Lord our Shepherd makes us to lie down where we can feed upon His love, His grace, His goodness and His glory, yea, upon “the things concerning Himself” from the Word of God, which the Holy Spirit delights to show to us, because we are beloved of Him. It is important to heed the exhortations, inspired by the Holy Spirit, of the apostles Peter and Paul: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2). “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (1 Tim. 4:15-16).

Beside Still Waters

The place where the Shepherd guides His flock is “beside the still waters.” The Lord would not have us to be unhappy and restless; He would have us enjoy His peace under all circumstances. “My peace I give unto you. ... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid,” He has said (John 14:27). In these perilous times, how much we need that word. What restfulness of spirit and what contentedness of mind it gives us to lean confidingly upon His love and care! Nothing can separate us from His love. And if, because of sorrows and roughness of the wilderness journey or by reason of the rapid progress of infidelity and worldliness, our spirits have drooped in sadness and we have become discouraged, let us cheer up; He is enough to make the heart rejoice. He is the all-powerful, loving, gracious and tender Shepherd. His glory has not been tarnished a bit. He is the Brightness of Eternal Glory.

“He restoreth my soul,” or rather the meaning is, “He invigorates” or revives “my soul”; it is like a good tonic to a person whose health is run down; it invigorates. The Lord can do this when we get discouraged, as He revived the two disciples on the way to Emmaus and restored their souls. First, He did this by drawing out all that was on their heart, and then, in His love, removing their mistrust and banishing their discouragements by ministering the Word and comforting them, causing their hearts to burn within them, as He spoke to them by the way

(Luke 24).

We have another instance of this when Paul was imprisoned in the castle, and in the stillness of night, the Lord stood by him, and said, “Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome” (Acts 23:11).

Occupation with our circumstances will not invigorate us, because they are variable; nor can we turn to ourselves, “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing”; and the heart, the Lord has told us, is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17:9). Although all things, even the foundation of the earth and “the heavens... shall perish” and “wax old like a garment,” the Lord our Shepherd is the eternal and unchangeable God.

The second thing we notice is:

The Shepherd’s Presence

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me” (Psa. 23:4). Many believers, it is feared, do not come to that valley, in which the conscious presence of the Lord is realized and enjoyed, until death, but we should, and if we go on in daily communion with Him, we will find this world to be the valley of the shadow of death. Nothing can affect our standing in Christ; even our state of soul can never affect our standing. But we ought to live according to our standing. May we be more like Christ and less earthly-minded! It is often only when a saint has to depart from earth that the world is given up. It is a glorious privilege, as well as a blessed responsibility, as saints of God, to be counting ourselves, as we are in God’s sight, dead with Christ; this would separate us from the world altogether, just as though we were dead to it. Then it would be to us the valley of the shadow of death. But we shall have His presence with us in it and be able to say, “I will fear no evil.” This is the confident expression of one who realizes the Shepherd’s sustaining presence.

We are in God’s sight dead and risen with Christ, just as though we had passed out of this world altogether, and are left to live here on earth as a heavenly people waiting to be taken up to heaven where Christ is. This world is like an inn to the believer, to stay in as a pilgrim and a stranger for a little while, at the expiration of which the Shepherd will take him to His home, which is our eternal dwelling place. In the meantime, we have His presence with us, for He will never leave nor forsake us. We need not fear, for “goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.”

W. E. Sibthorpe

Young Christian: Volume 23, 1933, Through the Valley

“Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.” Psa. 23:4.

The “valley of the shadow of death” is this world, sunk in sin and shame. In the midst of this we walk. We are in the world, although we are not of it. Around us, on every hand are sin and its wages, “death.” It is in such a valley we walk: and it is in such a valley that He gives us promise,

“I will be with thee.”

Christian Treasury: Volume 10, Lord Is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want, The

Psalm 23:1

Give me ten thousand dollars, and one reverse of fortune may scatter it all away. But let me have a spiritual hold of this divine assurance: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want," then I am all right; I am set up for life. I never cantle a bankrupt, for I hold this security: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want,”

Do not give me ready money now; give me a checkbook, and let me draw what I like. This is what God does with the believer. He does not immediately transfer his inheritance to him, but lets him draw what he needs out of the riches of His fullness in Christ Jesus.

Young Christian: Volume 12, 1922, Lord Is My Shepherd; I Shall Not Want, The: Psalms 23:1

Give me ten thousand pounds, and one reverse of fortune may scatter it all away; but let me have a spiritual hold of this divine assurance, “The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want,” then I am all right, I am set up for life. I cannot break with such stock as this in hand. I never can be a bankrupt, for I hold this security, “The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.” Do not give me ready money now; give me a check book, and let me draw what I like. This is what God does with the believer. He does not immediately transfer His inheritance to him, but lets him draw what he needs out of the riches of His fullness in Christ Jesus.

The Remembrancer: 1904, First Thought of Christ in Resurrection, The

Remark that the first thought of Christ, when heard from the horns of the unicorn, is to declare the name of God and His Father to His brethren—now glorious, but not ashamed to call us brethren. Perfect in love, attached to these excellent of the earth, He turns, when once He

is entered into the position of joy and blessing through a work which gave them the title to enter, to reveal to them what placed them in the same position with Himself. Thus He gathered them; and then having awakened their voices to the same praise as that which He was to offer, He raises the blessed note as man, and sings praises in the midst of the assembly. Oh, with what loud voices and ready hearts we ought to follow Him! And note, he who is not clear in acceptance and the joy of sonship with God, in virtue of redemption, cannot sing with Christ. He sings praises in the midst of the assembly. Who sings with Him? He who has learned the song, which he has learned to sing as come out of judgment into the full light and joy of acceptance.

Bible Treasury: Volume 13, Psalm 22:17

That there are difficulties of interpretation or readings in Hebrew, no one doubts. Christianity is in no way concerned in this phrase. It is not quoted in the New Testament. The reason for reading it as it is in the English translation is, that the ancient Jews insist it is so in the old Hebrew. It is no question of rationalism. The most high-church orthodox writers take it as meaning “a lion.” The form is peculiar. There is the same in Isaiah, where it is translated, “as a lion;” but the ancient Jewish writers insist that it is not to be read so here. The LXX (a century and a half, say, before our Lord) translates it, “they pierced my hands and my feet; so the Vulgate; so the Syriac in Walton; Montanus, De Wette, Hengstenberg, and many, “as a lion.” Of the ancients, the Chaldee Targum only has, “as a lion;” and, according to De Rossi-the best authority is of small authority, and founded on bad manuscripts. He insists on the manuscripts of the very learned critic of the Jews, Ben Chaiim, and the Masora, that “they pierced” is right; Rosenmuller prefers, “they bound.” It is a question of reading. Cahari is, “as a lion;” most probably, though not certainly, caharu is, “they pierced;” and the difference in Hebrew is very slight: éøàë, åøàë, Caharu is, “they bound.” Now, as all the ancient translations give, “they pierced,” the Masora confirms, and one of the most critical Jewish doctors approves, pleading his own good Jewish manuscripts. The use of the text by the fathers may have induced the Jews to tamper with the text by a change hardly perceptible; and as the pointing is uncertain, there is nothing so sure in the matter. I avow that I am disposed to think “pierced” is right.

What is the meaning of “the assembly of the wicked surrounded me, as a lion my hands and my feet"? I do not see much sense in it. What is most against “pierced,” though it proves nothing, is, that it is never referred to in the New Testament, whereas other parts of the Psalms are. However, my own conviction is that “they pierced” is right. The difficulties and labor of those who take “as a lion” as the true reading, to make any sense of it, show that it is no natural reading. Its place in the psalm makes it inappropriate. It is not “the strength of bulls and lions” that is here spoken of—that is an earlier stage of the speaker's sorrow—but the “shamelessness of dogs.” It is an interpretation of what is ascribed to the dogs. They “compass” him—so the wicked: then to jump to a lion, who does not compass people at all, is out of place. Next, how “compass his hands and feet?” What does that mean? We have had the lion, but then it was only “gaping with the mouth,” and in place; here he is going on with personal details. All tends, I think, to show the ancient interpreters were right, had they cahari for caharee, or caharu. Venema reads “as a lion,” but connects “my hands and my feet” with, “I can count” —an additional proof of the difficulties of those who reject the ancient versions. That it is the most ancient Hebrew reading is anything but proved; that it is the common modern one is true. The versions have so far more authority in the Old Testament, that no Hebrew manuscript is so old by many centuries as the oldest of the New. In any case, though the apostles have quoted the psalm as a prophecy of Christ, the rationalist is sure they are wrong. “The staring monsters are intended by whom Israel is surrounded and torn.”

Only read the psalm through— “the declaring God's name to his brethren,” and “in the midst of the church will I praise thee;” compare this with John 20, and you will see how impossible it is to apply it to Israel. But the greatness of the scope of divine thought, the moment Christ and redemption are the center, these men seem incapable of. I will give you a little sketch of the Psalms preceding chapter 22, which will lead us to see how specially it applies to Messiah. That the whole book of Psalms is in methodical order I cannot doubt, though we cannot enter on it now. Psa. 1 gives the righteous Jew, the remnant, contrasted with the wicked; Psa. 2, Christ as King in Zion, according to the decree of God, and owned Son; the nations and rulers raging against Him, but warned; then, Christ being rejected of men, the righteous are in trial, instead of the government of God securing their present blessing, as in Psa. 1. But in Psa. 8 Christ has a wider character than in Psa. 2 He is Son of man, not Son of David, and all things are put under Him, and Jehovah's name is excellent in all the earth. Thus the ways of God with earth are shown. Psa. 9; 10 enter into the details of Israel's condition in the land in the last days, and their deliverance. Psa. 11-15 go through this, and the feelings it produces, in various ways; hence they become a comfort in any trial. In Psa. 16 Christ first takes, in the most exquisite and deeply instructive way, His place among the excellent of the earth; shows the path of life through death; and as His trust was in Jehovah, Jehovah's presence was His joy as man. Psa. 17 treats the subject not of confidence, but of righteousness; and here we get glory, and what I may call reward, more than joy.

Psa. 18, I have no doubt, looks at the suffering of Christ as the center of all God's ways, from Egypt to Messiah's kingdom. I now come to the psalms I had immediately in mind. In Psa. 19 we have two testimonies of God—the creation (the heavens) and the law. In Psa. 20 the true and faithful Witness is prophetically viewed as rejected by men, and in sorrows. In Psa. 21, which directly answers to it, having cried for life, He is exalted as man to everlasting glory, and His hand finds out His enemies. This was outward government and dealing. He had suffered from man imagining devices against Him; and when they took the character of enemies, they were judged. But (Psa. 22) Christ did not suffer from man only—bulls did close Him in; heartless, shameless, dogs then surrounded Him, and He looked, not only to man to have compassion on Him, and there was none, not one that could watch one hour; He looked to God, and was forsaken there. But suffering from God was avenging, not to be avenged; hence, when this is passed, all is grace, widening out in blessing. He declares His name to His brethren, as He did in John 20, there first distinctly calling them brethren, and leads the praises of the church He has gathered; He then brings in Israel; then all the ends of the world remember themselves, and turn to Jehovah; and then the seed born in this time of blessing learn the great truth, to chant it with others, that He hath done this.

It is evident to me there is progress in the bulls and the dogs: the first refers to mere violence, leading Him to the cross; the other, to men's conduct when He was there. But the witness of creation, law, and Messiah, rejected of men, and He glorified and judging; and then His being forsaken of God—the result of which was not judgment (for it was bearing it), but grace, unmingled grace—makes the true import of the psalm most clear. Could we dwell upon it, and study the grace of Christ in it, the place He gives us in it—what the declaring the Father's name was (see John 20), and the full import of this consequent on redemption, and the place He then takes in our midst, when redemption is accomplished, to lead our praises as being in, and having placed us in, the same perfect joy—it would show the extraordinary beauty of this psalm as applied to Christ. We may take the words of His lips upon the cross to show us He was not a stranger to it. Now, I can only use the

series as marking the place Christ has in it, when God, after all, did not despise nor abhor the affliction of the afflicted, and when atonement was made for sin.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, True Rendering of Psalms 22:21

Question: Psa. 22:21. What is the true rendering of this verse? J. N.

Answer: I see no sufficient reason to question the common view. The R. V. is clearer than the A. V. The force of the verse lies in the unexpected turn. For “and from the horns of the r’eem” (wild oxen or buffaloes) the natural thought would have been “answer me.” But there can be no doubt that the only legitimate sense is, as is generally if not universally given, “thou hast answered,” or heard, “me.” It is impossible, without wresting the scriptural expression, to extract a future bearing. Parallelism is usual, but cannot override the plain language of inspiration; nor can a priori doctrine, which is sound only as far as it is subject to scripture. Nor is there more difficulty in understanding these words of our Lord than what He subsequently cited from Psa. 31:5. Is there not something to learn?

Correspondence, Correspondence: Psalm 22:21; John 14:12

Ques. Please explain the 21st verse of Psalm 22, and what does it mean, especially the part, "My darling from the power of the dog?"

Ans. "My soul" as we see by its use elsewhere (Num. 23:10), is the equivalent in Hebrew, to, "Myself," and "my only one;" (my darling) answers to it in parallel. The Hebrew word here is used "poetically for life, as peerless or unique, not to be equaled or replaced." Hence the verse would mean "deliver My soul from the sword (death); My life from the power of the dog (Gentile)."

Ques. What is meant in John 14:12,

"Greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father"?

Ans. The Lord is speaking about going away to the Father, and the Holy Spirit coming down to them. The result of this would be the power of the Spirit of God seen in them doing greater works than were seen in Christ, now seen in mortal men. It would be Christ's power in glory by the Spirit, the source of them. So Peter's shadow, and handkerchiefs taken from Paul, would do cures.

J. N. D. says, "A striking proof was connected with His departure. After He was gone they would do even greater works than He did, because they should act in connection with His greater nearness to the Father. This was requisite to His glory. It was even unlimited. He placed them in immediate connection with the Father by the power of His work and of His name. Christ Himself would do it for them; their request should be heard, and granted by the Father, showing what nearness He had in view for them."

Scripture Queries and Answers, Scripture Queries and Answers: Jacob Serving for Leah and Rachel; PSA 22:21; 2CO 5:21; 1JO 5:11

Q.-Is there typical meaning in Jacob's serving for Leah and Rachel, in Gen. 29? W. E.

A.-It appears that Rachel was the first beloved wife, but in fact the last actually to enjoy, and bear the fruits of, the relationship-Joseph rejected of his brethren and exalted in another sphere over Gentiles; and Benjamin, his mother's sorrow, but son of his father's right hand. Leah before this is the mother of many sons, as there are before Israel comes into full and happy view.

Q.-Psa. 22:21. What is the true rendering of this verse? J. N.

A.-I see no sufficient reason to question the common view. The R. V. is clearer than the A. V. The force of the verse lies in the unexpected turn. For " and from the horns of the r'eem " (wild oxen or buffaloes) the natural thought would have been " answer me." But there can be no doubt that the only legitimate sense is, as is generally if not universally given, " thou hast answered," or heard, " me." It is impossible, without wresting the scriptural expression, to extract a future bearing. Parallelism is usual, but cannot override the plain language of inspiration; nor can a priori doctrine, which is sound only as far as it is subject to scripture. Nor is there more difficulty in understanding these words of our Lord than what He subsequently cited from Psa. 31:5. Is there not something to learn?

Q.-How is 2 Cor. 5:21 to be taken? W. E.

A.-In 1 Cor. 1:30 saints are said to be of God in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (for the body itself will be under the power of redemption at His coming). This is all of grace that no flesh may glory save in Him. But in the second Epistle the apostle goes farther and affirms that God made Christ Who knew no sin to be sin for us (i.e. dealt with as a sacrifice for it on our behalf) that we might be made or become His righteousness in Christ (i.e. blessed righteously according to His estimate of Christ's work and its answer in glory).

Q.-1 John 5:11? What is the force?

W. E.

A.-It seems impossible to make the truth plainer than the apostle was given to do. He is showing God's witness worthy of the greater heed, as in itself greater beyond comparison than any witness of men. And it is this, that God gave unto us, Christians, eternal life (not merely promises or a kingdom), and this life is in His Son. For He is that life, though of course far more, as being very God no less than the Father. But it is ours now, and it works in us all that is pleasing in His sight; though we have it in His Son, and all the more surely and incorruptibly ours

because it is in Rim. But it is equally true that we have life, as it is destructive error and unbelief to doubt or deny, to darken or defile, this grand truth of Christianity.

Q.-How is it that without the article in many cases like , , .. means" all " and not " every "? QUERY.

A.-Because they express moral thoughts, grouping every case under the word; so that it is a question of our language not here admitting " every " but requiring "all" in idiomatic English. With article before or after, in English must be translated not " every " but " all." So without it words expressive of moral ideas, as righteousness, joy, fear power, wisdom; but it really means every such case. So of the common " all flesh," all the individuals without distinction. But ordinary appellatives come under the regular rule which is true of all languages.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, "He Asked Life of Thee, and Thou Gavest it Him" - When Asked and What Does it Mean?

Question: Psa. 21:2, 4.—What is meant by “He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him?” and when did He ask? Was it as the Messiah, as in Psa. 102:24, and answered in resurrection?

But why asked for? Was it not of necessity, so to speak, that as a man He should ascend to His Father?—Psa. 16:11.

M.

Answer: If we compare Heb. 5:7 (and Gethsemane’s cry, I think the force of the Psalm will be evident. The answer in the Psalm is not being preserved from dying; but life as risen in glory above, made most blessed forever, not sparing life for a time here, but honor and great majesty laid upon Him as man in a higher and more glorious condition. Christ as a man, though mighty to do all things, asked everything of His Father. Dependence was His perfection. At Lazarus’ tomb He asked, knew His Father heard Him always; asked in John 12; asked that the cup might pass. Only the word is not used of Him. The necessity of an event does not hinder asking. Everything in God’s purpose will be necessarily accomplished; but He leads men’s hearts to ask, as the moral filling up of their relationship with Him. In Christ, as man, this was perfect.

Young Christian: Volume 24, 1934, In What Is Our Delight?

“His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night.” (Psa. 1:2).

We should meditate prayerfully upon the deep mysteries of God’s truth. It is such an immense thing to have to do with the blessed God – to be eternally related to Him in such a way, and by such a means as we are, who believe in Jesus, who is “the Son of the Blessed.”

He that drinks in the nourishment of His love, so well proved as none but such sufferings could prove, shall be like “a tree planted by the rivers of water, which bringeth forth its fruit in due season.”

Young Christian: Volume 5, 1915, Fruitfulness

“A TREE PLANTED BY THE WATERS.”

“A tree... that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.” Psalms 1:3.

Jeremiah explains the vigor and fruitfulness of God’s trees by a most suggestive metaphor, “They send forth their roots to the river.” God provides the water; it is a “river,” but we have to send forth “our roots” in search of it. Large trees can survive a drought that withers smaller ones because their roots go deep, and find sources of moisture that can never dry; and a strong, well-nourished Christian is proof against temptations and trials that wither feebler souls, just because his roots go deep into the water of life. He draws strength out of deep heart-intercourse with God, out of the secret study of the Word, out of private prayer, but these things he has to seek. He must go in search of the water, for the water will not come to him. There is a celebrated vine at Hampton Court that for many years disappointed the gardener’s hopes. It was quite healthy, but there were few grapes. One year, however, it was unexpectedly laden with clusters of the finest fruit. Seeking to discover the cause of this, the gardener laid bare its roots, and traced their ramifications and found that they had suddenly gone through the banks into the river Thames. It had “sent forth its roots to the river,” and thenceforth “ceased not from yielding fruit.”

This is a parable for us all. If we are to bear fruit in large abundance, we must get across to the hidden resources of God’s grace that are waiting for us to tap and that is a secret process, a secret between us and God alone. Without this deep fellowship. this secret communion with the Unseen, there will be no growth for any of us, but with this, and because of this, there will be abundant fruit—fruit even to old age. And He who is the unseen Giver, of what we unseen receive, will be glorified in us who are thus “enriched by Him unto all bountifulness causing through us thanksgiving unto Him.” “In the secret of His presence.”

Echoes of Mercy: Volume 13 (1903), God.

THERE is a God, though some may deny it, and call it superstition to believe in the unseen. God IS, though His existence may be ignored or neglected by many, and by others admitted in words only.

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handywork.”

All worlds throughout space—and this world on which we live among them—proclaim His Being. The trees did not create themselves, nor bring forth the sap that every spring rises from their roots. They have no intelligence nor skill to form their leaves or blossoms. The animals never begot themselves, nor did man—intelligent man—bring himself into being. Whosoever thinks that all these had their being without a Creator, is far more superstitious than he who accepts the evidence of creation that there IS a God. And surely intelligent man is responsible to believe that which speaks directly to his senses and his reason, for “the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.”

There MUST, then, be a God, the Creator of all things, for the evidences of His eternal power and Godhead are made clear by all around us, yea by the existence of our very selves; and this leaves the unbeliever not only under the charge of superstitious incredulity but without excuse for his unbelief.

More than this, God has “left not Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness”; this is a daily and hourly reproach to him who denies or doubts the existence of a living God who is not only the Creator but the upholder of all things.

But after all, to acknowledge the existence of God on undeniable evidence which speaks to our senses, which we are responsible to use, is very far from being the highest ground on which God rests our responsibility to acknowledge Him; for in His mercy He has given a, yet surer witness in that which speaks to the conscience and the heart of man. He has spoken in His WORD, and this must call not only for earnest attention, but for submission and obedience. It establishes on a firm foundation the witness which creation bears to God, who in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, resting that testimony and man’s apprehension of it, not only on the works, but on the WORD of Him who did the works. “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Heb. 11:3).

When God, the living God, the eternal God, has spoken, a tenfold responsibility devolves on those to whom His Word has come to listen to, and accept it, and let it speak with authority to their souls. That Word commends itself as its own witness, and not only reveals God as existing before all things, and creating and upholding all things, but it unfolds His very nature—light and love—a God of holiness and grace, yet love and grace according to righteousness. Creation does not and cannot reveal Him thus, but the written Word does, and oh! marvelous grace, the LIVING Word, His Son in whom He has spoken in these last days (Heb. 1:2), tells out all the fullness of His heart; He not only speaks with authority to command obedience, but with light to search the conscience and love to win the heart, even the heart of sinful man.

That same Word was given to men in their sins, revealing their lost condition, though not to leave them there, but to lift them out of it and restore them to that God whom they did not like to retain in their knowledge, nor to glorify as God (Rom. 1:21). It proves that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, so that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God; while God who judges thus, reveals by the same Word the grace that meets men in their sinful ruined state, and displays His boundless grace in justifying and restoring all who believe (Rom. 3). For

“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16); and

“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 7:32) even eternal glory with Himself.

SUCH IS THE GOD WE ADORE.

D.H.

Edification: Volume 9, Something of His Greatness.

OFTEN, when musing on the greatness of the One, who has expressed His love for us in death, we visualize the vast celestial system, where everything moves with mathematical precision and accuracy. We are filled with wonder and awe as we think of the mysteries of that region which defy the power of the greatest telescopes to penetrate and with the Psalmist of old, re-echo “The heavens declare the glory of God” (Psa. 19:1).

Then too, we might think of the magnitude of space; the fascinating wonders of the rolling deep, with all its weird and terrifying secrets; of the untrodden peaks of the everlasting hills. Within our reach we behold the perfect order of the changing seasons, and are assured that He hath made everything beautiful in its season.

But this vista of created glory coupled with the multitude of shining hosts, could never win the affections of man’s heart nor drive away his fear and distrust of the One who brought them into being by the Word of His power. The witness of creation would tend to overawe, and repel the approach of man to God.

How wonderful it is to see that God, knowing this, has found a way in which He can come within the range of man’s vision and circumstances in a manner which does not occasion alarm and fear in the heart of His creature, and thus bring him into the warmth and comfort of that Divine circle, cleaned of every spot and stain. This wonderful expression of love and grace, of the disposition of God’s heart, has been made fully known, not in the glory of created majesty and wonder, but in the Person of His only Son.

We learn by contrasts, and in Matthew 12, the greatness of that despised and rejected One stands out in clearness when brought into contrast with Solomon, Jonah, and the Temple.

No earthly potentate like Solomon, when kings flocked from the uttermost parts of the earth for his counsel. His reign was characterized by peace plenty and praise. yet he only formed part of a background to bring into relief the greatness of Christ.

Was there ever such a preacher as Jonah? A whole city repented at the sound of his voice, and even the beasts of the field were affected. Nothing like it before or since. But here was One greater than Jonah.

To the Jew the temple was his life; the singing and the incense, the order of the priesthood, and very much more. But here in their midst was a living Temple, great enough to satisfy every spiritual aspiration of the worshipper. He could give to the stricken heart that which no temple order could. He was greater than the temple.

How precious to view Him in this scene of moral corruption; no retinue of angels, no bodyguard of seraphim. As holy as when seen in Isaiah 6, but divested of all that visible and terrifying expression. Let us muse on those features which have endeared Him to our hearts and won our trust. He was meek; He was lowly; He was harmless; He was undefiled; He was approachable; the weary came for rest; the blind to see; the deaf to hear; the guilty one for pardon; the bereaved for comfort; and the weak for strength. Very much more could be sung of His moral greatness in His lowly pathway here, and as we dwell on this, surely it will cause the tongue of the dumb to sing for joy, and the lame to leap like the hart.

He was rich, but for our sakes became poor. The heaven of heavens was not great enough to contain Him, but down here He had nowhere to lay His blessed head. The scene which He left was reflective of His glory, but here He was despised and rejected. Up there the subject of angelic praise, here the song of the drunkard, and the object of derision. The power of His Godhead was no less in Jerusalem than in glory, but He allowed them to pluck the hair off His cheek, and He gave His back to the Smiter. He could have taken refuge in His creatorial power, but He had made himself of no reputation. No circumstance of His pathway could make Him deviate from it; it was the way which God was taking in order to reach us, to recover us for the glory of His Son.

And after a pathway of moral perfection, with its end in sight, we are privileged to witness one more blaze of His moral greatness; when, death having no claim upon Him, He voluntarily goes into it, in order that He might rob it of its fearful character, and thus set us free in the liberty of sons to praise and worship Him throughout the ages of the ages.

C. D. Wallach.

The Gospel Messenger: Volume 6 (1891), Supremely Selfish!

SUCH is the man of the world. From such the Psalmist of old cried to his God to deliver him. “From men of the world which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes” (Psa. 17:14).

Their desires are fully satisfied, the cup of their portion is filled up to the brim—no cankering care on account of pressing needs is theirs. Yet the Psalmist knew that though their own couches were soft, they would not think of softening other people’s lot; that though their own storehouses and barns were crammed with creature mercies, they would not dream of filling the hands of the hungry.

Now-a-days a man must be decently liberal to save his character, but how many an inward grumble is there whilst the sleek hand doles a golden guinea or two out of the well-filled purse? Yes the Psalmist knew how to describe them in one short verse. And the race has by no means died out yet. But let us narrow the circle, and yet widen it Centuries after the Psalmist wrote, the apostle Paul of the Gentiles was treading thoughtfully the streets of the far-famed Athens. He marked their numberless altars. Their heathen superstition drove them to an absurd zeal in their religion. Fearing lest they had omitted some god who would punish them for their forgetfulness to do him honor, they had reared an altar, inscribing it “TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.”

The earnest spirit of the devoted apostle could no longer keep still When he was brought before the high court of Athens—Areopagus—he declared to them the God whom they thus ignorantly worshipped He told them that He gave to all, life and breath and all things. That in Him they lived, and moved, and had their being. That even their own poet had declared, “For we are also His offspring.”

Then the apostle brought the claim of that God before them, with the result that, whilst some mocked and procrastinated, others believed.

Now, friend, you may not have your horses and hounds, your town and country house. You may not be able to boast the position of a man of the world, but you owe to God your being—the air you breathe, the water you drink, the health you enjoy, and ten thousand things more.

Do you ever thank Him? Are you ever grateful? If not, you are supremely selfish and ungrateful.

I know many who are greatly blessed by God, yet who never thank Him for their food, never commend themselves to Him in prayer, never seek a place of worship, even take His holy name in vain, and whose whole life is a course of self-seeking and pleasure. If any such read these lines, take these thoughts to heart, and remember that you cannot be pleasing to God till you honor His well-beloved Son—till you can subject yourself to His rightful claim over you as Lord.

As the apostle spoke of a corning day of judgment, and a present command to repent, so we would press upon you repentance for your life’s history of selfish sins, and to come to Christ as a poor, lost sinner, and receive Him as your Saviour and Lord, and then seek to live a life that has reference to the God who so richly blesses you every moment of your life. “Behold NOW is the accepted time; behold NOW is the day of salvation.” You cannot approach God save through Christ. Your sin forbids it, but the precious blood of Jesus can cleanse you from all sin—God grant it may. Your ingratitude is rendered ten thousand-fold more ungrateful when you neglect the love of God by not availing yourself of such a Saviour. “How shall we escape If we neglect so great salvation?” A. J. P

Christian Friend: Volume 12, Psalm 16:2-3

The connection between these two verses, as rendered in our English version, is confessedly obscure. The Lord, in His pathway through this world, taking as He ever did, in the perfection of His life of faith as man, the place of entire dependence and ‘obedience, says, “ O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not unto thee;” and then the next verse proceeds, “But to the saints,” etc., as if it meant, “My goodness extendeth not to thee, but to the saints,” etc. Some years since a well-known servant of the Lord made a suggestion which, to most minds, cleared up the difficulty, besides throwing a flood of light upon the mind of the Spirit of Christ. Instead of reading, “But to the saints,” etc., he pointed out, that to bring out the sense it might be thus taken, “I have said to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, In them is all my delight.” This makes the parallelism also complete: “O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord.... but I have said to the saints.” And the spiritual mind will instantly perceive the beauty of the passage as thus explained. There is first the lowliness of our blessed Lord as man; and secondly, there is His identification with, and delight in, the saints on the earth.

While, however, many were feasting on this precious unfolding of the Word, it was said, by one who claims to have a large knowledge of the original, that the structure of the Hebrew made this rendering impossible. But, on turning to the Revised Version, we find it thus given: “I have said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: I have no good beyond thee.” As for (or “unto” in the margin) “the saints that are in the earth, they are the excellent in whom is all my delight.” Thus, learning contradicts learning, and justifies the explanation of one who was not without learning, but who used it only as a servant in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord’s heart, then, was upon the saints. It was in them He had ‘His delight; and this He showed when He identified Himself with the poor remnant who went out to be baptized of John. (Matthew 3). He Himself was also baptized; and it was then, on His going up out of the water, that the heavens were opened, and, together with the Spirit of God descending upon Him, there was a voice from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I have found my delight.” He found His delight in the saints, and the Father found His delight in Him. It is surely a lovely scene; and we may learn that the heart of God can only flow out to His people through Christ, and that they can only meet the heart of God in the heart of Christ.

The reader may compare Proverbs 8:30,31— “I was daily His delight.... and my delights were with the sons of men.” What wonders of grace, unfathomed and unfathomable, are contained in these few words!

E. D.

Bible Witness and Review: Volume 1, Dependent One, The

Psa. 16:2,3.-I am of opinion that the main idea of the Psalm is the perfectness of Messiah's dependence on Jehovah, shown in His humiliation here below (Heb. 2), and vindicated in His resurrection (Acts 2) Hence it is that, while a divine person, yet taking the place of a servant, His soul (for it is feminine) said to Jehovah, " Thou art my Lord; my goodness is not to Thee." It is the expression of his self-renunciation as man, which was in truth His moral glory. (Compare Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18, etc.)

On the other hand, He said, " To the saints who are in the earth, and the excellent; All my delight is in them." This latter was acted out in His baptism, when He thus fulfilled all righteousness and identified Himself in grace with the godly in Israel. As man, He did not exalt himself, but gave the entire glory to God; and this not in austere distance from the despised remnant who bowed to the testimony of John the Baptist, but graciously entering into and sympathizing with their true place before God. " He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one."

Dorothy Conference: 2019, Psalm 16:10-11

Reading

You sing #230. Oh Lord, when we the path retrace which thou on earth is trodden to man, thy wondrous love and grace, thy faithfulness to God, 230. Oh Lord, when we. Grace. With God. I was born. Oh Lord, oh God. Be nice to complete our enjoyment of Psalm 16. Could we read from verse 9 even though we did discuss it because of its connection with verse 10? Would that be outright? Psalm 16, verse nine. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth. My flesh also shall rest in hope. For Thou will not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer, thine Holy One, to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life in my presence, His fullness of joy. And at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. There is no doubt that in the Old Testament, the. Interval between death and resurrection. Was darkness to them. They did not know what took place.

We learned from the New Testament that life and immortality, or perhaps more accurately, incorruptibility, were brought to light through the gospel. And so, David no doubt could say, my flesh shall rest in hope. But as we were remarking before. The Spirit of God takes him beyond what a mere man could experience to talk only of Christ, because here it says in verse 10, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One, to see corruption. I believe you alluded to it this morning, Brother Steve, that the Lord Jesus, as a perfect man, never having sinned His flesh, did not see corruption, even though he lay in the grave during the time he was there. He was definitely dead in every sense of the word as far as the body was concerned, but he did not see corruption. But I would also point out that the correction in the verse here is rather necessary. The word is not really hell in the proper sense of the translation. It should read Hades. And Hades as Greek, the new test or the Old Testament counterpart, and this is anybody can look this up. The Old Testament counterpart to it is sheol, the Hebrew word, And both have the sense not of a distinct place, as is often thought of, but rather of. A condition. So that Hades or Sheol is simply the condition of a soul and spirit without a body, and that's all they knew in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, the wicked dead are often spoken of as being in Hades. In Revelation 20 for example, where you read concerning the Great White Throne death and it says hell, but it should read Hades delivered up the dead which were in them. What does that mean? It means that death delivers up the body, Hades delivers up the soul and spirit. They are reunited together. To stand before God for judgment. But the believer is never spoken of in that way. When the Lord Jesus spoke to the thief

on the cross, what did he say to him? This day shalt thou be with me in Hades. Oh no. Much better than that. Technically it would have been a true statement, but the Spirit of God takes the believer into something beyond that. Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. His brother Steve brought out in the address yesterday. The Apostle Paul has been there. In soul and spirit with the Lord for many centuries, His body is awaiting the resurrection day. And so the Lord Jesus prophetically here says, Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades, that is, He will not be left in the condition of a soul and spirit without a body. Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One, to see corruption. And as soon as that. Resurrection day came. The Lord Jesus rises from the dead in all his power and glory. And the angels appear as a witness of it. By rolling away the stone, the keepers became as dead men and as we had brought before us. And it's in the next Psalm, or rather the 18th Psalm. It's a resurrection song, bringing before us all the power of God displayed in resurrection. And so for you and for me, that's our prospect too. Of course, we have a better hope because we may not even go through death. We trust that the Lord will come before any of us here have to die. But if we do, yes, we will see corruption because we're part of a fallen race, but our flesh will rest in hope, sure hope, of the Lord's coming to raise the dead Saints and to change the living Saints, and all be taken up together into heaven.

In Mr. Darby's translation to support what you're saying, Brother Bill, it is translated Thou wilt not leave my soul to shield. And it's interesting to me how the fact of hell is one of the things that atheists and humans really resent about the truth of Christianity. But I find it interesting that the person who tells us the most about how and talk. The most about how is the Lord Jesus Christ the person we've been considering in this Psalm, and I think it's because he knew actually how awful it was that he came into this world motivated by love to try to reach those who are were lost. He came to seek and to save. That was the those which were lost. And I just think that it's on his part knowing what it was. It's his motivation and for us the same thing we learn in Corinthians. Knowing therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. So they were ignorant back then in the days of David about what it was. But the Lord Jesus has brought that information to us and it's revealed to us, and it's very solemn to think about it. It's a fact that's revealed. You can't know it any other way than the Son of God coming and telling us that that's the way it is. And so the Lord Jesus really felt. The going into death because it was the penalty for sin. And He not only suffered on the cross the judgment for our sins, but He suffers the ultimate penalty of sin, which is going into death. But as we read in Hebrews, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to ******* Satan. Holds men in ******* and still does. And As for thousands of years, by the fear of death, God has taken that away in the finished work of Christ, the one who legitimately never had to taste death. Voluntarily took upon himself a body capable of death, not subject to it capable of death. And so he could say of that. Of his light, the life which he had in John 10. No man taketh it from me, I lay it down of myself. This commandment have I received of my father. You see the type of that in Abraham and Isaac going up to Mount Moriah. Isaac says, Behold the fire in the wood. But he makes no mention of the knife. I believe a reference to the fact that no man taketh it from me. I lay it down of myself. As far as human life was concerned, yes, Abraham took the knife to slay his son, and we know that the Lord intervened to stop that. But the Spirit of God through Isaac's mouth doesn't mention the knife. I believe because it was a type of the Lord Jesus who would lay down his own life. By himself. And so the Lord Jesus really felt the going into death, because it was part of the penalty of sin. The wages of sin is death. And when God pronounced the curse on Adam, he said in the day that thou eatest thereof dying, thou shalt die. For Satan says thou shalt not surely die, meaning that you wouldn't die immediately. But death was the ultimate penalty for sin, and the Lord Jesus suffered it. But he had that confidence in God. Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades. Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. And so in that sense, as we've said a moment ago, the Lord Jesus was unique. You and I can't say that, that we won't see corruption unless the Lord comes. But the same power that raised him from the dead will raise the Saints who have died in Christ.

And will change the living Saints to be like him. This is a happy meditation on the Lord. What's being brought out? I'm sorry to go back to what you said a moment ago, but I I'd like to because. There's a great error caught on this verse. It's not the only verse, but on this one at least that is that the Lord Jesus when he died did indeed go to hell, and that is where in his death He defeated him that had the power of death, but not without 3 days of unspeakable torment there. That the Lord suffered, that is being taught widely right now, today, and you can hear it on the radio and other places. And so I think it's worth just pointing out again, what our brother Bill said is Hades is speaking about the condition of the soul after death. And for the believer, it's not at all talking about what is meant by the word hell or a place of torment. And Luke chapter 16. You'll find that there was a rich man and Lazarus, and Lazarus was. The one who died 1St and he went to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and in hell is Hades. He lifted up his eyes being in torment and that's what generally is referred to as hell. And it's really the thought of torment there. But he saw Lazarus far off. Lazarus was also in Hades, but he wasn't in torment. He was in a place of blessing in Abrahams bosom. And this is what our brother was referring to in Luke. I think it's 22. Paradise, Luke 23 I think that this day the Lord said to the thief, Thou shalt be with me in paradise. The Lord did not go to the place of torment. He went to the place of blessing which he called paradise, and that teaching which is out there today, that the Lord, when he died he went and he suffered unspeakable torment for three days. In this awful place, that's error and it denies that when the Lord Jesus said it is finished that He meant it is finished. It denied that His work was finished. Then the blood was shed, the work was complete and had to be completed at some later time. That's a tremendous error. That those who call themselves Christians are teaching right now and we need to be aware of it and understand what this verse is really teaching. That the Lord was in that place of paradise as to His soul and spirit. His body was in the grave and He was not going to be suffered to remain there. He was going to be raised again in resurrection on the third day. There's a bit of an aside, and it's kind of half question, half teaching, I guess. But when Lazarus, when the Lord left Lazarus in the grave, he left him there for four days. Which means his body saw corruption. And the Lord did that. Was that not to demonstrate? His power, or if we could use the term frailty in frailty using the term his ability to raise up one whose body had been corrupted. And so he left him there purposely that long four days so that there would be corruption to show that he could raise him up nonetheless. Yeah, that's I believe brother Ted. That's correct because Romans one tells us that he was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection literally translated of dead ones, not just of his own resurrection, but the the great proof that he was who he was the Son of God could quicken whom he will begin in John five was that he raised Lazarus from the dead. And so just before the crucifixion, he's coming to Jerusalem, everything ordered of God, Lazarus dies. He's there four days. Without a doubt, this man is dead. And that's another reason for the four days, no question.

It's a it's a funeral and mourning and who comes. A great company from Jerusalem come. There's a huge crowd there. God orders that too. He gives those four days for this crowd to gather because he is going to give the last great final witness to the fact that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. And he raises him from the dead and they reject that proof. They even want to kill Lazarus, put him back in the grave to to obliterate that. So he goes on into Jerusalem and he presents himself as Messiah. And they say as much. Come down from the full of the ***. Stop these praises. They reject him as Messiah. Then he says the Son of Man. And they say, who is this Son of man? They reject him in those two chapters, the Son of God as Messiah and Son of Man. But the first great testimony is that he's the Son of God in Chapter 11. It was the last great witness Jerusalem had. And further to that, we could point out that if there were any further witness needed. God provides it and it's

recorded in Matthew's Gospel that after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, it says many bodies of the Saints which slept the Rose and went into the holy city and appeared unto many. So as you say, brother Ted, whether it were four days or four years. Or 4000 years, or whatever it was, there was a clear demonstration of God's power to raise the dead after corruption had set in. So there was absolutely no question for those who wanted to see it, that here was the power of resurrection embodied in the Lord Jesus. Just to just to say it again, because I think I found these things kind of difficult. Hades is the condition of the spirit and soul separated from the body. And unless we have additional context in the verse where it's mentioned, we don't know if it's a place of torment or a place of blessing. We need the additional context to know which way that soul went. Hell is the lake of fire where it's properly translated. Hell, it's the lake of fire, and there's no one in hell today. No one. The first ones that are going to be there are going to be the beast and the false prophet cast alive into the lake of fire, and the dead raised later on to receive judgment. All will be there. It's a place created for Satan and his angels, and he certainly will end up there too. But right now there's no one in the lake of fire. There's no one in hell, properly speaking. So people say the expression to die and go to hell. Not yet die, yes, but Hades is the place, whether torment or blessing is, whether you've received Christ or not. But hell, properly speaking, the lake of fire awaits the future. I like the term the holy one. Jehovah's holy One. We know from the New Testament scriptures in him was number sin. He did no sin and he knew no sin. He was the perfect, holy spotless Lamb of God. Perfect. Perfect sacrifice, the perfect substitute for you and for me, and for whosoever will wasn't he. Amen. And for that reason God did not let him see corruption. Not one touch of sin on him, ever. Other than when he bore our sins in his own body on the tree. Amazing thing to think of God raising him from the dead, justification and taking him back to heaven. Proof that the work was completely done. And waiting for the day when he'll bring him back as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Scripture is so exact when we have a record of the mana falling or coming from heaven. Didn't fall directly on the Earth, did it? Fell on the Duke. So that's another proof of what our brother Robert was saying concerning. The holiness of the Lord Jesus. We think of that first, that holy thing which shall be born, and so. How careful scripture is to maintain that? But especially too when there is something connected with sin of the judgment of it or corruption that would be brought in because of it potentially. And so the Spirit of God is so jealous to guard the Lord's nature in these cases. I was just thinking too, what we have with the sin offering in Leviticus chapter 6. It brings in there the law of the offerings and the Spirit of God. Guards it very jealously there as well, and tight. And there in Leviticus chapter 6 it says. In verse. The right verse in verse 25 speak unto Aaron and to his son, saying, This is the law of the sin offering. In the place where the burnt offering is killed. Shall the sin offering be killed before the Lord? It is most holy. The Lord is an offering for sin and type with his sacrifice. And it brings it out very specially in connection with it. You see the next chapter in the law of the trespass offering the same that He was most holy, never more holy, was the Lord Jesus. And when He was being made an offering for sin, and here in death, when corruption would have come in and affected any one of us, He spoken of as a holy one. There was no claim on Him, and it was not possible that He should be holding of it, Peter said. He was above all of that, and of course we know the glory of the Father. We've been talking about that demanded He be raised some of the dead. But of his own self and His holy nature, there could be no touch, no mark on Him. And the Spirit of God points it out again here in the very term. It's interesting to know too, in connection with the Lord's burial was to be a new tomb, wasn't it? We read the account in the Old Testament of a body being thrown into a pit where the prophets bones were and life came. But that was not to be the case in connection with the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. It was a new tomb and. They could not dispute the fact that it was a news new tomb and they had to accept. What actually transpired? In John's Gospel where we get those details. Says in chapter 19 and verse 40. Then they took the body of Jesus and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre. Ran was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus. Going back to Leviticus with the laws of the offerings. And looking at the law of the burnt offering. In Leviticus 6 again and verse 10. The priest shall put on his linen garment and his linen breeches, and he shall put upon his flesh. Shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with a burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar. And he shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes without the camp unto a clean place. Isn't that striking? It says of the cross. There was a garden right by where he was crucified, and that's where they took the body of the Lord Jesus, and they laid it in a clean place, and the priest was to take the ashes.

Having himself wrapped in that clean linen garment, you think of the Lord's body wrapped in that clean linen. And the ashes were to be laid right beside the altar, Right beside the cross was that garden. And we know that the Lord was crucified outside the camp. And so then he was to take those ashes without the camp into a clean place. And that grave also not only break the side to the cross, it was outside the camp and it was a clean place. Where they laid him, what are? Ashes. Ashes are the witness of a completed and accepted sacrifice. The work was done. As our brother mentioned, he said it is finished. It didn't need any more to be done. It was done. Ashes are the testimony of a completed and accepted sacrifice. Sometimes we enjoy. The thought and it's very right. That in the Old Testament the fire consumed the sacrifice, but that the Lord Jesus on the cross consumed and exhausted the fire. Very true. But there is something for our souls as we look at the burnt offering and see it completely reduced to ashes, that conveys to our soul the intensity of what He endured on that cross and how completely everything went up to God. There was nothing. Left it all, went up to him and a hymn writer wrote. And I think it's so beautiful. I've been to the altar and witnessed the lamb burnt wholly to ashes for me, and seen its sweet savour send up on high, accepted, O God, by thee. It's beautiful to go back and look at the ashes, the sacrifices completed. The sacrifice was accepted. Yes, God protects the. Person of his beloved son, although he became an offering for sin. Yet once the work of redemption was complete, once the soldier had pierced his side, God never allows wicked hands to touch the body of His beloved Son. God provides a rich man by the name of Joseph to put him in the new tomb, as we have been saying, and along with Nicodemus, they bury the Lord Jesus once the work was done. And God never allows. Wicked hands to touch the Lord Jesus and so. All of these things put together make the preciousness of himself and that work that he did more complete, don't they? Well, the last verse of our chapter is also very precious. Thou wilt show me the path of life. For the Lord Jesus it was indeed a path of life, and it ends, as we see in the latter part of the verse. In thy presence is fullness of joy. If the Lord Jesus on earth had God the Father at his right hand so that he would not be moved. Then God the Father says, I will exalt him to my right hand. And that's where he is today. And so you and I must. Remember that. It is a risen Christ who is our object. It is a Christ to walk through this world who is our pattern, but it is a risen Christ who is our object. And so when it's a question of showing us the path of life, yes, we see that blessed One in every step of his pathway down here, going through all the circumstances to which God had.

Ordained him. And as we have said earlier in these meetings, he goes through it as the perfect dependent man. But then what is the end of the pathway? In thy presence is fullness of joy. Is there joy down here? Indeed there is. Was there joy in the pathway of the Lord Jesus down here? Indeed there was. But at the same time He was, and in that sense had to be, the Man of sorrows. He was the Man of sorrows because of His love, because of what He saw in the world around him, the ruin that sin had brought in, even though He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead. He weeps at the grave of Lazarus and the Lord Jesus no doubt felt every day of his life the awful sadness and heartache and ruin

that sin had brought into this world, and none could realize it but He in its fullness. But in the coming day He will be the man of joy, and you and I will share that joy with Him. In Thy presence is fullness of joy. Now, we don't want to be misunderstood. If we turn over to John's Gospel for a moment. John 17. Verse 13. And now I come to thee, or come I to thee, and these things I speak in the world that they might have. My joy fulfilled in themselves. So the Lord Jesus wants us to have joy down here, and it's right that we should, and it's right that we should have His joy. But it is the joy that he had. Who for the joy that was set before? And what joy was that? The joy of doing the Father's will. But then in a coming day, there will be fullness of joy. In a little different way up there we will do His will perfectly because we will no longer have an old sinful nature, but the fullness of joy will result in the perfect rest that God will give for all eternity. I enjoyed the expression in the hymn that our brother gave out at the end of the meeting this morning. Oh, bright and blessed seems where sin can never come, And if you go down a few verses it says our God the center is his presence fills that land, and countless myriads owned as his round him adoring stand. But then in the next verse it says. Our God, whom we have known well known in Jesus love. Rests in the blessing of His own before Himself. Above God will rest you and I will rest, and the fullness of joy will be in His heart to see the blessing of His own, and in your heart and mind to see our blessed Savior given His rightful place and to enjoy. And to see all his glory, fullness of joy. In the 15th chapter of John's Gospel, the Lord not only speaks of his love, but He speaks of his joy. Looking at. Verse 10 If you keep my commandments, He shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you. That your joy might be full. But could someone give a little description? Of what the current scene in heaven is like from Christ being risen again, ascended, seated at the right hand.

Perhaps a little bit of his activity, what he's doing now and what is the anticipation is I think would be very helpful if someone could give a outline of what that scene in heaven is now and the place that Christ is regard to Christ is held in there. If someone could give a little outline of that, I think that'd be helpful. Well, I'll say something, and others perhaps can add to it, but we know that the Lord Jesus has been raised from the dead and ascended up to heaven, and he is now seated there at God's right hand, Seated because the work is done. As we've often remarked, no priest in the Old Testament could ever sit down in the temple or the Tabernacle. The work was never finished, but the Lord is seated there, as we get four times over in the book of Hebrews in virtue of the work being done. And we know, and we had that before us already, that the Lord Jesus is there now. And I believe his activity on your part and mine is both as high priest and advocate as high priest to intercede for us because of our infirmities. We had that before us in the open meeting. He's there as our advocate in order to restore us. If we sin, and as we have often remarked before, the Spirit of God in the Word of God never assumes that the believer will sin because we have been given everything to enable us not to sin. Sad to say, we do, and as our advocate, the Lord is there acting for us. Now, are there other things that the Lord does? I believe he does from other scriptures. We know, of course, that while God does not openly intervene in the affairs of the world today. So that men make a mockery of it and say, if God is really a God of love, why does he allow the awful suffering in the world today? Why doesn't he deal with it? Either he can't do it, in which case he's not God, or he won't do it, in which case I hate the thought of the word. But they call him a monster for allowing things to go on. No, God is allowing man to see the results of their having rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, while at the same time proclaiming a message of salvation and redemption in the message of repentance for those who will listen. But in the meanwhile, through the angels and through the administration, the Lord Jesus. I believe is still upholding all things by the word of its power, and as we get in Colossians by him, all things subsists. So all of those things he is doing up there, He is looking after us in every way up there as our high priest and our advocate. But he's waiting for that day to come when the Father gives him the word to come and call us home. And no doubt as soon as that word is given, he will get up from that seat. And will come and call us home. Now that's rather a short summary, but maybe someone can enlarge on it. I don't know if I could enlarge on it, but I always been a little troubled by there's a line in one of the hymns in the Little Block hymn book that said thou art a blessed rest preparing, as if the Lord's up there, you know, building mansions for us or something. But as you said, the Scripture shows him seated. When he said that I go to prepare a place, it was his going that prepared the place. He's not doing anything. It was his going there that prepared a place for us. Is that right? As soon as the sun stepped back into that place as a man, our place as man was prepared.

Cautions also tells us that he's hidden God. Our life is hid with Christ in God. He's going to be manifest in the coming day once again. And when he is? Then we will be too. He also is the occupation of the departed Saints. Absent from the body, present with the Lord to depart to be with Christ. Far better so in some way he is the present occupation of the Saints who have. Departed this scene and are waiting with us for the realization of our hope when he comes. We have that wonderful verse in Isaiah chapter 53 and verse 11. We shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. There's a sense of anticipation, isn't there? Waiting for that day when he can claim that Blood bought pride. Does exactly what is entailed in that I couldn't say, but I know he's waiting. There's a question, and I hope I don't open up a can of worms here right at the end, but I am curious. In the first part of verse 11 it says Thou wilt show me the path of life. In Acts 2, when Peter quotes the Scripture, he says Thou hast shown me. The path of life. Anyone have thoughts on why the difference? Here it's our wilt, and there it's thou hast. I learned a long time ago not to comment on something I hadn't meditated on, so I have no thought on it. Well, Peter is given that by the Spirit of God, and he says it after the cross. It was an accomplished fact by then, but here it's spoken of before it happened. Lord could speak in John's Gospel about a work that would be finished. Even before we have the record of it being accomplished, and I think it's something of the same thing. And one more little comment. Our time is nearly gone, but. I suggest the thought, I hope it's the right one, that the Spirit of God, as we said earlier, I believe took David beyond. What was normally the experience of an Old Testament believer? Someone has made the comment and it was a good one. I heard it 40 years ago or more that the Old Testament as far as the interval between death and resurrection was concerned, and as far as the precious truth that you and I enjoy. The Old Testament was like a dark night, but where God allowed occasional flashes of lightning to illuminate the whole countryside for a moment. And then all was dark again, and I believe this is one of those flashes of lightning. Because here David says in thy presence is fullness of joy. That is the fullness of joy in heaven will not be. And brother Steve has already commented on it and Ted too. It will not be the place, but rather the person that makes the place and. One of our dear brethren again in our written ministry, said. Even more precious than the glory will be the celebration of the grace that brought us there. And in that grace, or rather in that person of Christ, we will see. Forever, for all eternity manifested the beauty of all that that grace has done. In thy presence is fullness of joy, but going beyond that, or I shouldn't say beyond it, but linking with it. At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. The Lord very gladly and happily gives us the enjoyment of these things. Now we've talked about it.

The Lord Jesus. Is not only the portion of our inheritance, but also our cup. The present enjoyment of all those things, but in that day there will be perfect enjoyment and pleasure in every possible way. Every possible realization of your heart and mind will be there in the glory down here. Do we have pleasure? Yes, we do. We enjoy the things of Christ and even in natural things God has given us certain pleasures, the pleasures of. A relationship with someone else. The pleasures of His creation, the pleasures of things that He gives us out of the goodness, the mercies He gives us in our lives, these are all things that we enjoy, but they come to an end down here. Up there. The pleasure will be

forevermore. Nothing will spoil it. Nothing will come to an end. It will be forevermore. Did David enter into the fullness of what that meant? I don't believe he did. Did he know how all that would happen? No, he did not. He had to wait, and so did every other Old Testament St. Dear Daniel got very wonderful prophecies and when he says to the Lord I heard, but I understood not the only answer he gets. Go thy way, Daniel for the book is sealed until the time of the end Daniel, you'll have to be content and the same thing is recorded in first Peter chapter one when they asked questions of the Lord when they wrote some of these things and made inquiries, the answer they got was. You're writing for people in a future day. Who are those people? You and I. We come into the enjoyment of all these things. What a blessed privilege that is. Despite the close with the words of a Tay, the get tight that we have in Second Samuel chapter 15. And the middle part of verse 21, surely in what place my Lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be. I had just one little comment. This Psalm begins. The introduction is Psalm 15. Who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? In Psalm 16, He's abiding in it. He's in the presence of the Lord and enjoying the presence of the Lord, and he's enjoying the ahead of time, the inheritance. In the end of the Psalm, he anticipates going into the presence of the Lord, and you know that it says of the Lord, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross. Despising the shame, it reminds me of Moses on Mount Pisgah. There he is. Whose company is he enjoying on that mountain? It's the Lords, and the Lord, as it were, takes him in hand and he shows them all the inheritance. All of it in company with himself, and he dies before the Lord. Where did he go? He went from the presence of the Lord into the presence of the Lord, having enjoyed all the inheritance as the Lord laid it out before him. And it's the same pattern in this Psalm. He goes from the presence of the Lord, viewing all the inheritance in a present enjoyment of what's ahead, and he goes into the presence of the Lord. #39 On his Father's throne is seated Christ the Lord, the living One. All is total on earth completed. All His work for Sinner is done in the glory, seeing God's eternal son #39. All this father from the sea. Praise the Lord of everyone. Oh, it's hard. Done. Eternal.

God Sing. From from the glory. From the glory. To the. Real time. Well. May we also sing the last two verses of #18 in the appendix? #18 in the appendix verses 3:00 and 4:00. Yeah, it must be. Now.

Dorothy Conference: 2019, Psalm 16:5-9

Reading

231. We're pilgrims in love. We are far from. Home. Good morning. No. No, no stranger. Lord. Mercy. Ask the Lords help. For those that were not with us yesterday, we started out in Psalm 16. Be nice to continue on with it because we didn't get very far. Psalm 16. Should we start with verse five? Would that be that'd be about right. Yeah. Thank you.

May I suggest that we just read the whole Psalm over again? Why not? Sounds good. Psalm 16. Victim of David preserved me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust. O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord, My goodness extendeth not to thee. But to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight, their sorrow shall be multiplied. That hasten after another God their drink. Offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup. Thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places. Yeah, I have a goodly heritage. I will bless the Lord who have given me counsel. My reigns also instruct me in the night seasons. I have set the Lord always before me, because He is at my right hand. I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth. My flesh also shall rest in hope. For Thou will not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One, to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life in the presence. In Thy presence is fullness of joy. At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. Thank you for reading the whole chapter, the whole Psalm. Part of the reason I suggested reading the whole Psalm is because right in the first verse, as in many of the psalms, there's a statement that's made. And then for the rest of the Psalm, there's an explanation of what that statement is. And so I think it's good to remind ourselves that the theme or the idea that the psalmist started out with was preserve me, O God, for indeed do I put my trust. And yesterday we saw. A little bit of the hazards of idols and as we commenced this morning with verse five, we're going to see a little bit of why the psalmist put his trust in the Lord. So just to recap a little of what we had yesterday, this Psalm is portraying the Lord Jesus as the perfect dependent man. It's really the Lord Jesus speaking. Of course, ultimately, I shouldn't say ultimately, but in writing it, it was the words of the psalmist, but as often happens, the Spirit of God. Takes the psalmist beyond his own experience. To bring in things that have to do only with Christ. And so this is the. Perfect dependent man as depicted in the Lord Jesus. But of course, ultimately it's our pathway too. And so the Lord Jesus, although He was and is and ever will be the Son of God, yet he voluntarily took that place of dependence as a creature, submitting to everything that the Father wanted him to do in this world, not having a will of his own. But simply following the will of the Father. And thus showing us the pathway of faith in which we can walk. So in verse five is Rob has pointed out we have some of the reasons why. The psalmist, and ultimately the Lord Jesus himself, was able and willing to put his trust in the Lord. And perhaps others can develop it more, but I suggest we have three separate things in this verse. Inheritance and Cup and lot. And all three, I believe, have a different meaning. We know that the Lord Jesus has an inheritance coming to him, and if we were to turn back to the second Psalm. God the Father says to him, Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. And so the inheritance, I believe, is all created things, and God has ordained that the Lord Jesus is going to inherit and enjoy and reign over all created things. Does he have them now?

No, they're all his, not only by virtue of creation, but by virtue of his work of redemption. But they will be his in a coming day. But then you and I, what do we have? Hebrews 9 talks about eternal inheritance and it talks in Peter about an inheritance incorruptible and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven. For you heaven is not the inheritance, but it's reserved in heaven. And so you and I are going to inherit all things with the Lord Jesus. And we can look forward to that. We may not have very much down here. Neither did he, but we look forward to it. But then it says. Then it talks about. My cup, the Lord, is the portion of mine inheritance and my top. And I would suggest that the cup is the present enjoyment of all that we have in Christ. And so when it talks about the inheritance and our cup, it doesn't merely say that it's all created things, but it's Jehovah is the Lord himself. It's all embodied. In the Lord himself everything that we have and even though we don't have the inheritance now. The psalmist can say in Psalm 23, My cup runneth over. That was the present enjoyment of all that he had in the Lord, and you and I have the privilege of enjoying all of that now by faith. But then, what about our lot? Our lot, I would suggest, brings in all the circumstances through which the Lord passes us. And they're not always present, pleasant, I should say. The Lord could say in John 16 in the world you shall have tribulation. And sometimes the Lord puts us through difficulties and problems in this world. But what is it doing to us? Ultimately, it takes us away from everything that might distract us and brings us into a deeper enjoyment of those things that are eternal. And so we realize more and more that the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. And the Lord Jesus

himself, if we could say it with all reverence. Those were things that kept him going in this world because he looked beyond at all to what was in the future and to the joy that he would have in doing the Father's will. And being able to go back to the Father and say, I have finished the work which thou gave us me to do. And then ahead of him was all that God had given him in that inheritance. Speaks in verse six about lines. A lot and the children of Israel were came into the land, and the land was divided among them. They all got their lots. And. Unlike in the wilderness, where? The food, the manna fell from heaven. They were provided for when they got into the land. That man has stopped falling from heaven, and they had to. They began at the start just to enjoy. The food that was already in the land, but eventually they had to start there to till their land and to work it in order to have food. So the lot. And speak of all of our circumstances. Sometimes in the world people say that's my lot in life and they're referring to all the circumstances, usually adverse. But the law can be seen, as our brother said, is all of the circumstances that God has arranged in our life with this very important addition. It's our enjoyment of Christ in all of those circumstances, including the adverse, and perhaps even more importantly, the adverse circumstances where we can enjoy Christ and gain him, as Paul says, to gain that I may gain him.

But in our circumstances, in all what we call our lot in life. We have to, as it says, as a first Peter, all those things we add to our faith. In order to sort of chill the ground, if we just go through life haphazardly and let things come and we don't. Positively at positive energy till the land, so to speak, so that we might enjoy Christ in our circumstances. We have our lot, but we're not enjoying what was intended to be enjoyed in that. So it's all of our circumstances in life particularly you could think of the adverse circumstances of being most important an opportunity to gain price. The the language the Lord is the portion of my inheritance reminds us of the Levite and in Numbers chapter 18 and verse 20 says in the Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shall thou have any part among them. I am thy part, and thine inheritance among the children of Israel. And so not only the Levite, but very specifically the House of Aaron, the priesthood. The Lord was their portion and their lot, and you think of the Lord Jesus Christ himself and the 110th Psalm. Set thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Thou art priests forever after the order of Melchizedek. And so there he is in heaven, waiting for that moment when he'll have his inheritance. The heathen, as was mentioned in Psalm 2, every created thing, he's son and heir. But there he is in heaven, our great high priest, and we've been brought into the family of that priesthood. We've been made part of that priesthood and in that same sense we take our inheritance like the priests of old. It's the Lord himself. He's our portion, he's our inheritance, he's our lot. You know this is a Psalm of David. I I was thankful that little bit was read at the beginning. David was of the tribe of Judah and there arise that no priest we read in Hebrews from Judah. But I think David all his life wished he was part of that family of Aaron. He longed to be in the Lord's presence. It's expressed over and over in the Psalms. And I think the, I think perhaps the highest point in David's life was when the ark was being brought back to Jerusalem and he put on a linen ephod, he put on a priestly garment, and he got as close as he could to the ark and he danced before the Lord. This was going to be his only opportunity. And he wanted it and he wasn't going to give it up because once that arc went in behind the curtains of that tent, it was close to him. And so he took advantage and he got as close as he could. In the 15th Psalm, where we get God finding the man, He's looking for the first verses who shall abide in thy Tabernacle. That was David's longing to abide as close as he could to the Lord. And then now in this Psalm. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance. How close to the Lord can we get? How close do we want to be? He is our portion. We see that David tells him how Thou and Zyba divide the law, but the fibership was so occupied with the person he didn't give any thought for. The material possessions, he said that Zaiba could have it all. So here's one who has occupation with Christ. I would suggest another thought to in connection with that phrase.

Thou maintainest my lot. And in connection with what Brother Ted was saying, we all have. A certain lot in life and yes, on the one side it is connected with our circumstances. A brother long since with the Lord used to remind us that God doesn't put his Saints into a classroom. He has an individual tuition for each one. But then there is in that sense to a certain, shall we say? Lot that each one of us has connected with the enjoyment of Christ and all that he is. Yes, it's all there for us. Everything of Christ is available to us. I trust we enjoy as much as possible, but being human and being what we are, we are generally characterized by a particular enjoyment of certain things perhaps. Where others have a special enjoyment of something else, all that is quite an order. That's why in a reading meeting like this, it's nice to hear from different brothers. But then it says thou maintainest my life. What a wonderful thing that is. Sometimes when it comes to going through circumstances, we can get discouraged. And it was mentioned in prayer this morning that there may be those here who are heavily burdened, those who are passing through difficult circumstances. Maybe it's family problems, maybe difficulties in the local assembly where we are. Maybe something to do with financial problems, maybe health problems, maybe a combination of many different things. Thou maintain us my life. But then what about the enjoyment of Christ? Does He maintain that for us to? Indeed He does, and if we are willing to follow Him, we can trust Him to maintain those precious things for us. A brother. One of our old writers back in the 1800s made this remark. It meant much to my own soul, he said. If the Lord sees in you and me any desire in our hearts to go after Christ, we can depend on him to work it in US. He will work it in us. He will, if necessary, put us through circumstances. He will make Christ real to us. If there's a desire there, that is a very precious thing. And so He maintains our lot, whether it's in the enjoyment of Christ, whether it is passing through difficult circumstances which ultimately are designed to increase our enjoyment of Christ, and of course, ultimately a view of coming glory. And we can recognize and appreciate that it is the Lord that does that for us. So he says yeah, I have a goodly. Heritage. And if we could see enough in all of our circumstances, again particularly in the adverse circumstances, that we have a goodly heritage. Than we can gain and everything give thanks. Says her brother said God has arranged all our circumstances so that we could gain price, so that we could enjoy Christ in them. So tell us, Brother Ted, how could the Lord Jesus say prophetically here the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, when he knew that he was going to be rejected and went for the most part from the human side, his life looked like a complete failure. How could he talk like that? Well, two thoughts come to mind. One is for the joy that was set before him, you could see. When that seed fell into the ground and died, he was looking for what would be produced from that beyond the grave, when actually he would have you and I, he would have all of us there as his produce. You might say, the result of that seed falling into the ground and dying.

And in connection with that, I don't want to do all the speaking, but turn to a verse in Second Timothy chapter 2. I believe the Lord through Paul was encouraging Timothy when things were starting to break up, when ruin was already starting to come into the church, when the precious things that Paul had so strenuously labored for were already beginning to be laid aside. And Paul has to say in the first chapter all day, which are in Asia, be turned away from me. In Second Timothy 2. He says. In verse 8. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel. But allow me to quote that as it appears in the Darby translation. It's a little different. It reads Remember Jesus Christ of the seed of David raised from the dead. According to my gospel, a little difference. It is not so much that we need to remember the fact of the resurrection. But remember the one who was raised from the dead. What does that mean? I believe the thought is that did the Lord Jesus see the results of faithfulness and obedience and submission to the Father's will during His pathway down here? No, he did not. As Ted has been bringing out all of the blessing, all of the glory, all of the results of it came in resurrection. And you and

I, if we are faithful to the Lord. May not see the results of that faithfulness down here. We may not see the results of following Christ, submitting to his will, walking before Him in a world that has rejected Him and will reject us. But. In this Psalm we will experience the blessedness of His preserving care over us, but we look on to the glory of the reward for a pathway of faithfulness to the Lord will be, not down here necessarily, but in coming glory. There's a beautiful progression in these Psalms that lines up with that because you get the present enjoyment of that inheritance in verse 6. But he's, it's a present enjoyment of what he's looking on to in the future. And then in the 17th Psalm, you get in the 15th verse. As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awaken Thy likeness there in resurrection. He's going to come into the good. And possession in Psalm 18 is a resurrection Psalm. It's remarkable in the beginning verses of that Psalm how it lines up. With a with a very circumstances that surround the resurrection of the Lord, the earthquake. The stone was rolled back, the Angel sat upon it. His face was like lightning. The keepers fellas dead at his at before that appearance of the Angel, the Lord was raised from the dead. God raised him, His beloved Son from the dead. Until you see the picture of God coming down on the cherubs. He flies down. And he raises him from the depths, and then he teaches my hands to war. And you get the the Lord as a man of war coming out of heaven to take that which is his by right. It's a beautiful Psalm. And so there's a progression, a present anticipation and present enjoyment of what's to come. Having it in resurrection and then going on and taking possession of it in power and glory in the 18th Psalm. It's a beautiful progression. We're going to go through that with him.

We're going to go through it with him. So we've been talking about how this is Speaking of the Lord Jesus and his enjoyment of those pleasant places. When He was going through trial as a man on earth, and it was in anticipation of those things. And I think if I understood rightly, spoke of two things. One was the joy of doing the Father's will. The other is the joy of having us that coming day. And I'd just like to go to verses to support that because we do often speak of it on the first one, just in Psalm 40. Psalm 40. Psalm 40. These are well known verses, but it's good to see them. Verse 7 Then said, I lo, I come in the volume of the book, it is written of me, I delight to do thy will. Oh my God, hear thy laws within my heart. Was no doubt His first and primary delight, wasn't it, to do the will of His thought and his Father? And so that was the lines. Late in pleasant places. For him, no matter what the cost, but it also includes us. And I think that's wonderful to see from my point of view, our point of view. And just reverse on that. Matthew chapter 13. Matthew 13 and verse 44 Again, the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field, Speaking of us individually, unlike the Pearl which follows. He says, The witch, when a man hath found, he hide it, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Oh, the Lord had a joy. In going to the cross, because of you and me as well, didn't he? So it's really precious to see these two things and then to consider in our chapter his attitude as a man on earth, to look forward to that and just take it as pleasant places where the lion were laid. Hard to think of of those things when we go through trial. But the Lord is bringing us to the trial, to bring us into something that we wouldn't have had if we didn't have the trial. And the Lord plainly saw that, and He's Speaking of that here. But what would have happened if the Lord took up the Kingdom when He was here on earth? He had the right to it. What would have been the loss, or what would have been our loss if we had never gotten out of Eden? Tremendous loss, that would be. Those were pleasant enough, but nothing compared to what was gained by his death and resurrection and by whatever trials that we might be LED through the things that He brings us through for His own glory. In the 18th Psalm, there's another ninth bird, verse 19. Brought before also into a large place. Delivered me because he delighted in me. We think of the Lord's goodness to the children of Israel, providing them that land of Canaan, that land which milk and honey. But they had to go in and possess that man, didn't they? And we think of the Lord's blessings to the children of Israel as they went through the wilderness. He provided matter for them on a daily basis and. We see later on that they despise that, like to just read a verse that we have in Psalm 106. Says verse 24. Gay they despise the pleasant land. They believe not his word so. Let us value these things. Let us value the position the Lord has brought us into. And not like those that we read about here in Psalm 106.

So I cannot really experience in our Psalm verse six very well unless I have fully appreciated verse 5. My eye is really on the Lord if He really fills my heart, and if I really trust Him to maintain my lot, it's only then that I can look on present circumstances as being. As it says here, the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places. Again, we emphasize it is not easy to say when you're in the middle of difficult circumstances, and it's easy to talk about it when you're not going through it. But when we are going through very difficult circumstances, the test is, is the Lord really the portion of my inheritance and my copy? Do I really trust Him as Brother Rob was bringing out? It takes us back to the first verse. Preserve me, O God, for thee do I put my trust. And that's the only way we will be preserved. Otherwise Satan will persuade me that those difficult circumstances are not worth it to follow the Lord. I better look or look for a way around them. And Satan is quite ready through compromise to. Perhaps allow us to go through something a little easier. But all of those circumstances, as we have often remarked, are designed for blessing for us and to bring us closer to Christ. Like to link this to. Because of the portion of mind inherits. Think this to Matthew chapter 6. That's the first part of verse 21 for where your treasure is. There will your heart be also. So treasure is something that we value, portion is something that we value. And so. We have these wonderful verses both in Psalm 16 and in Matthew chapter 6. So going on to verse 7. We find a further revelation. It is the Lord that gives us counsel. I suppose one of the commonest questions that is often raised. How can I know the Lord's mind for a particular decision that I have to make in my life? How can I know the Lord's mind for a particular situation that arises? And we have to say that there is no human parameter by which we can judge the Lord's mind. Yes, if we have a positive scripture for us, that settles it. But there are many decisions in life, in the Christian life, that we cannot in that same sense have a positive scripture for. Rather, we have to rely on that statement again in the Psalms here, that the secret of the Lord is within that fear Him. And it's in communion with the Lord that by the Spirit of God we can learn the Lord's mind. But is he willing to give us counsel? Is He willing to make his mind known? Indeed He is. But sometimes we find, and I speak to my own heart, that in seeking to know the Lord's mind in a circumstance, we find that the Lord brings us into His presence by perhaps not giving us an immediate answer. Why is that? Oh, perhaps I have gotten away from Him. Perhaps there is that in my life which I have allowed, which I have not judged in His presence. And then when I go to the Lord seeking his mind, I don't get an answer. I find that I can't pray in the right way. I find that I don't get immediate guidance. Well, of course, sometimes the Lord does not give me guidance until I really need it, but at the same time, the Lord uses all of that to bring us back to Him. And so sometimes the question of guidance.

Well, I shouldn't let me rephrase that. The question of knowing the Lord's mind cannot be separated from our state of soul. And that's a very, very important principle to recognize. I cannot talk about being guided of the Lord without bringing my state of soul into the picture. And that's why I believe, and I just suggest the thought. Maybe others have another thought. But the latter part of the verse says my reigns also instruct me in the night season. I believe the rains in Scripture very often are a reference to the kidneys in the human body. And as most of us know, the kidneys are largely used to purify our blood. Now they have other functions, but for our purposes this morning, I believe the thought of purification is a good one if I wish to know the Lord's mind and to have His counsel. I have to be ready to allow that purification process which the Lord seeks to do in our lives, and I would suggest it's a very important thing that the Lord wants to bring before us, something

which is very necessary to recognize. With the night night seasons or nighttime speak of those times when things aren't real clear. You know when the lights on, when it's day and bright, you don't really think about having to navigate. It's pretty clear where you walk. You're not going to trip over things. Typically it's lights on, pretty clear things that are playing. But the night time is when things aren't like that. And I wonder too, if perhaps it's Speaking of the fact that many times when things aren't clear in our lives. We sense restrictions on ourselves. And sometimes we feel like that restriction is uncomfortable, but it's a great time to get in the Lord's presence and to enjoy communion with Him. A notable teacher in the past and said that, you know, when he was laid low, it was a very valuable time to him. Most times when he was laid low and restricted from going about and so on, he gained a lot in those times through his communion with the Lord. So I'm just looking at the reins a little differently here as being restrictions that are upon us often times in our lives. When we would rather they not be there, but they teach us in those times when things are not so clear. Another practical point in connection with this verse seven. I will bless the Lord. And I think that that's an important part of having trust in the Lord is taking the time to look back at your life and my life and understanding how the Lord has guided me and directed me in the past helps me trust for the future. Before we go on, just want to go back real briefly to something my brother said. About believing and that being the key to our enjoying Christ in our adverse circumstances. That is the key is to believe. It was unbelief that was the result of all the failure code of Israel. And I just thought of this verse in Romans, Romans chapter 15 and verse 13. It's a beautiful verse. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. That's the key. Especially in those adverse circumstances or when times aren't clear that God would fill you with all joy and peace in believing. Leaving is the key. Well, it's a wonderful thing always to have before us the goodness of God, isn't it? I can remember well many years ago now, at least 3035 years ago now, speaking to a dear sister in Christ. And I say it with all humility, I trust, because it could happen to me. She was very clearly away from the Lord. She was in tears because of difficulties and problems in her life.

And she was very obviously, in speaking to her, I could not help but notice that she was very obviously very bitter about the way things had gone. Very bitter. I said to her, Have you been able to take these circumstances to the Lord? Now she was old enough to be my mother, so I was respectful in the way that I spoke to her. But I said, Have you been able to take these circumstances to the Lord in prayer and lay them out before Him? Oh, she said. I've tried to do that, but the Lord doesn't answer me. He doesn't give me any answer. Perhaps a little more recently, but still a good many years ago, there was a dear brother who was going through difficult circumstances, a brother younger than I, and I cringed at hearing his remark. He says he said to me, I trusted the Lord and I hesitate to repeat his words, but he said. But the Lord let me down. Was that true? Indeed, not, indeed, not in both cases. And I say it, I guess again with humility, because it could happen to any of us. There was something in the lives of both of those individuals. I believe the dear sister I did not know so well. I do not know what the Lord was talking to her about. The other dear brother I knew somewhat about. But I believe the Lord had something that He wanted to bring before them, wanted to teach them something in their lives that He wanted them to judge. And instead of dealing with it, there was a serious doubt in their hearts as to the goodness of God. Dear Job, thousands of years ago, had to learn that lesson, that he was to justify God first of all. And then to say to the Lord, if he didn't understand that, which I see not. Teach thou me. May that be our prayer. So that, as Rob has reminded us. We bless the Lord for the counsel He has given us in the past and at the same time allow Him to teach us what we need to learn. In present circumstances. Just another thought on the night. The night is when it's quiet. The night is when there's no activity. And. Sometimes the Lord needs to get us in a quiet place before we really hear what He has to say to us. All the activity of life and the things that can occupy us sometimes shut out what he has to say to us. And so it's in a night season, in a quiet time, that we can hear his voice when everything else has been done and put away and responsibilities are done. He needs to get us in a place where it's quiet. In the 17th chapter and verse three it says Thou hast proved. My heart, thou hast visited me in the night. Thou hast tried me. And we're familiar with that verse and Psalm 30. Especially the latter part of the verse. Weeping may endure for a night or for a season, but joy cometh in the morning. So it's often in the night when. We plead with the Lord. But we see as a result of that. There would be a period of joy in the morning. The next verse I have set the Lord always before me connected with the thought of preserve me, O God for and thee do I put my trust reminds us of first Peter and chapter one verse five we read who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time we are kept by the power of God and that's the only way we can be kept.

But he says it's through faith, so we're kept by the power of God. In setting the correct, the right object for our faith before us, that's how we're kept. And so I have set the Lord always before me. Do you want to be kept by the power of God? Then you have to have the right object before your soul. You have to have the Lord before you. Is that second Corinthians sub? After four or five. Looking for where he says that. I've got it wrong where he says I've not attained these. Not that I have attained so this one thing I do. Hebrews, Philip. Philippians 3. Is that the reference? Yeah, I'm sorry. Thank you. Yes, it's Philippians 3. Yeah, verse 12. Not as though I had already attained either were already perfect, but I follow after it, that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended. And forgetting the things that are behind verse 13, pressing forward toward the mark. Or to set the Lord before you, that's like. Making him your goal, right? And it is only when we set Him before us that, as the latter part of the verse says, we will not be moved. Again, we trust. We say it with all humility and respect. How many dear believers are being moved today? How many are being moved away? From. What is honoring to the Lord? Moved away from what the Word of God teaches, and Satan is very, very active today to bring us to that point where we are, shall I say, in a position where we can be moved. It's very sad to see and again we say it could happen to anyone of us if we get away from the Lord, unless He is before us, we will easily be moved. And how easy it is to have our eye taken off the Lord, taken off what is due to Him, taken off what His word says, and then we're in a position to be moved. David felt in his life the threat of that and we know that speaking for the moment about David, there were times in his life when he was moved. There was a time when a man by the name of name of Nabal refused to give any help and food to David when he was in rejection. And David became so upset and angry at the circumstance that his reaction to it, instead of trusting the Lord was. Gergie on every man his sword. And had it not been for the intervention of Nabel's wife Abigail? There would have been bloodshed on another occasion, we know when things were going rather badly for David. He said, I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul. And what does he do? He defects to the Philistines, goes over to active the king of the Philistines, and says, I'll be on your side now. Well, the Lord in his grace and in his Providence allowed that when David was ready to go to war with the Philistines against his own nation. The Lords of the Philistines said no way, He'll turn on us eventually and fight with his own nation. No, you're not going with us, David. I believe that was the Lord's preserving care over David. But he was moved. There were times in his life and discouragement took over. And it can happen to us too, where the difficulties become so great that we are in a position to be moved. The antidote is what we have here. I have set the Lord always before me because He is at my right hand. If I go through every circumstance in life as if the Lord were right here at my right hand, it will be a wonderful keeping power to us.

And this defined the Lord's own life perfectly, didn't it? There's. Vivid example of it just before the cross at the end of John 16. Illustrates this verse very well. Verse 32 John 1632 Behold, the hour cometh, Yay. It is now come that you shall be scattered, every man to his own. You shall

leave me alone. Why, they didn't have the Lord before them. They were thinking about their own trial and difficulty. But he goes on, and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. It's where the Lord left it, wasn't it? It's a perfect example of all these things. Could we add one more scripture to that Tim in the 12Th of John? I. We find the most awful dilemma in verse 27 of John 12. The most awful dilemma from 1 eternity to another when here the Creator and the Sustainer of the universe has to say. Now is my sole trouble, and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour, but for this cause cometh came I under this hour. And in keeping with what you presented, Tim, what answers the question? Father, glorify thy name. Settle the issue, didn't it? And it'll settle many, many problems for us if we simply look up and say Father. Glorified thy name. I look again at those words that we. Have in our chapter in connection with the Pleasant places. And. We think of all that the ward has given to us. I think of a question that Saul put before the children of Israel. And First Samuel, chapter 22. In verse seven of that chapter says, Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him. Here now he Benjamites, will, the son of Jesse, give everyone of you fields and vineyards, and make you captains of thousands and captains of hundreds. Oh, he did not realize what was. In the Heart of David and. He usurped. What belonged to David for himself? And so we know it would would have been the desire of David to bless those. But he is ascribed a wrong motive there, isn't it? But we know that God desires to bless his children. And give each 1A portion. And Satan would. Come before us, just like Saul, hear and say God doesn't want to bless you. And we see that in the very lie that we have in Genesis. Satan told Adam that God had withheld something from him. And here we have Saul. Ascribing something to David's heart that was not in his heart. And may we ever value that which He has for us. Now that we got down to this eighth verse, I'd just like to go back to something Brother Bill said to be in the meeting. I remember you correctly. You said that the Psalms, well, this Psalm was the Psalm, the Mick Pam of David. It was a Psalm of David where David spoke somewhat of his own experience, but the Psalm goes beyond his experience to that which could only be true of the Lord. That's what you said, and we hear that often.

This verse is. One of the proofs of that, if you connect it with Acts chapter two, I think we should look at that because we often hear these things, but it's good to know why they're said. So Acts chapter 2 where Peter speaking on the day of Pentecost. He quotes these next 3 verses and beginning with this verse eight and then nine and 10. So Acts 2 is speaking in verse 22. You men of Israel hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, man of truth, of God, and so on. And then verse 25. He said for David speaketh concerning him. I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on or at my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad. We're over. Also my flesh will rest in hope, because I will not leave my soul in hell. Neither wilt thou suffer, thine Holy One, to see corruption so very plainly. Here Peter, speaking by the Spirit of God, is saying what our brother brought before us. That this. Was not the case of David. David was Speaking of Christ, even if he didn't understand it, as Peter says in his first epistle, he knew that it was beyond his own experience and he spoke something prophetically. And now we're told this is about the Lord Jesus Christ. And so with the authority of the Word of God, we can come to this chapter and apply the things the way we're applying them in this meeting today. Well, the result of all this is verse 9. Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth. It's quite an expression. My glory rejoiceth. In acts that was just read to us, we find it says my tongue rejoiceth. Those who know Hebrew, and I am no Hebrew scholar, but those who know Hebrew, tell us that the word for glory in Hebrew is the same as the word for tongue, which apparently is characteristic of the Hebrew language. Many words have multiple meanings, and that's why it could be translated tongue in the New Testament, but it is really the present rejoicing in view. Of all that God is doing and is going to do for us. The wonderful thing that the Lord Jesus had before him was the glory ahead. There was glory going to come as a result of his work on the cross. And as Tim Tim Ruga has already brought out, there was more than one reason for it. But perhaps the main reason was as we get in Hebrews chapter 12. He was going to be able to go back to the father, having finished the work that the father gave him to do, and the joy of being able to go back and to say what he says in John 17. I have glorified thee on the earth. I have finished the work which Thou gave us me to do. But what was going to be the result of that? And now glorify thou me, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. And so there was going to be glory connected with all of that. And the Lord Jesus looked on to that glory and rejoiced in it. You and I can do the same. Is it our glory? In one sense, yes, because He shares it with us. But it is a glory that He has which he gives us, isn't it? It's a glory that He shares with us. But a glory that we will enjoy with them. And so you and I can walk through this world with glad hearts. Yes. Are there times when we pass through difficulties? Yes, we do. Are there times when we shed tears? Yes, we do, and there's nothing wrong with that. Are there times when the pathway is difficult? Yes. But through it all, the Lord will give us an inner joy, a gladness of heart, because there is that hope before us and we can look on to coming glory.

We've heard over the years, but it certainly bears repeating. You've never met a Christian at the end of their path that said they wish they hadn't followed the Lord. You'll meet plenty. Maybe you won't meet them, but there are plenty that will say, I wish I'd followed the Lord closer here. The Lord in this Psalm, he's facing certain death. He's looking onward beyond it to resurrection and beyond. And he can say, therefore, my heart is glad. The Christian path is a happy path. He was a man of sorrows, but we can see his path was a happy path. And he could look beyond what was just ahead of him to what would come. And resurrection he could say, my flesh shall rest in hope. His flesh would never see corruption. He was a sinless one. And his flesh would never see corruption. If we're laid in the grave, our flesh will, like David, see corruption. Nonetheless, I think we can apply it and say our flesh will rest in hope. Where is Paul today? His soul and spirit are in the presence of the Lord. He's enjoying the Lord, but his flesh is resting in hope. He hasn't realized his hope yet. And not one of those who have passed from this scene have realized their hope yet will realize it together when the Lord comes. And resurrection. And we're caught up to meet the Lord in the air. And then our hope will be realized in resurrection, just as the Lords was. I'm #64. Oh, bright and blessed. Can never fall in our long disturbance. Roger where Yak we all? Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. So that might have seen our string. I'm so tired. Our hearts are safe on it for them.

Shines through all. More. I can't like see. I. Oh, blessed is our voice when we. Love God. And our mind is here. Our needs are restore in the end in all of our souls. So. Oh. Right. For our. Destination. Yeah. Yeah.

Dorothy Conference: 2019, Psalm 16:1-4

Reading

Of all whose mercy? For me. All day. I can. Only dear how many days? Oh, I hear you. My. Right now. I pray to my name. Oh no. Reading John chapter 10. Chapter 10. Good Shepherd. 14. I am the Good Shepherd, know my sheep. As the Father knows me, Even so know I the Father. I lay down my life for the sheep. Another sheep I have which are not of this whole. Them also I must bring. They shall hear my voice. There shall be one cold, one shepherd. Therefore does my Father love me because I lay down my life. And I think it again.

Verse nine I am the door. I mean, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, shall go in and now find pastor. Him prayer. I would like to suggest a passage that we might take up. It's one that I cannot remember having heard taken up in a reading meeting, but I believe it could be very profitable for us. Psalm 16. It brings before us, and I'll just mention this for what my brethren might think of it, but it brings before us, as I'm sure many recognize, the. Pathway prophetically of our Lord Jesus Christ as the perfect dependent man and ultimately of course as a pattern for you and for me in our pathway down here as also. Walking a pathway of faith. Perfectly dependent on the Lord and a pathway which ends in glory. That be suitable. Nice. Chapter 16. Midstone of David. Preserve me, O God, for in Thee do I put my trust. O my soul, Thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord. My goodness extended extendeth not to thee, but to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. Their sorrow shall be multiplied that hasten after another God. Their drink, offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup. Maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places. Yeah, I have a goodly heritage. I will bless the Lord who hath given me. Counsel my reigns also instruct me in the night seasons. I have set the Lord always before me, because He is at my right hand. I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth. My flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou will not leave my soul in hell, neither will thou suffer mine. Holy One, to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life. In Thy presence is fullness of joy. At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. Just another remark or true concerning this song. As we said a moment ago, it brings before us the pathway, ultimately at the Lord Jesus Himself. He addresses God and addresses. Him as my Lord and as Jehovah, and so on, taking the position of the perfect dependent man down here. We live in a complicated world today, getting more complicated and difficult all the time. For some of us here in these favored lands, we don't suffer the outward persecution that many of our dear brethren in some countries suffer. But Satan is working very hard to turn everything against the believer and to bring everything into line with his that is Satan's thoughts, and so that ultimately we find that it is a more and more difficult world. In which to live and move. But the precious thing is that there is one who came right down into this world where we are and went through it.

Experiencing everything that a sinless man could experience in the pathway of faith and went through it in perfect dependence on his God and Father for everything. And now here this is penned for us, I believe. To encourage you and me to go through a complicated, sinful and difficult world. Which is ultimately Satan's world and to be able to walk a pathway of faithfulness to the Lord. Independence upon him and a pathway which, as we see at the end of the Psalm, ends in glory. And so I would suggest that there is something in this Psalm for every one of us, even for children and those that are in public school here, because you are already feeling the complications of the kind of a world in which we Live Today. But what a blessed thing it is to realize. There is another who has already walked that pathway and marked it out for us, and the only one who had a right to live, if we could say it reverently, independently chose to walk a pathway of dependence in order to market that pathway out for you and for me. I think the way you explain that is very helpful. I don't know how many have had the experience that I have had, but you come back to this Psalm. And it's not hard to recognize that the Psalm is speaking about the Lord Jesus since it's quoted in Acts and directly applied to him by the Spirit of God. And we'll get to that further down the chapter. But you come back here to this chapter and you look at what is spoken of and the thought of him putting his trust in God. And even more difficult, what we get in verse two. My goodness extends not to Thee. You think, how could this be the Son of God? But it helps to understand the Psalm as you've explained it, that it's the Lord Jesus taking his position as a man. And although his perfect man, it expresses a place, a position he took in this world as subject man in this world, and it's viewed that way. And to look at it beyond that. To see in this Psalm an expression of the Lord Jesus as God would be confusing, even though he is God. But that's not the expression of this Psalm, is it? Yes, when He came into this world, He did not come into this world exhibiting His Godhead glory. And we say it with all reverence and yet with all truth. Had the Lord Jesus acted in this world in any way other than in perfect dependence, He would not have been an example for us. Would it have been wrong for him, for example after the temp, or I should say during the temptations in the wilderness? To change stones into bread in order to have something to eat? No, it would not have been morally wrong, but it would have been stepping outside of the pathway of dependence. You and I, we say it reverently, could rightfully have said, well, I don't have the power to make stones into bread, I don't have that. So that if I'm hungry, what do I do? But here was one who depended perfectly on his father for everything. Perfectly on God as God, and he addresses him as God here in order that he might be the perfect example for you and me in the kind of world in which we live. And so the first thing he says is preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust. And I say to my own heart, that ought to be my prayer every morning when I get up.

Before I go about my work, before I, in the case of those who go out to work, go out the door. Before I engage in anything to recognize that as creatures we need the preserving care of the Lord every step of the way. We can't really take one step without being dependent on the Lord, and He doesn't want us to, does He? But if we go independence upon Him, we will find that that trust is never misplaced. Never misplaced. It's not. Not to take away from the application that that you've been. Put before us as the Lord as our example, but it's also true. That the principle of sin is a will. Acting in independence of God. And we know that man started with the very first man. Man failed. The Lord Jesus came as a man. And never exercised his will as a man. He said that. He's getting come to do my own will, and he said I do nothing but what the Father hath commanded me. So it wasn't just to be our example, but to fulfill God's purpose with respect to the first man. Otherwise, he could not be the perfect sacrifice. He had to be perfect as a man. Order to be the perfect sacrifice for us to take our place in judgment. So his perfection as a man was essential to his being our substitute. He never is, brother Bill said. He never stepped out of that place, and you'll notice in the temptation in the wilderness. Bill, you, you referred to it, if we look at that in Matthew Chapter 4. See comes to him and he says. If thou be. The Son of God. But he was was the Son of God. But Satan is trying to get him to act in that capacity. And to step out of the place of man. But the Lord's response to him is what? Man shall not live by bread alone. As if to say, you want me to take a step out of this place, just for a moment. And exercise my power is the son of God, but I'm not going to and so he shows I'm here as man. So there was a there was a temptation in the very fact that Satan tries to get him to act in capacity as the Son of God. He was and he said he was, but he never acted in that capacity. He forever stayed while he was here. He stayed in the place of man, not only to be our example, but because it was essential to him being. Qualified, you might say, as our substitute. It's interesting to take those thoughts and then just turn back a page. In Matthew chapter 3, when the Lord came to John at the River Jordan, where he was baptizing those who came in repentance for their sins to wait for the Messiah to come. It was a baptism of repentance. The Lord comes and John. It says verse 14 forbade him. The Lord came to be baptized and he forbade him. He had nothing to repent of. He was a perfect man. I have need to be baptized of thee, and cometh thou to me. Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him, and when? And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him in a voice, and lo, a voice.

From heaven, saying, This is my beloved son, whom in whom I am well pleased. The the beauty of it is this perfect man who needs no repentance comes down and he says what these ones are doing, they're coming and being baptized and repenting. It's the right thing, it's

righteous and I'm going to take my place with them and I'm in taking my place. I'm going to stand with them that this is the right thing before God to do. Though he had no need of such a baptism personally, God opens the heavens and marks him out that He is that perfect man, His well beloved Son. And what's I want to connect with that is when we go back to our Psalm and look at the two preceding psalms that lead up to the 16th Psalm and Psalm 14, we get God looking down from heaven and He's looking for a man. And in Psalm 14, he says the Lord looked down from heaven to see the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They're all gone aside, they're all together, become filthy. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. And then the question arises in the 15th Psalm. Lord, who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth with his heart, and so on. That was the Lord. He's looking for a man. In Psalm 14 he finds the man. In Psalm 15, perfect, spotless, flawless man. And then that man identifies himself in Psalm 16 with a faithful remnant, and he takes the place that they have before God, And His expressions are their expressions and His experiences their experience, and He identifies himself with them just as the Lord did at the river Jordan with those repentant ones. Picture of the remnant waiting for the coming of the Son of God. Another thing to realize too, in the Lord, not in the Lord being a perfect man in perfect dependence on God, is that we tend to think that we should not follow our own will because it's sinful. That's not the reason we should not exercise our own will and independence of God, because that's not our place. The Lord's will was perfect, and Bill alluded to this, that the Lord, there's no sin in him, and he was the Son of God. What would be wrong with him exercising his whip? So it's not a question of whether of our sinful nature or any of that is the fact that God has to be given his place and we have to take our place and we should be the Lord's example is perfect. He had, he had no sin, nothing wrong with his will, and yet he still submitted to God and still laid aside his own will. Yes, it is always the proper place for the creature to submit to the will of God. And as you say. The question of sin for the moment doesn't really enter into it. Yes, because I am a fallen creature. My will is characterized by sin, which the Lords was not. But the proper position for the creature is to be submissive to the will of God. And the Lord Jesus takes that place and will not depart out of it for you and for me. That is our position. Not one that we take voluntarily as the Lord did, but one in which we were born. And thus it is always correct for us to be in a place of submission. And of course. For the believer, what a wonderful thing it is to recognize that in submission and dependence on the Lord, we can, as we said earlier, we can walk a pathway of faithfulness to Him through this world and honor Him in a difficult world. In spite of all the distractions, all the difficulties, everything that may present itself to us.

I used to wonder, listening to some old meetings, especially some addresses by Brother HE Hayhoe. I never knew. And he would love to read those expressions in the Gospels where the heavens open. This is my beloved son and whom I have found all my delight. And he would stress that all. And I went looking for it and I couldn't find one of them that said all. I used to enjoy the way he expressed it, but it it troubled me. Why aren't why does it the the Father say from heaven and whom I found all my delight? Well, there may be more than one answer, but a brother pointed me to Psalm 16 years later and he says verse two reads but to the Saints that are in the earth and to the excellent in whom is all my delight. Oh, when he has his Saints identified with him, then the Father says, In whom I found all my delight. What grace that we should be brought into that place, identified with Him in such a way that the Father can look down and say of Him with His Saints, and found all my delight. He are they who have continued with me in my temptation, and moments later they were sucking and fled. That's us. And yet He says whom I have found all my delight. The Father loveth you because you know that. He believed that I came out from him. It's a marvel, I think, when you read that verse, to think of ourselves, an application included in that expression of delight. Just one more comment on the second verse. We notice that the first reference to Lord is in capitals which could and properly should be translated Jehovah, which brings into focus of people in relationship in the Old Testament with Jehovah. But then the next one says, Thou art my Lord. I say to my own heart, am I willing to say that? Not merely once, as if, well, I've said it. I've recognized God as having lordship over me. I've recognized as the Lord Jesus did the lordship of one over me, and recognize the Lord Jesus ultimately as also my Lord. But do I do that on a steady, regular basis? Every day of my life is the Lordship of Christ, that which characterizes our lives. Oh, I would only say to my own heart and to each one of us how important that is. It says in another place, there are gods many and Lords many, and there are many voices in this world today, many of those who want to tell us what to do, many who want to try and direct our lives in various ways and with seeming authority and seemingly knowing what they're talking about. But there is only one for the believer. To whom we should say properly, Thou art my Lord. And here was none other, as Steve has been bringing out, than the Lord Jesus Christ himself. He is God, as we've been noticing, and yet he comes into this world, takes the position of the creature, and says to Jehovah. Thou art my Lord. Now of course, in this kind of an expression it gets a bit beyond our human understanding, because was the Lord Jesus Jehovah? Indeed He was, indeed He is, but he, we might say for the moment. In his earthly pathway, steps out of that place, takes the place of a creature and then says to the Lord, says to God, thou art my Lord. And as a creature he submits as a creature. We get it in the 50th chapter of Isaiah. He recognizes that every morning his ears need to be opened and he says, I, I open my ears.

In order to hear what what the Lord had to say to him. And so that ought to be your position, and mine Thou art, my Lord. And then to go about whatever the Lord gives us for that day with that thought in mind. Well, going on with what brother Steve was saying, what a precious thing it is to. Recognize that the Lord looks down at you and me, and as it says, here he finds. US. Nothing but lost, guilty sinners before we were saved, but he calls us the excellent. Now here, of course, we know that ultimately it refers to the godly Jews, the godly Jewish remnant, those who, when the gospel of the Kingdom was preached by John the Baptist, and then later by the Lord himself, came and submitted themselves to that baptism of repentance and confessed their sins. And took their place alongside the Lord Jesus, separating themselves from a guilty nation that would not and did not recognize Him. But for you and for me, it's not a baptism of repentance in the same way, but it's taking our place alongside a rejected Christ in this world, isn't it? One who has been cast out and crucified, One whom this world has said about. We will not have this man to reign over us. That is just the same as it was nearly 2000 years ago when they cast him out. And yet the Lord Himself can look down on you and me in the midst of that kind of a world and say You are the excellent in whom is all my delight. Why is Brother Steve is brought out? Because we are associated with his beloved son. We recognize him and honor him. What a precious privilege that is in the day of his rejection. Our brother this morning read that verse in the 110th Psalm. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. Oh yes, there is a day coming when the godly ones in Israel will recognize their Messiah and will own Him in the day of His power. But what a precious thing it is to own Him now in the day of His rejection. Just a little word on that expression. My goodness extendeth not to the, but to the Saints. So on. I think the thought there is that. We don't profit the Lord, if I can put it that way. Not that He doesn't appreciate what we do, not that He doesn't want us to serve Him, and so on, but He profits us. He is not dependent upon us, but we are dependent upon Him. And so I think that that's the thought of the goodness in that way. That. We're dependent upon Him to receive goodness. He is not dependent upon us to receive. Anything. Again, not to discount appreciation on his part for anything that we do for him. That's not the point. But he we need him. It's not so much that he needs us and the and the worshiper in the Psalm. He just owns that freely. But how would you put that in the context of the Lord expressing this? I think it's when he identifies himself with a remnant, He comes right into their place and and so much so that he can express in his own words, their words.

Maybe there's at least that's how I've enjoyed it. Yes, I believe it's the Lord Jesus so fully identifying himself as taking the place of perfect dependence himself, and he identifies with those who sought the Lord in such a complete way that he takes it well. You've expressed it well, Brother Steve, he says in that sense. I am now the receiver of God's goodness to me. Rather than the one who is extending goodness. Now was he able to extend goodness as God? Indeed he was. And let none ever take away from the preciousness of the fullness of the Godhead. Colossians 2 expresses it in very clear words. In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. We cannot in any way. Take away from that, but the Lord Jesus, as the perfect dependent man says I step out of that position and in that sense I don't dispense goodness. In that sense I do it as the one who is perfectly dependent and who represents the Father. And so when he does His good works, he says the Father that liveth in me, He doeth the works. Did the Lord Jesus not have power to do those mighty works of miracles? Of course He did, and He had we say it with all reverence, the right as God to do them. But he doesn't exert that right. He says my Father, and he does them. How? By the power of the Spirit of God in him. And so in every way he takes that place alongside those godly ones and says, I am not for the moment taking my place as being the one who dispenses goodness, but I am the one who is merely a channel of it. I would have to say I I've struggled a little bit just because of the. Where the King James is written here, I think you have the J&D in your mind. But we're reading the King James, aren't we? Says My goodness extends not to thee, but to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight. It almost looks like he's not. His goodness isn't extending to God, but to the Saints. But what you're saying is, I think, more in keeping with the King James or the J&D translation. If I understand you right, which is my goodness extends not to thee, then he puts a colon, and then there's the break right where now it's God is extending his goodness towards us to the Saints that are in the earth and to the excellent thou hast said in them is all my delight. A very different thought altogether. So I I think it might be helpful for us to go away from the rendering in our King James and see how Mr. Darby has that. Might say what is written in the Arabic translation. Maybe another meeting? Arabic translation. Say thou art my God. Thou art my Lord. Thou art my goodness. And there is none but. It says like the Lord Jesus had received God, thou art my Lord, thou art my goddess, and that. Could you repeat that? OK. My goodness. And there is none but the. Thou art my Lord, my good, My goodness, there is none but.

Interesting, did everyone hear that? The Arabic reads Thou art my Lord, thou art my goodness, and there is none but thee. Well, if we go on to the fourth verse, we find other gods brought in, and these were the bane of the nation of Israel right up until the captivity. A very solemn thing. They continually turned after other gods. And you and I might perhaps legitimately say, well, I guess we don't have to worry about that. We would never think that putting up an idol made of wood or stone or silver or gold or something and bowing down before it. But the idolatry of the Old Testament, I believe, is the worldliness of the New Testament. And so we are told to flee from idolatry. And I don't believe the apostle was referring to. Actual idols. John in his epistle says little children are children. Keep yourselves from idols. And I don't believe he meant literal idols. Anything that comes between US and God himself and takes that place before him is another God. And there are many gods in the world today, aren't there? Many things we have in North America that we might call other gods? Wealth, pleasure, prestige, just to name a few, and many other things that we can pursue after that ultimately become our gods. This says Hasten after another God, is in italics. So. This is this answering to what's in verse two, he says in verse 2. Thou art my Lord or my Master. Yes. And then here is saying their souls were multiplied. Who would go after another other than the Lord? Is that right? I think there's an important practical lesson between the end of verse one and the beginning or the contents of verse four. It's around the word trust. Those who trust in the Lord will not come to harm. But those who go after the kinds of things that our brother Bill was describing are putting themselves in harm's way in the way of sorrow. We know, for example, that riches make themselves wings and flee away. So you may think you have a nice big bank account, but it can be gone in a hurry. You may think that your friends are going to give you the happiness and satisfaction that you need in your life, but they can turn on you. You may think that your wife or your husband will give you the satisfaction. That you need in life, but so many of those relationships end up broken. Especially if we don't keep the Lord Jesus in them. So just like to by way of illustration, I've seen that Father sometimes be able to lift their children to the ceiling. And as long as the child trusts their father, they'll keep their body rigid and they'll be enjoying the ride as their father maybe lifts them with one hand or two hands towards the ceiling and not afraid of the height. But when they start to think about how high they're going and they stop thinking about their father and the relationship that they have, then they go all limp and try and fall and everything comes down. So by way of illustration, I'd like to just encourage myself like Brother Bill was saying, preserve me. Oh God. It's an important thing, but it has to do with understanding who it is that is preserving us. It's not my bank account, it's not my friends, it's not my family, it's not my job, it's my God. Everything that I have, I've received from him. So I need to trust Him with all my heart. And when we start not trusting Him, that's when we start turning away that we have in the fourth verse, and it's a path of sorrow. Satan will come and offer us a a shortcut to pleasure, won't he?

There's another way that you can be happy. And that we find also in the temptation. She brought up the. That's the last one, isn't it? He offered the Lord a shortcut to the Kingdom, didn't he? You can have all these, all the kingdoms of the world, if you'll just bow down and worship me. Yeah. And the Lord says to him, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only. Shalt thou serve? He wouldn't do it. And so again, he's the perfect example of what's put before us in this verse, isn't it? There's another kind of God. As well that's become prevalent. Think of the scripture. God's many, Lords many. And it's illustrated in the end of the book of Judges. The last few chapters of the book of Judges are moral appendix. There are counts that take place in the beginning of the book, and they give us the reason for the moral decline of the children of Israel. Throughout that book, two things happen. First man named Micah takes a little silver, and he makes a God. In the end, the tribe of Dan picks up that God and a whole tribe goes into idolatry. What did he do? He took a little silver. What we know, what Silver speaks of in Scripture, it speaks of redemption. He takes one attribute, you might say, of God, and he makes himself a God that suits his thoughts, the way he thinks, and he's quite happy. Now he has a God and he develops a whole priesthood around it and so on. The tribe of Dan picks it up and they go on with the whole tribe goes into idolatry. Not one whisper from the rest of Israel. Whole tribe goes into idolatry, christened them today, takes a little aspect of Christ or God. God is love and they make an idol and that's the only attribute it has. And my God is love and he would never send anybody to a lost eternity. He would never do this, He would never do that. And they make a God from 1 attribute that they draw and they make a God that fits their mind, that fits their thoughts. And Christendom is full of Jesus is, if I can put it that way. I don't want to speak irreverently that are nothing but things that are formed from men's minds as to what the Lord Jesus Christ is. And they're not what is presented in Scripture. And that's what they follow. Evil doctrines attend those things. The denial of his humanity, a spotless humanity, a denial of His eternal sonship, denial of his deity. And they don't have the Jesus Christ presented to us in the word of God. They have an idol. And Christendom has largely gone after those idols. The next incident that happens is a horribly immoral thing where a concubine is abused, murdered, and then the man who she belonged to cuts her in pieces and sends her out through all Israel. The guilty tribe was Benjamin. All of Israel rises up, they come down and they destroy Benjamin down to just a handful of men. They're outraged against the moral sin. What about Dan? What about Dan? Not a word. We see a professing Christianity Today around us, outraged about moral abuses in this world and occupied with that. But the wicked doctrines that have pervaded Christianity, the disfiguring of the person of Christ, not a word

said. Not a word said. It's the root of the moral decline in judges. There are idols as well that are have the name of Jesus on them. That are not the Jesus presented to us in Scripture. And we need to be careful we don't follow them, that we are following the Christ that is presented to us in all this completeness in the Word of God, not in man's thoughts. It's the reason why we need to be continually in the Word of God, where we get to know God, we get to know the Lord. And especially younger believers, if any are led to the Lord, they need to be reading the book of John over and over again.

And by the way. It's not irreverent to say another Jesus. That's a scriptural term. The Apostle Paul used that term another Jesus. And there's been lots of other Jesus presented to this world, especially in this day of multimedia. They've been movies and religions that bear the Lord's name. All of them presenting somebody else. And then the worst thing, and the most ominous thing perhaps, is our own hearts creating our own version of the Lord. And again, what can preserve us from that is to be going through scriptures constantly back to the scriptures to have our thoughts about Him correctly. That scripture Two Corinthians Chapter 11 verse 4 where Paul uses that expression. And so it's very important, as we have said, to see that. Hastening after something else. Is, as Rob was pointing out, really a lack of faith, a lack of trust in the Lord. Do we really trust the Lord for everything in our pathway? One of the things that has been coming in among believers today and. Steve spoke of Christendom, yes, and we're part of it. We can't take our place apart from Christendom. We're part of it. And one of the things that has been coming in today is the fact that, well, yes, the Word of God is good to have and we need it, but sometimes we need to add human wisdom to it. Of course, that's nothing new. It was going on in the days of the apostles, or at least the beginnings of it, and we are warned about it in Scripture. But. To exhibit a lack of trust in the Lord will lead us into what we get in verse 4, hastening to something else, thinking that well, it's a good expression. A shortcut is Tim said to the Kingdom, a shortcut to something and the devil has many shortcuts which look very attractive and if some of us who are older may be permitted to speak this way. We say to those that are younger, don't be taken in by the devil's shortcuts. They may look attractive, they may look as if they can get you somewhere. Some of the kings tried it in the Old Testament. There was a king by the name of Amaziah who hired mercenaries to fight the Lord's battles and eventually he was told no, send those men home, you don't need them. Let the Lord look after them. But Oh dear. What had he done? Spent 1000 talents of silver to hire them and he wasn't going to get it back. And he says to the prophet, What shall I do for the 1000 talents of silver? Oh, the prophet's response is beautiful. The Lord is able to give thee much more than this. And so if we have gone after another or another God or something, and maybe there's a price to be paid to get out of that situation. I say to you, as I say to my own heart, pay the price. It's worth it. Whatever we need to do to get back into the position of trust and dependence on the Lord. Well worth it. And there's an expression here, I don't know whether I can explain it perfectly or understand it perfectly, but in the end of verse four it says. There drink offerings of blood. Will I not offer? Now drink offerings were not normally made of blood. They were made of wine or of something like that. Blood was meant to be sprinkled on the altar and meant to be sprinkled as we had in the prayer meeting on the mercy seat. It was that which, cleansed from sin drink offering, spoke of the joy with which the Lord offered himself to God.

And maybe others have further comments on this. The only thing I would say is that. I believe that whenever we hasten after something else, there is going to be a distortion of the truth of God connected with it. Drink offerings of blood are never mentioned in the Old Testament in legitimate sacrifices, but here it's mentioned. I believe in my own soul anyway. It's mentioned as a distortion of that which God gave. Which is the result of a lack of trust in God going after something else. And it may look innocent on the surface, but I believe you were bringing it out, Brother Steve, eventually. What is behind it is really bad teaching which distorts the truth of God. Am I right in that? The psalmist felt a need to separate himself from that. He wasn't going to participate, and he wasn't going to even use the name of whatever God they were following. And I think there's a lesson for me and that to be separate from the things that. Would destroy my trust in the Lord. Not that we can have no money, not that we can have no friends, no family, but don't take it up to the way the world takes it up as the source of your pleasure and satisfaction. Yes, it's not what we have in this world that makes the difference, but where my heart is, isn't it? And we don't want to dwell on that, but it's very interesting. If we were to go to Luke's gospel chapter 12, we don't need to turn to it, but we all remember the story of the rich man. Land and ground brought forth plentifully, and he pulled down his barns and built greater. And the Lord's remark on all of that was, Thou fool, this night, thy soul shall be required of thee. Not that there was anything wrong with having plenty, or building bigger barns, but he left God out of the picture. But there is a verse there that says, a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possessed possesseth. If you look in the Darby translation, there's a little different twist put on it, which I believe is very instructive, the JND reads. A man's life does not have. A man does not have to be in abundance for his life to be in his possession, showing us that it's not what we have, but it's where our heart is that counts. A man with very little can be occupied with it more than the man who has much. And so it's a question of where our hearts are and what we do and the use we make of what we have, not what we have. And so going after things in this world is where the problem is. But if God gives us those things, we can be thankful for them and then seek grace to use them for Him. But there are always sorrows connected with going after another God. We could turn to First Timothy 6 for a verse that is well known, but it bears repeating. First Timothy 6. It says there. In verse 9, but they that will be rich, that's the question will be rich. Fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For it should read, The love of money is a root of all evil, which while some coveted after they have heard from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows, and so the sorrows that are referred to here in verse four of Psalm 16.

Are similar to the sorrows of First Timothy 6 and verse 10. There are always sorrows connected with going after another God. Yes, it may look good at the beginning, and it may be the pleasures of sin for a season, but eventually it ends in sorrow. Nothing Satan ever gives us gives any ultimate pleasure in its end. It's always going to end in sorrow afterward. Jesus and from his great Son. His love is eternal and sweet eternal. Life. Walk in the circus of. Suffering. And ourselves.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Sheol

Question: How are we to understand Sheol in the O. T. as in Jonah 2:2? also Num. 16:33? If a place of punishment, how is it in Psa. 16:10?—Earnest Inquirer.

Answer: There is vagueness as to the unseen in the O.T. The gospel only has brought to light life and incorruption. But we never do find Sheol or Hades associated with joy or blessing like Abraham’s bosom or paradise. Consistently therewith Psa. 16:10 teaches that Jehovah would not leave Messiah’s soul unto Hades, any more than His body to see corruption. To leave in seems the force of neither Hebrew nor Greek in the correct text; and early superstition made much of the error, revived widely in our day. The Revisers are right in Psa. 16:10, wrong in

Acts 2:27, 31.

Correspondence, Correspondence: James; Ps. 16:2; Sins Born; Rev.20:4, 6:9, and Mark 8:35

Ques. Is the Epistle of James weakened or limited in its application to present day conditions of the assembly of God, by the address to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad; does this confine it to the Jews? R. M.

Ans. The subject of the Epistle is practical righteousness, and this is the fruit of accomplished redemption. We look for practical righteousness in all who profess to know God, and to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. And this fruit comes from those who have the divine nature in them, through being born again by the word of truth. This is why he says, "Faith without works is dead." There are no instructions to the assembly as such. It is all individual.

This Epistle is all true, and the word of the living God, and for the obedience of faith. In reading and applying it, we still keep in view that we are heavenly citizens, and that all the grace needed to walk according to this Epistle, like all the rest, is the ever flowing grace of Him who giveth more grace, and that the condition of our souls needs to be like Him who was meek and lowly in heart, for He resisteth the proud and gives grace to the humble.

The principle of 5:14, 15, 16 may be carried out where there is humility, brotherly confidence and love, though we have not official order now, as then when it was written. It is plainly a kind of discipline, and not meant to apply to every sickness. But we have the privilege of taking all to the Lord, and of resting in His ordering for us.

Ques. Please explain Psa. 16:2, last clause, "My goodness (extendeth) not to Thee."

R. M.

Ans. Psa. 16 presents Christ as a man, perfect in all His ways.

"Preserve Me, O God," is the expression of His dependence.

"For in Thee do I put My trust," is His confidence.

"O My soul, thou hast said unto the LORD (Jehovah) Thou art My Lord" (adon, lord or master), this is His subjection.

"My goodness (extendeth) not to Thee: but to the saints that are on the earth, and to the excellent, in whom (or them) is all My delight," this is His lowliness. He is not here claiming equality with God, but associating Himself with the saints on earth. We see this historically in Matt. 3 when He was baptized of John in Jordan, thus fulfilling righteousness, the One who had no sin, taking His place with the believing remnant of Israel in confessing their sins. And here the Father justified Him by giving Him as a sinless man, the Holy Spirit, and owning Him as His beloved Son in whom His delight was. This was His lowly grace expressed in "My goodness extendeth not (up) to Thee," but (down) to the saints, etc.

Verse 4 is His separation from evil. He was all that the godly man should be.

Ques. Did Christ on the cross bear the sins of the whole human race? Or only the sins of those who believe? N. F. A.

Ans. We should notice how the scripture reads, and we shall find that the death of Christ is the righteous ground on which God in grace can forgive sinners. We can mention a few verses: (John 3: 14-16; Rom. 5:6, 8; 1 Tim. 1:15; 2:4, 5, 6; Heb. 2:9; 2 Cor. 5:15; 1 John 2:2.) There we see salvation offered to all-God's love going out to all.

The language of faith, that is, of those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, gives the knowledge of forgiveness of sins. In Scripture language we do not say to the unsaved, "Christ died for your sins," but "Christ died for you." (Rom. 3:24-26; 4:25; 5:1; Gal. 1:4; 3:13, 22; Eph. 1:7; Col 1:12-14; 2 Tim. 1:9; 1 Cor. 15:3.)

The Lord Jesus said, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). The unbelievers will be judged for their sins. (Rom. 1:18; 6:23; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 3:22; 5:19-21; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6.)

So we see the only way of escape is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Tell Him you will trust Him, then He will say, I bore the judgment for your sins, and we who have believed on Him, may say:

Ques. Please explain Rev. 20:4; 6:9 and Mark 8:35. We would like a full explanation W. D.

Ans. In Mark 8:35 the Lord is showing how a true disciple should live. Not all of the disciples were saved. Some believed on Him when they saw His miracles, but the Lord would not trust them. (John 2:23-25.) They could turn away just when they pleased; they were not born again, and except they were born again, they would not continue with the Lord. Some were offended and turned away from Him; the true disciples would not turn away. (John 6:66-71.) Judas Iscariot was one of the apostles, yet he was lost, he was a devil.

We that are saved children of God want to behave ourselves in a way that is pleasing to Him. We are to deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow Him. We do not desire the pleasures of the world as we did before conversion. Their balls and concerts and amusements, their drinking and smoking and card tables and parties are not to our taste now. They are but the pleasures of sin, and for a short season, and they leave a sting behind them.

The pleasures of our new life, are pleasures for evermore. (Heb. 11:25; Psa. 16:11.) If we suffer rejection for Christ, we are strengthened by communion with Him. If our object is self-pleasing, we lose our life. If to please Him is our object in our walk and testimony, we shall save it, and though we may be called to lose it here, we shall be the gainers for all eternity. How many have deliberately chosen the world and were lost for eternity; for it they neglected God's great salvation, so the lake of fire is their eternal portion. They would not own Christ here, and He

will not own them as His there. (Heb. 2:3; Rev. 21:8.)

Now look at Rev. 1:19. This verse gives the division of the book.

1st. What John saw in Patmos, "The things which thou hast seen." Jesus as Judge in the midst of the Churches which are the candlesticks or light-bearers.

2nd. "The things that are." That is, the present Church period, from Pentecost till Christ comes for His Church, when she is completed. (1 Thess. 4:15-18.) The wise will go in; the foolish will be left out. (Matt. 25:1-13.)

3rd. "The things which shall be after these things." The future after the Church is gone.

In chapters 4 and 5, we see the glorified saints-the twenty-four elders-seated on twenty-four thrones. They see Jesus, as the Lamb of God, taking the book out of the hand of Him who sat upon the throne, and they praise Him as worthy, because He was slain, and He glorified God, and wrought redemption for them by His blood.

In chapter 6 He begins to open the book, and events are seen taking place. Verse 9 is the breaking of the sixth seal. In it we see some who were martyred for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held. "Under the altar" means that they laid down their lives. White rot es are the symbol of God's approval. Their prayer for vengeance, like the Psalms, is Jewish, and they are told to rest for a little season, till others are martyred.

Rev. 20:4 mentions these two classes of martyrs. "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them"; that is, the twenty-four elders, the glorified saints that were caught up. (chap. 4:4.) Then those beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, is the class we saw in 6:9-11. Also those which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands. (13:15-17.) These are seen in chapter 15:2 as victors. They would rather give up their lives than give in to the beast.

"AND THEY LIVED," means that they are raised from the dead-spirit, soul and body united again. Now they are glorified, and shall reign with Christ a thousand years. (Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; 2 Tim. 2:12.)

That completes the first resurrection; which means all the blessed and holy, that is believers, from the beginning of the world, that have died, and those of the Church are with them, who have not died, but were changed and caught up.

The rest of the dead mentioned in verses 5 and 12 are those who have died in their sins. They are judged at the great white throne, and cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. (verses 11-15; 21:8.)

Note. The beast and the false prophet are not seen in this present time, but will rise up after the Church is caught up.

Scripture Queries and Answers, Scripture Queries and Answers: Sheol

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Christian Treasury: Volume 8, Dependent One, The

Psalm 16:2, 3PSA 16:2-3

Psa. 16 expresses the perfectness of Messiah's dependence on Jehovah, shown in His humiliation here on earth (Heb. 2), and His vindication in resurrection (Acts 2). So, while a divine person, yet taking the place of a servant, His soul said to Jehovah, "Thou art My Lord: My goodness extendeth not to Thee." It is the expression of His self-renunciation as man, which was in truth His moral glory. (Compare Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18, 19.)

On the other hand, He said, "To the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all My delight." This He expressed in His baptism, when He thus fulfilled all righteousness and identified Himself in grace with the godly in Israel. As man, He did not exalt Himself, but gave the entire glory to God. This was not in austere distance from the despised remnant who bowed to the testimony of John the Baptist, but graciously entering into and sympathizing with their true place before God. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." Bible Witness and Review

Echoes of Mercy: Volume 13 (1903), Have You a Father?

“They are all gone aside.”— Psalms 15:3.

“Return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee.” —Isaiah 44:22.

“He shall cry unto Me, Thou art my Father.” —Psalms 89:26.

SUFFERING and misery are the lot of mankind. Even our poets sing to us of “the orphanage of earth.” Faded flowers, autumn leaves that carpet the ground, heart-rending farewells marking the departure of train and steamer—these are the echoes we hear on every hand, telling of distress and disappointment.

And yet the counsels of God divulge quite another picture—even an enduring spring-time of “natural affection” that nothing should disturb.

But “they are all gone aside,” they have turned away from happiness. Man has severed his link with a beneficent God, and is lost on a troubled sea. Instead of attaining to the independence he sought, he has found himself at the mercy of “the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves” (Psa. 107:26, 27). Had he only remained obedient, his lot would have been a joyful one on the “mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense.”

Where are you, reader? Perhaps you hardly know how to answer this question, so let me do it for you. If you have not heard with the ear, and listened from the heart to the voice which calls, “Return,” you are still among those who have “gone aside,” you are like an abandoned orphan; a pitiful lot indeed! Who will come to your aid? The sword is suspended over your head, and no kind father is at hand to ward off the blow.

Listen, then, to the account of one who had a kindred experience. Last year a young girl was suddenly condemned by the physicians to suffer a terrible operation. Lest she should be unduly alarmed, she was, however, kept in ignorance of her fate until the last moment, and her family invented excuse after excuse to explain her removal to the town where the famous surgeon resided. Believing that she was only there to be near her grandmother, the poor child offered no resistance until the moment came for her removal to the hospital. Then her terror knew no bounds, communicated itself to all around her, and unnerved every one. But suddenly, to the surprise of all, she became calm and even smiling. What did it all mean? Outside the door, she had heard—her father’s voice! Unable to reach her sooner, he had just arrived to be present at the operation, and she had recognized his voice. “Oh, I’m not afraid now, my father is there,” she had exclaimed in rapture. “Do what you like, father is here!” And as under the influence of the soporific, she became unconscious, she whispered, “What a boon to have a father!” How many times this has been repeated since her restoration to health it would be difficult to say; the memory of the agony is swallowed up in blissful remembrance of the value of a father in danger’s hour.

And you, unhappy one, “turned aside” from an eternal Father, and with no protection from the fate awaiting you, a fate far more serious than an operation which may be successful? There is no uncertainty about the death to which you are condemned. “Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Yes, death is before you even as the operation was awaiting Louisa. “And after this the judgment.” But listen: As surely as she heard her father’s voice—a life-giving voice to her—so surely may you hear the word “Return” uttered by a divine voice—the Father who seeks you in order to save you. “Return... for I have redeemed thee,” “not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world” (1 Peter 1:19, 20). “Return,” then, without doubt or fear, for the Saviour has said, “Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.” “Return” to infinite grace, to a perfect work accomplished for the sinner, and then you will reply, “Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.”

M. M.

Christian Truth: Volume 5, Fool and His Folly, A: No God

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 14:1); or rather, "No God"; in other words, it is not want of understanding, but moral corruption, the state of the affections, that leads to atheism. The impenitent sinner desires that there should be no God to bring him into judgment, and thus seeks to persuade himself that there is none. He "that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (margin, discovered). He loves darkness rather than light, because his deeds are evil. And hence Psalm 14 goes on to describe the moral condition of the man who has succeeded in persuading himself that there is "no God." "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works." I have been led to these reflections by a remarkable incident.

A Christian woman in conversation with an atheist said, "You will find infidelity a rotten plank some day."

This man had accosted her in very offensive language interlarded with oaths and curses. He had formerly been a religious professor, and was well acquainted with the "letter" of Scripture. The woman whom he had addressed, having seriously expostulated with him on his profanity, added a solemn reference to the name of God. He replied, first by a denial of His existence, and then with an impious challenge to his Creator to prove His existence by "smashing him to pieces." These words were deliberately repeated, and in louder tones, as the woman whom he addressed fled in terror from his presence, while the blasphemer called upon her to take his message to "her God."

On the very next morning, which was Sunday, this wicked man was with some of his infidel companions, on his way to a neighboring town, in his usual health and spirits, when he suddenly fell to the ground with a shriek. The poor stricken blasphemer was carried home and, on reaching there, immediately requested that an evangelical clergyman, whom he had formerly known, might be sent for. On the arrival of the minister, his first words were, "O there is a God—there is a God—the Lord be merciful to me a sinner." The Christian minister spoke to him of the grace of the Lord Jesus, and before he left his bedside the poor penitent found peace. The passages of Scripture especially used by the Spirit of God for blessing to his soul, were 1 John 1:7, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," and John 6:37, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." He died in a few days, constantly rejoicing in the Lord, but none of his infidel friends came near him.

May the Lord graciously grant that the striking exemplification of the truth which this narrative affords, that His all-seeing eye marks the footsteps of the transgressor, and that "There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves" (Job 34:22), may not be without fruit for His glory, and the conviction and conversion of sinners.

Not many years since, a young coachman was living in a gentleman’s family near London. He had good wages, a kind master, and a comfortable place; but there was one thing which troubled and annoyed him. It was that his old mother lived in a village close by, and from her he had constant visits. You may wonder that this was such a trouble to him. But the reason was that, whenever she came, she spoke to him about Christ and the salvation of his soul. “Mother,” he at last said, “ I cannot stand this any longer. Unless you drop that subject altogether, I shall give up my place, and go out of your reach, when I shall hear no more of such cant.” “ My son,” said his mother, “ as long as I have a tongue I shall never cease to speak to you about the Lord, and to the Lord about you.” The young coachman was as good as his word. He wrote to a friend in the Highlands of Scotland, and asked him to find him a place in that part of the world. He knew that his mother could not write, and could not follow him; and, though he was sorry to lose a good place, he said to himself, “Anything for a quiet life.” His friend soon got him a place in a gentleman’s stables, and he did not hide from his mother that he was glad and thankful to get out of her way.

You may think it was a pity she thus drove him to a distance. Would it not have been wiser to say less, and thus not to lose the opportunity of putting in a word in season? But she believed, in her simplicity, that she was to keep to the directions given her in the word of God—that she was to be instant, not in season only, but also out of season. And true it is, that the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

The coachman was ordered to drive out the carriage and pair the first day after his arrival in Scotland. His master did not get into the carriage with the rest of the party, but said he meant to go on the box instead of the footman. “He wishes to see how I drive,” thought the coachman, who was quite prepared to give satisfaction. Scarcely had they driven from the door, when the master spoke to the coachman for the first time. He said, “ Tell me if you are saved.” Had the question come to the coachman direct from heaven it could scarcely have struck him with greater consternation. He felt simply terrified. “ God has followed me to Scotland!” he said to himself. “ I could get away from my mother, but I cannot get away from God!” And at that moment he knew what Adam must have felt when he went to hide himself from the presence of God behind the trees of the garden. He could make no answer to his master, and scarcely could he drive the horses, for he trembled from head to foot.

His master went on to speak of Christ, and again he heard the old, old story, so often told him by his mother. But this time it sounded new—it had become a real thing to him. It did not seem to him then to be glad tidings of great joy, but a message of terror and condemnation. He felt that it was Christ, the Son of God, whom he had rejected and despised. He felt for the first time that he was a lost sinner. By the time the drive was over he was so ill, from the terrible fear that had come upon him, that he could do nothing more, For some days he could not leave his bed, but they were blessed days to him! His master came to speak to him, to read the word of God, and to pray, and soon the love and grace of the Savior he had rejected became a reality to him, as the terror of the Lord had been at first. He saw that there was mercy for the scoffer and despiser; he saw that the blood of Christ is the answer before God even for such sin as his had been, and he now felt in his soul the sweetness of those blessed words, “ We love him because he first loved us.” He saw that Christ had borne his punishment, and that he, who had tried to harden his heart against God and against his own mother, was now without spot or stain in the sight of that God who had so loved him as to give for Him His only Son. The first letter he wrote to his mother was to tell her the joyful tidings: “ God has followed me to Scotland, and has saved my soul.”

“ Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.” Psalm 139:7-12.

“ Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Psalm 16:11.

Echoes of Grace: 1953, Whither Shall I Flee?

Late one night two men, muffled up to the eyes to prevent recognition by the police, were to be seen knocking at the door of a schoolmaster who lived in rented rooms in an unsavory part of a large, city.

"Will you come with us, sir, to see a dying man? He gave us no rest till we came for you."

It was a request to be thought over. To go at night with these men through such a district needed a heart filled with the love of Christ and deep desire for the souls of the perishing. However, after a little conversation and silent prayer, the Christian man announced his readiness to accompany his callers.

Before long he knew not where he was, but had to trust to his rough-looking guides. By and by they came to the miserable house in which lay the dying man.

Through a thieves' kitchen went the three. Up the rickety stairs they climbed until they reached the top. When the visitor's eyes became accustomed to the dinginess of the room, he saw a man lying in the corner on a heap of straw.

Evidently the sufferer had led a hard life. Sin had left its mark on his features. He was far gone in disease, and even a novice could discern that his time was short.

"Tell me, oh, tell me what it means: 'Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?' " These were the eager, earnest words which fell upon the ears of the servant of Christ. Little did he expect such a question; and he quickly enquired of the dying man how he came to send for him so urgently, and why he asked the question.

His story was that some months previously, on a Sunday night, the man had been discovered in a robbery attempt by the police. They gave chase, but he outran them. As he neared the mission hall with which the schoolmaster was connected, quick as lightning the thought came, "If I can slip in there unseen by the police, they will never suspect me of such a dodge." The thought led to action. The police followed hard on his track, only suddenly to find that their man had mysteriously disappeared.

He sat down in the mission hall. The opening hymns and prayer were over. The preacher had just announced his text, and his audience was waiting expectantly for his opening remarks. He began by repeating his text, and these words—so divinely fitted for the occasion and to the listener—broke upon the ears of the startled runaway thief: "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" Psa. 139:7.

Not a word of the sermon did he remember, but this verse of God's Word worked its way into his conscience. He could not forget it. Months of sin and wickedness could not obliterate the impression made. He might elude the vigilance of the police, but not the omniscient eye of God. He might escape an earthly tribunal, but not the great white throne and the Judge of all the earth.

And now he was dying. Soon he must meet God. His wasted life lay behind him, eternity was before him. Can you wonder, then, at the urgent message sent to the Christian schoolmaster to come and see him? With a prayer in his heart the servant of the Lord turned to God's Word and read in the ears of the dying man:

"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." Psa. 139:7-10.

What beautiful words, yet how inexpressibly solemn to a sinner with the shades of an endless night gathering round him—unprepared to pass from time into eternity, from the company of his wicked fellows into the presence of a holy God.

The reading of these scriptures which had been engraved on the tablets of his memory deepened afresh the work of the Spirit of God in the dying man's conscience. Eagerly he drank in the message, so new and yet so old. With him it was—

"Tell me the story simply,As to a little child;For I am weak and weary,And helpless and defiled.Tell me the story slowly,That I may take it in—That wonderful redemption—God's remedy for sin."

And as simply as a little child, this poor, dying wretch received the blessed story of God's love to lost sinners: believed it, received the Savior into his heart, was cleansed from his sin, and entered into rest.

But what of you, dear reader? When a few more years shall have passed, both writer and reader will be in eternity—it may be only weeks. Let me ask you solemnly and earnestly, as we stand in thought by the deathbed of this poor, branded thief, and as we see our own boundless eternity looming in the near future, WHERE WILL YOU SPEND IT?

Christian Treasury: Volume 10, Pearl of Great Price, The

In the parables of Matthew 13, the "treasure hid in the field" and the "pearls" are typical of the Church. We read about the pearls in verses 45 and 46. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”

In Ephesians 5 we read, "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." This is like the merchantman seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. We can be quite sure about the meaning of this parable, for definitely Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. The gem that is used here is the pearl, which is formed in a living organism down in the bed of the sea in darkness.

In Psalm 139:15-16 we find: "My substance was not hid from Thee, when 1 was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect [unformed]." The Church is formed here in this dark world. In this comparison, this world is like the womb of a woman in which the seed has been planted and the child grows in darkness. It grows and grows—"my substance," because that is the likeness.

In verse 13 of Psalm 139 we read that "Thou hast possessed my reins: Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb." Doubtless David was thinking of himself, but God was thinking of more than David; I believe He was thinking of the Church. Just think that God, through that wound in the side of our Savior where the precious blood was shed, has saved millions and gathered them in this earth, and yet He has not displayed the whole Church in all her glory and all her beauty because she is Imperfect. She is not imperfect, she is just not complete. What a beautiful comparison we have for ourselves to enjoy.

"Curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written." This is language that we find about the Church, members of His body, members one of another written in the book—the book of life. God has a book, and every member is registered there.

These words are in the Old Testament, not the New Testament, but they fit the truth of the Word of God concerning the Church. "Which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." That is as far as we can go, but when we enter into God's thoughts: "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" Ed.

Christian Treasury: Volume 10, Way Everlasting, The

“Lead me in the way everlasting" (Psa. 139:24). Is not this way Christ Himself, the only way, the way everlasting? He is pleased to search out our own ways, that He may lead us therein—to show us that Christ must be practically to us that which He declares Himself to be in His Word, "the first and the last," our "Alpha and Omega." All is well that leads us "in the way everlasting," that beats us out of our own ways and brings us there, that makes us in result value Christ for the way, as well as at the outset, and the end—Christ learned as our portion to live upon, as well as known for the pardon of our sins.

Bible Treasury: Volume 8, Scriptures, On the

We may by a little consideration observe the value which God has set on the revelation He has, from time to time, been making of Himself and His will, and also our own title to the direct personal use of that revelation. And such truths are of serious and happy importance to our souls at all times, but in some sense especially now.

When the Lord God planted and furnished the garden, and set Adam in it, He made all to depend on His word or revelation: “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” This was the revelation then; and man's history, as we know, was to hang entirely upon it. And thus, at the very outset, we see what a place of value the word which had gone out from the mouth of the Lord holds: and it became the direct object of the serpent's assault and enmity.

So, when the character of things had been changed through man's disobedience to this first word of God, all is made to depend on another word: “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Man's return to God now depended on his belief of this word, as his departure from God had afore hung on his disobedience to the first word. For all now rested on faith, or obedience to this revelation. Thus we find that Abel, by faith, offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. All service from man now rested on faith, or obedience to the word or revelation of God. (Heb. 11) So high was the value which the Lord put on His word, making it, as before, the standard and the test of obedience, and the hinge on which man's history was to turn. And Cain's offering was in unbelief, or in despite of God's word about the seed of the woman. He despised God's word, as the serpent had before assailed it. And so, in process of time, in like manner, Noah and Abraham, to instance no others, are called forth from a revolted world by revelations from God, and their acceptance of such revelations determines their path in present peace onward to glory.

But when we reach a larger scene for the energies and acts of God, as in the nation of Israel, we still find that all was made to turn upon the revelation He was giving His people. We read that they were neither to add to it or diminish from it. (Deut. 4; 12) So carefully did He hedge round it, so jealously did He watch over it, that it might not be entangled with the thorns of the wilderness of worldly wisdom, or disturbed by the admixtures of man's thoughts. And having thus protected it, and provided for its purity, Jehovah ordered that His people should bind it round their heart and their soul, and fix it under their eye continually, inscribing it on their gates and doors, making it their morning and evening meditation and the theme of their family intercourse (Deut. 6; 11), so that they should let it in, that it might mingle itself with all their personal and social life, and shed its light on every path, however ordinary, of their daily journey. And if any of them were put at a distance from the more immediate place of the nation and of their religious observances, still the word was to be their rule there. (Josh. 22:4, 5.) And if any of them were called into circumstances which might be extraordinary or unlooked for, the same word of God should follow them there; for if there were to be a king in days to come, the law of his God should go up to the throne with him, and be there before Him as fully as he was before the people. (Dent. 17.) And the history of Israel as a nation, like that of Adam in Eden and out of Eden, was to be determined by their use of God's word. (Deut. 28.)

What an expression of the value which the Lord set upon His word all this gives us! and with what jealousy does He watch it, that He may maintain it in its purity! and how immediately would He have it bound round the heart and soul of each of His people!

It is blessed to see the Lord thus esteeming His own revelation, and commending it to our esteem; and, as we go on in His ways, it is His word we still find the Lord using and estimating. Israel was disobedient to the word of His law; and what He does is to send them the word of His prophets. If they refuse one testimony, it is only another they must get. God will still use His word, and still make their history to rest on their use or abuse of it. And, therefore, we find that their final dispersion and bondage in Babylon came of this, that when the Lord had even risen up early to send them His prophets, they did but despise those prophets, and the words which they brought; so that wrath came on them to the uttermost, and there was now no remedy. (2 Chron. 36)

There is however a return to Jerusalem out of Babylon; and return to God then is marked very clearly by a return to His word. The captives are obedient to the word. Ezra, for instance, makes it his meditation, the theme of his intercourse with the people, and the rule of his ways and acts in the midst of them. (Chap. 7.) So Nehemiah and his companions. They read it, they own the power of it over their consciences, and they set themselves to walk and act in the light of it. (Chap. 8,; 8.) As long, or as far, as those returned Jews were obedient to God, so long, and so far, were they attentive to the voice of His truth, both trembling at, and rejoicing in, His word according to its spirit in addressing them. They had returned to God, and must, therefore, return to His word; and while this was so, blessing was theirs, and latter day blessing is made to depend on this also. (Mal. 4:5, 6.)

When we open the New Testament, after all this, we find the word, or revelation of God, in this accustomed place of honor and value. It is put into the lips of the Baptist; no power lies in his hand, but the word of the Lord breaks from his lips. “John did no miracle,” but he was a “voice” from God, acceptance of which was again to determine the history of Israel. So the Lord's own ministry, which this of John introduced, was not only a fresh ministry of God's word (on the value of which I will not speak), but it did itself greatly honor the precious word; and this still shows us what value in God's esteem His word holds. Thus, in His acts, the Lord Jesus was ever fulfilling that word, as the Evangelists are careful to tell us; in His conflicts with the devil, He uses that word, as the gospels again tell us; and in His teachings, He is ever referring to that word, rebuking the Jews for their value for anything else, for their use of traditions, and their neglect of it, and giving them to know that not a jot or tittle of it can in any wise fail; that the scripture cannot be broken; and that if Moses and the prophets be not heard, even one risen from the dead would not avail to lead to repentance.

This is much to be observed; and thus did the Son, in His day, honor the word. The Holy Ghost, in like manner, is a Spirit of revelation in the apostles, and fills up by them the word of God. But not only so, but in them He does continually, clearly, and fully, express His high divine

sense of the value of the scriptures. If man dare not add to it, God need not. It is perfect, able, as the apostle tells us, thoroughly to furnish the saint to all good works. And no authority stands, or can possibly stand, on equal ground with it, so that even if an angel were to gainsay it, he must be cursed. It matters not who it may be, all must sink below the voice and authority of that gospel or revelation of God which had been delivered.

Thus do we see, from the beginning to the end, the Lord's value for His own word—how He has made a hedge about it, that no rude hand may guiltlessly touch it, and also has appointed it to be the great standard at all times, on which the history of His people, either for blessing or for curse, was to turn: and has bound it round the heart and soul, before the eyes, and on the palms of His people, and given it an authority which nothing is to be allowed either to gainsay or to rival. God of old, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, each in His day, attests this. And all this is precious to the soul. God and His word are joined together. To give up His word is to give up Himself. For He can be known only by His own revelation.

But if we thus see the divine estimate of the word, with equal clearness and sureness we may see our title to that word, and how the Lord has joined us and the word together also, and that no man therefore can put such asunder.

By one short sentence the “ready writer” has given all saints an immediate personal interest in all the old scriptures. “Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.” This one sentence writes our title to this most precious inheritance. The old scriptures are God's gift, and this word from Rom. 15 is the deed of gift, entitling all saints to a common property in it. The title is short and clear and simple, as the inheritance conveyed is invaluable.

But with equal simplicity can we make out our title to the new scriptures. Luke addresses his gospel to a private Christian friend as we may speak, hereby sheaving that it was written for the saint in the most ordinary circumstances—not committed to any elect order of persons, or persons in authority, but to a private Christian friend, who bore no office or distinction of any kind, of whom, indeed, we hear nothing but in this address of the evangelist to him. But this shows that this Gospel is given to us all. And if Luke be thus part of our inheritance, so surely are Matthew, Mark, and John. We ask no favor from any one to allow this: the title is so clear, so simple, so beyond all question: and on the very same ground is our title to the book of the Acts. This was the property of the same private friend, the same Theophilus: any “lover of God” may deem himself in fullest possession of it, as a further part of his inheritance, and use it without reserve.

The Epistles, in their turn, not only convey their rare and valuable treasures to our souls, but at the very outset tell us of our title to them.

They are addressed (saving in personal cases, as Timothy, Titus, or Philemon), to the saints, or the churches in the different places to which the Spirit by His apostles sends them: and the book of Revelation (which, following the Epistles, closes the volume of God) is sent to the seven churches in Asia; and thus we read the title of all saints to these words.

They are not specially committed to any separated order of men, but cast upon the hearts of all the saints, as Moses had done with all the statutes and judgments of Israel. And I may add, “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” would never have been written to the saints at Colosse, if they had not title to the immediate personal enjoyment of that word. But so it is, blessed be God. He has as simply joined His word and the heart of His saint together, as He has joined Himself and His word together. And we say again, what God has joined together let no man put asunder.

And if any do so violently—if any take away the key of knowledge, they are falling under the direct judgment of the Lord; “woe unto you, lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge.” (Luke 11:52.)

Such is God's estimation of His own precious revelation, and such His care that it should be kept pure. But in connection with this, I would for a little moment look at 1 Kings 13.

The kingdom of the ten tribes under Jeroboam was at this time an unclean place. The calves of gold set up at Bethel and at Daniel were the confidence of the people, obedient to this word of their king, “Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of Egypt.”

The Lord sends a missionary into that land with words of judgment. His commission, his ministry, and his conduct in his ministry, were all specially ordered by “the word of the Lord.” He comes out of Judah to Bethel “by the word of the Lord” (ver. 1); he cries against the altar there “in the word of the Lord” (ver. 2); and his behavior, while in that place and doing that service, is prescribed to him “by the word of the Lord” (ver. 9). And thus, as we said, his commission, his ministry, and his conduct—all are under the light and authority of God's word. This provided for everything: he had only to observe it.

This is most particularly marked by the Spirit of God in this narrative. And at the beginning, the Lord's missionary, “the man of God,” acts accordingly. He pleads “the word” as the warrant for his ministry of judgment upon the altar at Bethel, and also against the offers and invitations of Jeroboam, making it the only light and guide of his path while in his country. And this was all safe and happy. The Lord had given him a very simple directory, and in the observing of it his path was maintained in security and peace.

But that old serpent who, in the garden of Eden, made “the word of the Lord” the object of his attack, and has ever since been seducing the heart of man from it, tries with this man of God something further, since the offers and invitations of a king are resisted.

There was “an old prophet” in Israel at that time—another man of God, I doubt not, but, like Lot, found in a place where he ought not to have been, and where he could not act in character as a prophet; for how could he reprove the darkness with which he was more or less in fellowship?

Such an one is easily used by the enemy, and so it proves here. The father of lies employs him to do his work, and he tempts the Lord's missionary to eat and drink with him, contrary to “the word” which he had received, under the pretense that “an angel” from the Lord had spoken to him. And the temptation prevails: the path of simple obedience to “the word of the Lord” is deserted, and the servant of God dies under the judgment of God—a kind of pillar of salt, a kind of abiding witness and warning to us all, that our souls may ever hold to this— “let God be true, but every man a liar.”

Deep and serious, and for the present evil day well-timed is the instruction of this little narrative. The man who withstood the invitations of a king, and had determined on cleaving to “the word of the Lord,” though against the offers of a man in power, falls under the pretenses of a

man of religion. A religious guise seduces one whom the splendors of a court had tempted in vain. And so it is still and will increasingly be. The devil is still practicing by what the world judges to be religion, as it judged and estimated the traditions and observances of the Pharisees of old. And he succeeds if he can but withdraw from subjection to “the word of the Lord.” That is what God opposes to everything “If they speak not according to it, there is no light in them.”

Clearly, then, do we trace in the scriptures God's value for His word or revelation, and the believer's title to it. If God's word be deserted, He Himself is given up, for He can be known only by the revelation of it. There is no light in the soul” They have taken away the key of knowledge” —and our Lord joins this with not entering into the kingdom of God. (Luke 11)

There is an opposite error. There is the taking of this key, and using it to one's own destruction. The untaught and unstable do this. (2 Peter 3) The mere human or intellectual man, in the confidence of his own strength, takes this key, and injures, all he can, the door of the treasury of wisdom and knowledge through his awkwardness or violence. This is very true. And the danger is, lest, being offended by this as the saint should and must righteously be, he is cast on the former error, and tempted to let the key of knowledge be taken away, and deposited in some sacred hand, as is thought. But one error is not to be corrected by another: the key is neither to be taken away, nor used unskillfully.

I fully however allow, and it is to be deeply remembered by our souls in a day of intellectual pretense like the present, and of much activity of human thought and wisdom, that the book of God is not to be subjected to the mere acuteness of man's mind. Far otherwise indeed. It demands, in the name of God, our full subjection to itself. Nor is it written, as one has said, for critics, for scholars, or for judges, but for sinners. “It is not an interesting exercise for our faculties,” that we are to expect in it. And it is by laying aside malice and envy and hypocrisies, and by simple desire after the living God Himself, that we are really to grow by its sincere milk or strong meat. (1 Peter 2:1, 2.) I would indeed add this to what I have said on the value of the scriptures. The Lord forbid that we should say anything that would appear to treat it as only one of the many books of the schools. For the Son of God is not the mere master of a new school, but the living Head of the church to minister nourishment through joints and bands to the whole body. And let me add the striking and seasonable language of one of other days. “Wouldst thou know that the matters contained in the word of Christ are real things? Then never read them for mere knowledge sake. Look for some beams of Christ's glory and power in every verse. Account nothing knowledge, but as it is seasoned with some revelation of the glorious presence of Christ, and His quickening Spirit. Use no conference about spiritual truths for conference' sake, but still mind the promotion of edification.”

This would help to put the soul into a right attitude, when purposing to learn the secrets of God's most precious oracles. And when the apostle prays for the saints (as in Eph. 1 and Col. 1), that they may grow in knowledge, he does this after he has sought for them that they might have a spiritual understanding; and this tells us, or intimates to us, that mere acquaintance with, or information about, scripture, would all be divinely nothing worth, and that we should be careful not to pursue inquiry into revealed truth by the light or skill of the human mind, but by the exercise of the understanding given to us in Christ Jesus.

All this surely I would uphold before my own conscience at all times. But all this leaves untouched the great truth we have been mainly considering—the value of the written word with God and to us, and that it is the great one standard for the testing of all our thoughts, and the common inheritance of all the children. It is even the delight and commendation of an inspired apostle, that Timothy, the child of a child of God, from his childhood had known that word. So surely has God bound it about the heart and soul of His people. Therefore, again we say, let no authority divorce them or put them asunder, neither let any one use it, but in that holy obedient mind that is due to a gift of God.

The Spirit, in a very large sense, gives the scriptures to all. For in the inspired penman of the Acts, the Holy Ghost commends the Bereans for their candor, their nobleness, in searching the scriptures, whether what even an apostle was teaching was according to them. It was grateful to the mind of the Holy Ghost to have His word thus used and honored by these poor private Jews. Bereans they were, of the synagogue in that city; and the Spirit rejoices at seeing the scriptures in their hands, making them the standard, even though an apostle was preaching unto them. This surely puts the written word in high places. And so the same apostle, as quickened by the same Spirit, reasoned with the Jews out of the same scriptures, from “morning to evening;” as Jesus Himself restored the minds of the two disciples by leading them through all the scriptures. Peter also commends the disciples to the light of the prophetic word, and by his own word would ever have them bear in mind all that was needful for them, whether for past, present, or future truth; and never (as another has observed) thinks of commending them to any official or apostolic successor of his, but to that word which the Holy Ghost by him was then delivering. As even teachers, feeders of God's flock—as spiritual elders set over them are commended to God and His word, and not to anything else, in order that they might be kept and edified. (Acts 20; Luke 24 Peter 1)

This, and more than this, which we have, is more than enough to make our souls prize this precious, precious, gift of God—much more precious to our souls by the attempt there has ever been made to take it from us as not belonging to us, and to deposit it in some dark and distant corner. They have sought to put asunder what God has joined together—the heart of His wayfaring saint and the light of His word.

God's word may be given up by the infidel who rejects it; but it may be given up, though in another way, by him who would join other words with it.

Traditional Christianity is real infidelity; for it denies the scriptures, which assert their own sufficiency, and make themselves the standard. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because they have not light in them.” And again, “The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken; lo! they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?” “A betrayer of the book, in purer days, was judged as wicked an one as the denier of the faith.” But the one is profane infidelity, the other is religious infidelity, and man by much chooses the latter. It enables him to keep God at a distance, which is the desire of man, or the flesh, and at the same time to keep a conscience at peace with religion still, which is equally his desire.

Sorrowful is the sight that man still prevails—prevails in the religion of the world, as well as in its kingdoms. But blessed, blessed indeed, the prospect of entering a sphere, where Jesus shall prevail, and that forever. The light of God's thoughts shall shine there, the righteousness of God's power shall be felt there. Times of restitution indeed—times of refreshing; because times of Jesus' presence.

It is not merely thoughts of God that our souls need: all religion, divine or human, that is, true or false, will teach us to think of God. But it is the thoughts of God we need to have brought into our souls—and those thoughts are to be learned only, authoritatively and unmixedly, in the word. The scriptures are these thoughts of God conveyed to us. And the Psalmist can say of them, “How precious also are thy thoughts unto

me, O God, how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand.” O that we may thus prize them! Then shall we be wiser than the ancients, having respect to God's testimonies.

I would add, in the words of another, “The malice of Satan has raged no less against the book than the truth contained in it.” This we might expect. For what is the book of God? In the words of the same, “God's merciful and steadfast relief against all that confusion, darkness, and uncertainty, which the vanity, folly, and baseness of the minds of men, heightened by the unspeakable distractions that fall out among them, would otherwise have certainly run into.” And this book, like every work of God, manifests itself. It is its own witness. “Is not my word like a fire? saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?” And in contrast with all other words—with all words or writings which are not His—the Lord says, “What is the chaff to the wheat?” (Jer. 23) Such things do we learn of the word, or the scriptures.

And in closing, I would just say, that we need the whole of it, but nothing supplemental to it. This is intimated both by the Lord and Moses: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.” (Deut. 8; Matt. 4) This testimony is strong. These words tell us that nothing less, nothing more, is needed as food for the sustaining and strengthening of divine life in our souls, the Spirit most surely being alone able to make it effectual. The soul does not know what portion of the precious word, in its conflict with various darknesses and subtleties of Satan, it may not need, but it can live by that. Its life will not need aught beside, but it is not to spare any of it. These two thoughts are clearly intimated in these words. And thus, for our blessing as for the divine giver's praise, we are not to add thereto or diminish therefrom. We may and shall attain different measures in the knowledge of it, according as there is gift of God, and the exercise of the spiritual senses; but we are to make it the common standard in the camp of God. And the standard-bearer of the Lord must not faint in the day of battle. A firm hand and a broken heart are to give character to us.

Edification: Volume 4, Bible., The

“Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy Name” (Psa. 138:2).

THIS remarkable statement shows the wonderful position the Bible has in the mind of God. God’s Word is the declaration of God Himself, and that is above His name, His renown. We can have no knowledge of God apart from revelation, and for this we must have God’s Word either spoken or written.

In the Old Testament times God spoke; when the Lord Jesus was here upon earth God spoke. Now we have the whole revealed will of God in the Scriptures. It is remarkable that the word, Bible, means in the original THE book, as if there were not another hook in the world, just as the word, Scriptures, means THE writings, as if they were the only writings in the world. How is it that the Bible thus in its very titles arrogates claims to itself as the only source of divine information? Surely it is that the Book fills the place it claims. A cursory examination will serve to prove this statement.

“The One who made me made this Book,” said a Chinese translator of the Scriptures.

Impressed into this service by the missionaries, the dark heathen was so struck by the intimate knowledge the Bible had of men, their thoughts and feelings, that he came to the conclusion that the One who made him made the Bible. How true this is.

“The Bible is a bad immoral book; the infidel says. How is it then that good people are the ones who study the Bible? If the Bible were a bad book, bad people would read it with avidity; if it were immoral, immoral people would gloat over its contents. But is this so? We know that it is not. You know that if a man or woman is really living according to the Bible, you will find that person truthful, virtuous, honest, kind, gracious, in every way to be trusted. Would a bad book accomplish this?

The Bible is the only book written by Easterns that has influenced Westerns to any appreciable extent. Where one Western has read the Koran, the bible of the Mohammedans, or the sacred books of the Buddhists and Brahmins, millions have read the Bible. How is this? We answer because it is God’s book, and though He employed East-erns to write it, it contains a UNIVERSAL message. That is why it is so well known in Western lands.

The Bible is a LIVING Book. This is proved by two things. Most books have their vogue, and after an edition or two pass out of print. The majority of books are found only in the language in which they are written, and none other. The Bible was completed over eighteen centuries ago, and is as vigorous today as it ever was. It has been translated into something like seven hundred languages. Why? Because it has a living message of a universal nature. The Bible today is far and away the world’s best seller, though it goes against the natural man and is resented by him.

It is also proved to be living by the way it changes lives. No other book in the world does that. An infidel lecturer challenged a Christian to a debate on the truth of Christianity. The Christian accepted the challenge on one condition. He would, bring on the platform one hundred persons, who would testify to the way that the gospel had changed their lives, drunkards saved from intemperance, thieves saved from their sin; lives changed, and changed for the better. The infidel lecturer was to bring on to the platform one hundred persons, whose lives had been changed for the better through embracing the negations of infidelity. The challenge was not accepted. The reason was obvious. The Bible is indeed a living Book.

The Bible’s influence is uplifting. It inculcates care for the weak, the suffering, the ignorant. This was grasped by a little chap, who was erecting a Christian village amongst the heathen with his box of bricks. The father suggested that he should build a heathen village. The little lad was silent for a while, then, taking away what he had erected for a mission station, he said, rather sadly, We shall not want that, nor the hospital, nor the school.” Does not this let the light into matters? The place, where the gospel would be preached, the place where the sick would be cared for, the place where the ignorant would be educated, so that they might read the Word of God, were not required. Nor was there anything to answer to these things in the heathen religion for the heathen temples, gorgeous as they are, are places of vile sin and dark superstition. “The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty” (Psa. 74:20). What a glorious day will that be when “the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14).

We are told that the heathen religions of India, China, Japan, Mexico, etc. have much in common with the Bible as to details. We are told there were virgin births, sacrificial deaths, and the like, before ever the Bible story was known, that the heathen have stories about our first parents, about the flood, etc. We are not surprised at this. As to stories of our first parents and the flood, seeing those were events in the early history of the world, we should expect that the account of them would be handed down from earliest times. We should be surprised if it were not so. Nor are we surprised at the garbled way they come down to us, as they are only the traditions of men. The reason why they have come to us in the Bible so vividly, so full of detail in their verisimilitude, in so great contrast to the stories of the heathen, where fable is plainly mixed up with fact, is because the account the Bible gives is God-inspired. And as to the virgin births and sacrificial deaths before the Bible story came, we know that the devil is a great imitator, and doubtless originated these things so as to bring into discredit the gospel story. They were foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures, and Satan could anticipate them for his own evil ends.

But one word clears the mind. If the heathen stories and the Bible have, as infidels aver, a common origin, how is it that the followers of heathen teaching are sunk in a state of wickedness, misery and superstition. Look at the condition of heathen lands and then at what prevails, where Christ is really owned. Look at lands where they are throwing off the little Christianity that they had, as for instance Russia. As irreligion gets a foothold among the masses so we get a growth of sin, immorality, violence, wickedness of all sorts. Indeed infidels like Huxley, though disbelieving in the Bible, have urged Bible instruction in the schools, recognizing the good results that the fear of God has upon the rising generation. The Bible is the only book that gives that.

The Bible is the only book that reveals the beginning and the end of things. It is the only book that tells us what sin is, that gives us a standard, and the only book that explains what death is and what comes after death. The Christian Scientist tells us that death does not exist. Yet Christian Scientists die like other people. Not even their leader, Mrs. Eddy, who invented this harebrained travesty of religion, developed the imagination that kept her from death. The Spiritists say that death is a new birth. The man in the street says that it is the debt of nature. The Bible solemnly tells us that it is “THE WAGES OF SIN” (Rom. 6:23).

The Bible is the only book that gives us a remedy for sin. It sets before us a blessed Saviour, who died a redemptive death upon the cross for our salvation. The Bible tells us how a sinner through repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ can come assuredly into the blessing of the knowledge of sins forgiven and salvation and eternal life.

There never has been a disputed point where the Scriptures and the scientist have been at variance, and where fresh discoveries have been made through unearthing the archives of history, etc., but in every case without exception the Bible has been vindicated. The higher critics at one time averred that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch, as writing, they said, was completely unknown in those days. Those who believed, in spite of their assertion to the contrary, that Moses did write the Pentateuch were voted as back numbers, they were not scholars, they were literalists, obscurantists, etc. Then came the discovery of tablets in their thousands at Tel-el-Amarna, where writing was seen to be in full vogue in the very time of Abraham, long before the day of Moses. The critics were completely routed, but did not learn their lesson, and are dogmatic about their negations till some fresh proof of their folly comes along.

The fulfilled prophecies of the Bible lift the book into a category by itself. Its teaching, its moral sublimity, the wonderful character of the Lord Jesus, so unlike every other man, the way it satisfies the spiritual desires of the heart, the way it enables the believer to welcome and rejoice in, death when it is the Lord’s time for the end to come, all show what the Bible is. It is indeed a Book of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

The study of the Bible affords the best proof of its origin, its authority, its power to give life and to bless the believing sinner. “The entrance of Thy Words giveth light” (Psa. 119:130). Study it! Study it!! STUDY IT!!!

A. J. Pollock.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Matt. 7:6; Rom. 11:26; PSa. 138:2; 1 Cor. 15:29; Acts 2:16-17

Ques. In what way can the Christian cast his pearls before swine, or give the holy things unto dogs?

Ans. Matt. 7:6: By arguing and discussing the precious things of God with unconverted men, or pressing truth, precious in itself, on those who are not exercised about it. We need to bear a testimony in this world to those around, but it is to be in the spirit of meekness, and with prayer that we may minister the right word. (2 Tim. 2:23-26.)

Ques. What does "All Israel shall be saved" mean? (Rom. 11:26.)

Ans. It means that Israel as a NATION will be saved. It does not mean that every Israelite will be saved. All of them, as well as all Gentiles, who have died without Christ, are lost for eternity, for they have died in their sins. Israel is to be gathered into Palestine again, and all the ungodly ones will be sifted out from them, and the rest will have the national place and be twelve tribes again. (Ezek. 38; Rev. 7; Heb. 8:8.)

Ques. Please explain Psa. 138:2: "Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name.”

Ans. The absolute authority of the Word is seen in this verse. Jehovah has made His Word great above all His renown. We must therefore receive and honor the written Word above all the general teaching about Him: above everything else.

Ques. Please explain 1 Cor. 15:29.

Ans. The 29th verse must be read in connection with verses 16-18, verses 20-28 being a wonderful parenthesis. The word "for" has often the sense of "in view of." God was pleased to let the Church, during the first three centuries, be sorely subject to fearful persecutions. To be baptized was to take a step, with nothing in this world but death in view, or, as we say, death before them. They were baptized unto a crucified Savior baptized into His death, and, so to speak, buried with Him in baptism. And why should they take such a place, with nothing but a cruel death before them? But Christ is risen, and this altered everything else. What should they do which are baptized for (or in view of) the dead, if the dead rise not at all? It has been said, Why should they fill up the ranks that were being swept off by the most cruel deaths?

Paul then seems to refer to this in his own history. But why do this, if there be no resurrection? Truly they were "as sheep for the slaughter."

Ques. Is there any authority in the Word of God for women preaching? Does Acts 2:16,17 give any?

Ans. 1 Cor. 14:34-36 and 1 Tim. 2:12, distinctly forbid women speaking in public, or taking a place as teacher or preacher to men. We never find a woman speaking publicly in Scripture. Mary carried a message to the brethren (John 20:17, 18). Philip had four daughters that prophesied, but it must have been privately. Women were forbidden to be speakers in the assembly. The quotation from Joel's prophecy will be fulfilled in the day of Israel's restoration. The apostle said, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;" that is, it was of the same kind. It was not drunkenness as they supposed.

Correspondence, Correspondence: PSA 138:3; Any Authority for Women Preaching?; ROM 11:26

Ques. Please explain Psalm 138:2: "Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name."

Ans. The absolute authority of the Word of God is seen in this verse. Jehovah has made His Word great above all His renown. We must therefore receive and honor the written Word above all that we have heard of Him: above everything else.

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Ques. Please explain, "And all Israel shall be saved." (Romans 11:26).

Ans. Just now, Jews and Gentiles are all alike needy sinners, are all concluded in unbelief. (Rom. 11:32, John 3:36.) All now must accept Christ and His atoning work on the cross.

Ezekiel 37:11-12. "The whole house of Israel" is the uniting of the two and the ten tribes together into one stick, one kingdom. "I will open your graves," in this passage and in Daniel 12:2, is taking the Israelites out from among the heathen nations and bringing them into their own land (Ezek. 37:21).

Zechariah 12:9-13:1. This is the way the Lord brings every one of them who will be saved, to repentance, and the fountain is opened for them; but in Zechariah 13:8-9, we see two-thirds of them cut off and die; in Ezekiel 20, it is the ten tribes who are brought into the wilderness and are purged there, so that the rebels do not enter into the land at all. (Ezek. 20:34-38). (Read also Matt. 13:41-42.)

The Antichrist is himself a Jew (Dan. 11:37), and is cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20).

But in the Millennium, when the covenant is established with Israel (the ten tribes), and with Judah (the two tribes), then each of them shall know the Lord, from the least of them unto the greatest of them (Heb. 8:8-12; Ezek. 36:25-29).

Correspondence, Correspondence: Psa. 138:2; Acts 2:16-17; Rom. 11:26; The Lord's Table

Ques. 57. Please explain Psa. 138:2: "Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name." L. S.

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Ques. 58

Is there any authority in the Word of God for women preaching? Does Acts 2:16-17, give any? I. E. K.

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Ques. 59

Please give a few scriptures to prove that Ques. 45 is answered right, as I have heard another interpretation. I. H. (Ques. 45. What does "ALL ISRAEL shall be saved" mean? Rom. 11:26.)

Ans. Rom. 11:26. Just now Jews and Gentiles are all alike needy sinners, are all concluded in unbelief. (Rom. 11:32, John 3:36.)

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But in the millennium, when the covenant is established with Israel (the ten tribes), and with Judah (the two tribes), then each of them shall know the Lord, from the least of them unto the greatest of them. (Heb. 8:8-12; Ezek. 36:25-29.)

Ques. 60.

How do we really know that we are at the Lord's table? There have been so many divisions; how do we know that we are with the ones who have remained faithful to His name and are still meeting on the ground of the one body? Are there any scriptures to prove the same? L. M. S.

Ans. The truth that "there is one body", that we are united by one Spirit to Christ our head, and to all believers as members one of another, is the blessed truth that brings us together. Every denomination claims to have the Lord's table, and they have professedly (1 Cor. 1: 2), and many believers in them enjoy individual fellowship with the Lord in taking the Lord's supper, but it is with those actually gathered to Christ's name (Matt. 18:20), that His presence is promised, "there am I in the midst of them". To be gathered to His name, is to be gathered in holiness and truth; His name means that. (Rev. 3:7.)

The Holy Spirit is also the Spirit of truth: He is the gatherer and can gather only to that name. The truth, where it is owned, will have us together as one in separation from evil. The two wave loaves baken with leaven (Lev. 23:17), is typical teaching, that evil, that is the flesh, is in us all, and we need forbearance with each other on this account (Eph. 4:2), but the leaven is not working when it is baked. There are three kinds of evil, which, if allowed, would deprive us of the presence of Christ in the midst.

First: Immorality, or unrighteous living. (1 Cor. 5.) Second: Bad doctrine that touches the foundation of our faith in Christ and His finished work. (2 John 9-10.) Third: Divisions. (1 Cor. 1:10; Rom. 6:17-18; Eph. 4:1-4.)

The first two are easy to understand. The last asks our submission to the truth that we are one, for without this unity of the Spirit, discipline could not be carried out, nor divisions kept out. The unity of the Spirit implies identification with all those with whom we break bread, and judges all those who, though right in their individual walk and doctrine, are associated with loose or independent meetings of Christians, and who are therefore not gathered in the Spirit's unity.

The start of each meeting of Christians generally tells what principles it is gathered on. If not gathered by the Spirit, it is man's will that brought them together; they cannot in truth claim Matt. 18:20. A wrong thing will not grow right. It is of no use for any of us to say, we are right, for a right thing often goes wrong. What we need is subject hearts to the truth, hearts that desire to keep Christ's word and not to deny His name. (Rev. 3:8.) Going on, subject to, and maintaining, the truth of the unity of the body, in separation from evil, the Lord will be with us according to His Word.

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Echoes of Grace: 1953, God Hates Pride

"The proud He knoweth afar off." Psalm 138:6. Whatever humbles me, helps me. Not a particle of pride will enter glory. True humility is of God. The flesh hates humility.

Questions and Answers in Christian Treasury, Questions and Answers: The Church Hid in the Field or in God?

Ques. —Is not the treasure in Matt. 13:44 Israel? Is the Church hid in the field, or was it hid in God? Does Psa. 135:4 point on to the treasure in Matt. 13:44?

Ans.—“The kingdom of heaven" in its mysterious form, (that is, when the King is absent, only called so in Matthew's gospel), applies to this present time. It does not apply to Israel in the past, nor in the future that is, after the Church is caught up.

Israel was to be a peculiar treasure, if they had obeyed Jehovah (Ex. 19:5), and they will be it in the reign of Christ, the center for His earthly glory (Psa. 135:4). It will be the Kingdom in power then. Israel was never hid in the field. They were well known, not hidden.

In Matt. 13:44 the Man found it, and hid it, then sold all that He had, and bought the field for the treasure that was in it. The field is the purchased thing there. In verses 45, 46 we find the great object of His delight, the pearl of great price (Eph. 5:25-27). This is what was hid in God, and was only revealed (Eph. 3:9) after Paul was converted.

It is important to notice that all the parables of the Kingdom of heaven apply to the Church period.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Matt. 13:44 and Psa. 135:4; Matt. 20:1-16

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It is important to notice that all the parables of the Kingdom of heaven apply to the Church period.

Ques. Please explain about the householder and those hired. (Matt. 20:1-16).

Ans. In this parable is shown the sovereignty of the Lord in calling and rewarding the laborers in His vineyard. It is not a question of obtaining salvation, for we do not labor for salvation. It is to teach us that the Lord is our Master. Peter had said "What shall we have therefore?" Here is the answer even to those who begin late in the day, "Go ye into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you." Laboring for Christ because we love Him, and trust Him, is better than laboring for reward. It is grace, not law. We love to do it because of His grace to us. He made us His.

Reward is encouragement to those who are serving Him with His approval. It is not the motive to lead us to serve. Those who bargained for the penny, received it. "What is right I will give you." They trusted Him. The assurance of reward is given when the Lord is the motive for the labor. If we get the reward as the motive for laboring, it falsifies the character of true service for Him. Then Peter and the disciples must learn that it is His to do with as He pleases, and therefore, many that are last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen, It is the sovereign grace of God that is the source of true blessing.

Peter was called, and a place given him by the Lord. Paul came in later on, as last, but he was a chosen vessel to unfold the heavenly mystery of Christ and the Church as a stronger testimony to grace, so the last was first, and the first last. Each has his place to fill as given by the Lord (Eph. 4:8). Again, notice, this is not salvation, but service after we are saved.

Edification: Volume 1, Redemption.

WITH the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption” (Psa. 130:7).

Redemption shines resplendent on the pages of Holy Writ. Job, its earliest, and John, its latest writer, celebrate its glories. Job knew, three things.

He knew his Redeemer was alive.

“I know that my Redeemer liveth.”

He knew He would come to this world.

“He shall stand... upon the earth.”

He knew that his eyes would behold Him.

“Whom I shall see for myself.”

(Job 19:25, 26, 27).

DO YOU KNOW THIS FOR YOURSELF?

Redemption is from the power of the enemy (Psa. 106:10). It is found alone in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24), It includes the body (Rom. 8:23). It is secured at the infinite cost Of THE PRECIOUS BLOOD of CHRIST.

Redemption is the anthem of heaven.

HAS IT TAKEN YOU OUT?

H. N.

Echoes of Mercy: Volume 14 (1904), Light at Eventide.

“With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption.”— Psalms 130:7.

A CHRISTIAN who through a long and tedious day had been following his usual laborious calling, feeling very fatigued, was retiring to bed rather earlier than was his custom, when he heard a timid knock at the front door.

“Who’s there?” he asked.

“If you please, sir, I’ve come to ask you to come and see mother,” were the words uttered in girlish tones.

“I cannot tonight,” he replied, as he wondered however he could drag his aching limbs to the address given.

“Oh, do come,” pleaded the child.

“I will call early in the morning,” he rejoined. But as the child was turning away he felt suddenly constrained to go, so called out after the retreating child, “But tell mother that I will come along in a few minutes.” And hastily putting on his boots and lifting a silent prayer to God for His guidance and blessing, he set out to the address given, endeavoring to forget his bodily weariness.

When he arrived at the lowly cottage and was ushered into the bedroom, he saw lying upon a bed a woman whom he at once recognized as being a listener to the glad tidings of God’s salvation which he had proclaimed in an adjoining factory some time previously. Upon her face was a look of deep dejection, and she was uttering the solemn words, “I’m lost; I am going to hell. I’m lost; I am going to hell.”

“You know, then, that you are a poor, lost, helpless sinner,” remarked the visitor; “but let me remind you that God has in His great love provided a way of escape for you. Do you believe the Scriptures?”

“I believe the Bible,” was her faint reply.

So turning to that beautiful passage in Gal. 2:20, “I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me,” he asked, “Do you believe that Christ loved you?” There was a stillness in that chamber for a few minutes, for God the Holy Ghost was speaking to that woman’s heart. She was halting between two opinions. Should Christ or Satan have the victory? Should there be rejoicing in heaven over another soul being brought from darkness to light?

“Do you believe that He loved you?” again asked the visitor.

“Yes,” was her hesitating reply.

“Very well, then,” he continued; “not only does He love, but the verse says, ‘He gave Himself for me,’—for me—so you see it requires individual application.”

There was another momentary pause, when suddenly the sick woman exclaimed, her face aglow with newly found joy: “I’ve got it! I see it!” for she saw for the first time in her life, that although she was lost, sinful, and passing onward to endless ruin, yet the love of Jesus Christ was so great that He died for her sins, gave Himself for her. Thus was she born again and made through divine grace an heir of God, even at the eleventh hour. At midnight her ransomed spirit was set free; under three hours after the glorious knowledge that her many sins were all forgiven.

The above is not recorded to encourage you, dear reader, to put off the weighty matter of your soul’s salvation until upon your deathbed; but it is written to magnify the triumphant grace of God.

We would remind you that comparatively speaking the above is an exceptional case, and that sometimes in a soul’s history after grace has been willfully slighted, perhaps for a lifetime, God speaks, saying:

Then the Christ rejecters die as they have lived—unsaved! For, “He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life, and he that bieveth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

A. G.

God's Glad Tidings: Volume 7, Seven Buts of Scripture

IT sometimes happens that a stream is deflected from its course and turned in an opposite direction by a very small obstacle. Just as, not unfrequently, a trifling event may completely alter a life or materially affect a career, and, in the same manner, we shall find, in the seven passages about to be quoted, a remarkable change of thought or action intimated in each case by the little monosyllable “but.”

The first is found in Eccl. 11:9. “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.”

Can it be that the Spirit of God condescends to use irony, when the young man is thus urged forward in the pursuit of the natural inclinations of his heart, and in the gratification of the eye? Can there be, in this passage, a contradiction of the uniform condemnation of this very thing that is found elsewhere in the word of God.? Can the sins that are everywhere denounced, in the plainest terms, be lawful here? Nay, there is neither irony, nor contradiction nor allowance of sin. In reaching this point, and using contrast to produce its natural effect, the line of thought changes—the stream is deflected—by one little monosyllable, and the young man assured that “for all these things God will bring him into judgment.” “But know thou” says the Spirit of God to the profligate, the drunkard, the worldling, “that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.” “Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap,” and just as surely as sin is sown so will judgment be the harvest.

“But,” says the young man, “these are the pleasures of sin, and are we not to be happy? Are we all to be gloomy and morose? Are we to have no pleasure?” Well, the pleasure that is bought at the cost of the soul, and that brings with it future punishment, if not present remorse, is dear indeed. Moreover it is not a question of pleasure, for there is a region of joy outside the province of sin that throws the transitory “pleasures of sin” into the shade. Come now, young man, be honest and tell me, whom you deem the happiest, the worldling or the true Christian? The man whose conscience is harrowed and stained by sin, or he Whose sins are pardoned and who can look death, judgment, and eternity calmly in the face, who can truly say “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain”? As one of yourselves I ask you for an honest answer. Ah! your conscience bears witness that a course of ungodliness is one of misery, that the sinner is the dupe of the devil and is being fooled into hell. Think of being a fool forever! “Fools make a mock at sin.” Well then, I say, that the pleasure which harrows the conscience, violates the word of God, and secures future judgment, is pleasure falsely so called. It is an ignis fatuus leading on to the bottomless quagmire. It is sugar in the cup of deadly poison. Young man, take your fill indeed, but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee

into judgment.

Now let us turn to our second illustration. “We did esteem him, stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah, 53:4-5.)

What a discovery for the now aroused and troubled soul to make, the soul that, with other sins, had been emphatically a rejector of Christ, guilty—so to speak—of His blood, what an amazing truth for such to learn that the “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,” who during His earthly life had not where to lay His head, and ended that life upon the cross of shame, there abandoned by His disciples, and, because of the burden of sins He then bore, forsaken by God Himself, forsaken but not forgotten, enshrouded in darkness but an object of infinite delight to the Father’s heart, stricken, smitten of God and afflicted,—what a wonderful fact to apprehend that “he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities!” Ever blessed substitute! We adore Thy grace! Thou didst die for sinners.

It was our iniquities that wrung from thy bosom the cry “My God my God why hast thou forsaken me?” “All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all,” For no other reason did He die. The sinless one indeed, “but he was wounded for our transgressions and with his stripes we are healed.” “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” Oh sinner think of this. What a flood of love follows our little monosyllable here, but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. It was followed by judgment in the first instance, by mercy here.

In continuation of this glorious theme we find in our third instance, “Though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain, and when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a sepulcher, but God raised him from the dead.” (Acts 13:32.) As to the sepulcher of this blessed One, Satan, with man for his confederate, had things all his own way. When Jesus was born He was laid in a manger for the Inn had no room for Him, and throughout His earthly career He was the constant object of Satan’s malice. The cross was the grand proof of this. Here the enemy thought to avenge the course of defeats he had suffered; here man too joined in the wicked cause, and the greed of hell was satiated when the “great stone” was rolled to the mouth of the sepulcher. The victory seemed complete. Death wrapped itself around the Lord of Glory. “But God raised him from the dead.” Hallelujah! Becoming interposition, suited answer to that life of devotedness! What else could await Him whom death could not hold? “The Lord is risen!” Thrilling words. Satan is abashed—death is overcome, and over the work of redemption are written the words “It is finished.”

God raised Him. What an eternal rebuke to the enemy. He who was “delivered for our offenses was raised again for our justification.”

What rest for the troubled conscience “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Our four remaining instances are in character similar to one another, each presenting God in the exercise and energy of His grace meeting the ruined condition of man. Thus in Psalm 130 we read “Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord... If thou Lord shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord who shall stand; but there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared.” Here we find a soul in deep distress, crying out of the depths, and dreading lest God should mark iniquity, an experience not unlike that in Romans 7. There is an evident struggle, and perhaps an effort to conceal iniquity, a fear to make known the worst, and to lose the hope derived from iniquity not being marked. Such a hope is vain; such an effort is futile. God must know the very worst; there must be a full confession and a total and unreserved surrender. It is vain to conceal any part of the truth. Yet the soul shrinks from a full disclosure; it dreads retribution; it cherishes false thoughts of God, and its misery is deepened!

What a blaze of light pours in, however, when the soul can say “But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared!” Who is a pardoning God like unto thee? Why hide from such a God? The poor demoniac said to Jesus “I beseech thee that thou torment me not.” He had no other idea of the Son of the most High God than one of judgment. He little knew that Jesus had crossed the stormy sea of Galilee just to heal and clothe and befriend him. He did not know the true nature of God thus manifest in the flesh. He feared indeed, but had no hope of forgiveness—but now forgiven—or at least healed, he feared, and loved, and followed. There is the fear of torment; and there is the fear of forgiveness. How terrible the one! How sweet the other! Reader, mark the divine order “there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared.”

Again, let me quote from Titus 3:3, 4, 7. “For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another, but after that the kindness and love of God toward man appeared. . . that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life,” Notice the sevenfold description of man’s fallen condition, the exact and awful delineation of human depravity, guilt and ruin.

What more complete than the word “hateful” and yet how true—how deserving of hate—as in Romans 1:30. “haters of God,” or, perhaps more correctly, “hateful to God.” Is not God “angry with the wicked every day?” Is not sin hateful to Him? Can He look on it? Yet observe the glorious, the surprising contrast, “But after the kindness and love of God toward man appeared.” Human depravity is exceeded by divine love—spite of all the well-merited judgment—the hateful condition; spite of all the tide of sin, the kindness and love of God appear, and by His grace He justifies! Dear reader your attention is called to this magnificent attestation to the divine nature. Weigh in your mind the two statements: balance the one by the other and see the astounding preponderance of the love of God over the guilt of man.

Such another passage comes before us in Ephesians 2. “You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the (lower of the air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation, in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and. of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, but God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.”

Again we find sin met by love—God rich in mercy and great in love! This passage states more fully than even the previous one the extent of the fall—this speaks of death, that of sins—this of the state, that of the conduct—this of the believer being quickened, that of his being justified. But notice how the complete race both of Gentile and Jew is embraced—all equally guilty and spiritually dead—all children of wrath. But at this very juncture divine love declares itself! When dead in sins, it is then that mercy and love act, and by divine power the soul is quickened, and blessed beyond all measure. God Himself, apart from anything on the part of man, acts for His own glory and according to the

grace of His own heart, and man becomes the debtor. It could not be otherwise! Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

And now for the last of the seven. “But when he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him,” Luke 15:20. The climax of all! How transcendent See the prodigal, the “young man” who had taken his fill, and now returned empty, who had taken his own way and had been reduced to want, see him retracing his willful way—slowly and humbly and just as he was—filthy and forlorn and fearful—at a distance indeed “but when he was yet a great way off his father saw him!” How was this? Ah! the father was on the outlook—love is always hopeful—and what then? “He had compassion!” and then? “He ran!” love is always energetic; and then? “he fell upon his neck!” Oh! that embrace! Distance, sin, self-will, prodigality, everything of the kind overcome! and then he “kissed him” —love is always intimate—a kiss is the emblem of nearest and dearest affection—the lovers token—and then? In the stillness of profound self-abhorrence, solemnly, fervently, irresistibly says the prodigal “Father, I have sinned... and am no more worthy...” Enough! love has won the day! and its happy prisoner is clothed and feasted amid the music of the Father’s house. Ah! reader, leave God out, and what then? Let God have His way, and then? “God is love.”

J. W. S.

Acrostic Psalms, Acrostic Psalms: Psalm 130:1-8

1.-Psa. 130

Each of the verses 1-8 begins with Aleph.

1. 1ALL blessings for the perfect in the way, who walk in the law of the Jehovah.

2. 2All blessings for those that keep His testimonies, they shall seek Him with the whole heart.

3. Also they do no iniquity; they walk in his ways.

4. A command thou hast given, diligently to keep thy precepts.

5. Ah! that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes!

6. Ashamed I shall not be, when I have respect to all Thy commandments.

7. As learning Thy righteous judgments, I will praise Thee with uprightness of heart.

8. Ah! forsake me not utterly, I will keep Thy statutes.

Messages of God's Love: 1920, "Deliver My Soul, O Lord, From Lying Lips."

Psa. 120:2.

SHALL never forget an untruth I once told, although, it happened when I was a very little girl. My younger sister had a penny, with which she wished to buy a fig, but being too sick to go to the store herself, she asked me to go. Accordingly I went.

As I returned with the fig nicely folded up in a small piece of paper, suddenly the thought occurred to me that I should like to take a peep at the fig. So I very carefully opened the paper, when the fig looked so very tempting, I thought I could not help tasting it at one end. I had scarcely tasted it before I wanted it all; and without much more thought I ate up the whole fig! Then when it was all gone, I had nothing to do but to think. I began to feel very uncomfortable. I stood disgraced before myself. I thought of running somewhere, I did not exactly know where, but to get away from everyone. It was not long before I reached home; I went as quickly as I could.

I told my sister that I had lost the penny. I remember she cried sadly. But I went right out into the garden, and tried to think of something else, but in vain. My own guilt stared me steadily in the face, and I was wretched. Although it was only a few minutes to the dinner-hour, yet it seemed very long to me. I was anxious some event might intervene between me and the lie I had told. I wandered about with a very heavy spirit. I thought I would give worlds if it had not happened.

When the dinner-hour came, I was seated in my high chair at my father’s side, when my sister made her appearance, crying, and looking very much grieved. My father immediately asked what was the matter. Then my mother stated the story, the conclusion of which was, that I had “lost the penny”.

I can never forget the look of kind, perfectly unsuspecting confidante with which my father turned on me, and with his large blue eyes full in my face, said, “Where did you lose the penny? Perhaps we can find it again.”

Not for a single instant could I brave that tone and look, but bursting into tears, I screamed out, “O, I did not lose the penny—I ate up the fig.”

A silence, as of the grave, ensued. No one spoke. In an instant I seemed to be separated at an immense distance from all the rest of the family. A great gulf yawned between us. A sense of loneliness and desolation came over me, the impression of which will go with me Forever. I left the table, and all that afternoon, the next day, and during the week, my feelings were melancholy in the extreme. But as time wore away, and my father and mother, brothers and sisters, received me back to their love and favor, my spirits recovered their usual tone. The whole event left an indelible impression on my mind and heart. It convinced me that “the way of transgressors is hard.”

Dear young reader, whatever it costs you, be truthful. It will cost you more to be untruthful. Through fear, children are sometimes driven to tell a lie. Whatever you do, be truthful. May this be your motto all through your life.

“Lying lips are abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are His delight.” Prov. 12:22.

How solemn are these words of Scripture, “All liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.” Rev. 21:8.

To be truthful is not enough; salvation through the finished work of Christ is needed, if we are to be truly happy for time and eternity. No one can escape the lake of fire and get to heaven but by the Lord Jesus Christ, and His work on the cross.

Accept Him now as your own Savior, dear children, and He will keep you from evil, if you go to Him for strength day by day, and are in dependence on Him.

ML-07/04/1920

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Peoples Associated With Israel in Latter Days

Question: Psa. 120:5. Have you any light on the peoples so remarkably associated with Israel in the latter day? The commentators seem perplexed by these names, and without anything of moment to suggest. W.

Answer: It may be fairly asked if the construction of “sojourn” does not point to “with” Meshech, rather than “in” (as Psa. 5:5 (4); as also the preposition “with” is really meant, and not “in,” the tents of Kedar. Hence it is not dwelling among these enemies that is intended, but their hostile proximity to the sobs of Israel in their land. The difficulty supposed from the one belonging to the far north, the Muscovites once inhabiting the country near the Euxine, but afterward with others migrating to the land of Magog or Russia, and the other to the north-west of Arabia in the south, is exactly what gives point to the plaint. The Psalm refers to the last part of the latter day crisis, when Gog (as in Ezek. 38; 39) comes up to crush the restored people dwelling in their unwalled villages. Little does the great and last north-eastern chief of Rosh (the Russians), Meshech (the Muscovites), and Tubal (the Tobolskians), know that Jehovah-Jesus is their King, and that he with his vast hordes, not only of Gomer and Togarmah, &c., in the north, but down to Persia, Cush, and Phut, and as here Kedar in the south, only come up to be punished for their unbelieving greed and presumption, that Jehovah may make Himself known in the eyes of many nations, at the beginning of His glorious Kingdom for a thousand years. It is of interest, one may add, that the Assyrian inscriptions connect two of the three, Mushai and Tuplai; as Herodotus much later the Moschi with the Tibarini. In the Byzantine historians, is used for the Russians, the very name by which the Septuagint long before rendered the Hebrew Rosh employed by Ezekiel.

God's Glad Tidings: Volume 8, Three Cups, The

THE CUP OF THE WICKED.

“Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup.” Psa. 11:6.

THERE is nothing so definite and plain as the Word of God; and I would appeal to you, dear reader, as to the solemn, and none less certain fact, in the above verse.

It clearly defines a certain class of people, and plainly states that a certain portion will be theirs.

This is put in the figure of a cup: the cup of the wicked. God, acting in righteousness towards such, must necessarily fill their cup with judgment. Mark how expressive are the words of the Psalmist, “He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible (or burning) tempest.” No mitigation—no word here of mercy, um of blessing.

The character of God demands that every rejecter of Christ must have such a portion, and the all-important question for you and me dear friend is, Do I belong to this company? or shall such a portion be mine? And this not merely for time—but for eternity. You, dear reader, whoever you may be, will shrink from such a doom. Satan, and your own heart, will be too ready to tell you—that you are not of this company. A religious training, moral influences, good society, and many other things may seem to separate you from the openly wicked. Or again, you say, once I was such; I was known as a drunkard, a blasphemer, and mixed up with all that is bad. Now I have given up these things—signed the pledge, it may be; become moral, upright, and religious; surely, such a portion can never fill my cup?

Much there is in all this, to be thankful for—but I want you to read one verse with me in the last book of the Bible; where God, as it were, winds up the destinies of men.

In Revelation, chap. 21, verse 8, (Rev. 21:8) We read “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.” How striking the similarity between this verse, and the one already quoted from Psa. 11; but this gives more details, and defines more emphatically, who shall have the solemn part of which it speaks. Now, heading the list are two classes of people, and I tremble, dear friend, lest you should belong to one of these—namely, “the fearful and unbelieving.” Alas, how many good, amiable, and even religious people come under this head, and what if you are amongst them.

Psa. 9:17 verse, declares that “the wicked shall be turned into hell” but beware, dear reader, Oh, beware, lest, unbelieving, your portion shall be the same as theirs, and your eternity spent with them. What sin so great and heinous before God as unbelief! Jesus says of the Holy Ghost, in John 16, “He shall reprove the world of sin, because they believe not on me.” Again, he says in Mark 16, “He that believeth not shall be damned.” I need not stay to explain what is implied in belief or unbelief—you can scarcely be a stranger to what is meant—but what I do plead, is, that the claims of Christ, as well as His love may have a place in your heart—that your eternal portion may be settled now, as it must be in time—that you may weigh now solemnly—the consequences of being amongst the wicked, so that you through mercy may escape their awful and righteous doom in the lake of fire, where their cup shall never be drained. “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

II.—THE CUP OF SUFFERING.

After having spoken of the awful portion that must fill your cup for eternity, if a Christ rejecter— surely, dear reader, you will be the more willing to hear of another cup; one that speaks of suffering, of substitution—of judgment borne—of guilt atoned for by One Who was, and is, spotless as God Himself. Love brought Him down—the eternal Son of God—the Saviour of the world—matchless love led Him on through this scene to Calvary, Love divine sustained Him in that awful hour when He, the spotless victim, made an atonement for sin, when He took the cup filled with suffering and death. Oh, miracle of grace! to see the Saviour thus: to hear that cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” while He bore His righteous judgment; while He suffered, not for Himself, but for others. This, dear friend, is the way God has met man’s need.

He has said, “Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.” And this is found in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Neither is there salvation in any other.” Say will you not now, even now, turn to this Saviour and trust in Him? His work avails for the chief of sinners. He came into the world to save such. Will you not then whilst owning what you deserve, thankfully believe in this perfect provision for all your need? Thus, you will escape the judgment;, and be saved from the wrath to come that must fill the cup of the wicked, and all the blessings that Christ’s finished work secures—namely, pardon, salvation, peace, joy, glory—all will be yours through faith in Him.

III.—THE CUP OF SALVATION.

Thrice happy the soul that follows the Psalmist’s example in the above verse. The latter has such a sense of the Lord’s goodness that his heart gladly responds to it, in these words, “I will take the cup of salvation.”

Here again we have the figure of a cup—only this time it is filled—not with judgment, not with the sufferings of atonement, but with the blessed and certain result of Christ having accomplished the work—having drained the cup of suffering even to the dregs. Peter tells us that “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” To be brought to God in all the value of Christ’s sacrifice, this, dear friend, is salvation.

If left to myself, the cup of the wicked must be my portion, but in wondrous love the Saviour God has acted for me.

So the hymn expresses it, and such is the testimony of God’s own word. Rom. 5:6, declares that “When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” The cup of suffering is put, as it were, into the Saviour’s hands, and we know how He finished the work, and how God raised Him from the dead, the living proof that the work was done; and God was satisfied. What then is left for you, what else can you do, but “take the cup of salvation?” If David spoke of benefits think, oh think of Calvary—of that unspeakable gift— of that atoning work of the Saviour’s love; and tell me, dear friend, are you not constrained to take, what God Himself has provided, and so wants you to have— “the cup of salvation.” O be real, in view of the judgment to come, and the perfect grace now displayed, and take— just now—what you so need, as the hymn puts it:

Then shall you rejoice; then, and not till then, can you look back to sins put away—to death and judgment behind you; then can you look forward without the fear of having to drink the cup of the wicked, but with the certainty of glory with Christ your deliverer. Then too you will learn that He Himself who so loves you is even now and forever the portion of your cup (Psa. 16:5), so that you are constrained to say in the language of the twenty-third psalm, “My cup runneth over.”

T. E. P.

Echoes of Grace: 1985, ?Open Thou Mine Eyes?

"What are you reading?" demanded a university student of a girl of sixteen.

"God's Book, the Bible," she replied.

"Then do you believe there is a God?" asked the young man.

"Is it possible that you don't believe it?" she answered.

"I used to believe it," he said, "but after living in Paris and studying science and philosophy, I learned it is all a mistake. There is no God."

"I was never in Paris," replied the girl, "and never studied those important things which you speak of. But since you are so educated, may I ask you a question?"

"Certainly; ask as many as you please."

"You say there is no God. Now suppose I were holding an egg, could you tell me where it came from?"

"What a funny question! Of course the egg comes from the hen."

"And which then existed first, the egg or the hen?"

"I really don't know what you mean by this question. I suppose, of course, the hen existed first."

"Well, that must have been a hen that did not come from an egg. Can you tell where that hen came from?"

"I beg your pardon, young lady, I was mistaken. Of course the egg existed first."

"Then that must have been an egg that did not come from a hen. Where did that egg come from?"

The student became excited and said, "What's the use of asking questions such as these?"

"The use is this," said the girl. "If the first hen did not come from an egg as other hens do, then Somebody must have made the hen; that Somebody must be God. If you cannot explain how the first egg existed without God, can you explain how the world existed without God?"

That is a question which all the atheists in the world cannot answer. The young man having nothing further to say, departed.

God had opened the eyes of the teenage believer to see what the young man with all his education could not see. This is the sight we all need and should earnestly desire.

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Psa. 14:1.

"All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3.

The Remembrancer: 1904, I Will Consider Thy Testimonies

How varied and precious are the considerations " set before us in the Epistle to the Hebrews, striking chord after chord in our hearts, and producing note after note of praise! In the first chapter the personal and official dignities and glories of the Lord Jesus Christ crowd themselves together and unfold themselves before our souls; while in the second chapter, we have the grace of Him, by whom God spake in these last days, in associating others with Himself when passing through death to the Headship of all things, crowned with glory and honor it is as thus set before us, we are told, as holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, to " consider" Him, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession; to gaze on Him, and have our souls enlarged in contemplating Him, " who was faithful to Him that appointed Him."

But how can such as we sit down and feast ourselves with such considerations, with consciences unpurged and not at rest? In view of this need, and before the next " consideration " is presented to us, we are led, in chapters 9., and 10., to see the altar of sin-offering receiving a victim, once and forever, that has satisfied all its righteous requirements, and which has fully answered all the demands of the glory of God as to sin and uncleanness satisfied the need of the convicted conscience, and silenced every accusing foe. And with consciences thus at rest, we are set down to another consideration for our souls. We are told, in chap. 10:24, to “consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." With the holy peace and calm of purged consciences we are thus, as it were, told that we have leisure to turn round and look upon one another with such an end in view, and so much the more as we see the " day " approaching.

But, you will say, there are the trials and difficulties of the way to contend with, and there are the weights and hindrances that would hamper and clog us in our journeying onwards to the glory. And, in view of these things, we are told to turn our eyes toward Him again, and we are exhorted, in chap. 12., to "consider Him who endured," as One who has been in the way Himself, and understands the grace needed for every step, and who has learned " how to speak a word in season to him that is weary " (Isa. 1.) at every stage of the journey to the place where He has Himself sat down, " lest we should be weary and faint in our minds."

And, lastly, as those Who are in the midst of the things that are about to be shaken, and who are dwelling in spirit and by faith amongst those thing which, when all things are shaken, will remain, we are exhorted to " consider" the end of the conversation of those who minister amongst us— Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for even.

Varied and precious are the “considerations " thus laid before us, and to which we are set down to contemplate, in their order and suitability, as every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of our God.

Christian Truth: Volume 33, Bible, The

"Forever, 0 Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven." Psalm 119:89.

This Book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy.

It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter.

Here heaven is opened, and the gates of hell disclosed. CHRIST IS ITS GRAND SUBJECT, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet.

Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, a river of pleasure. It is given to you in life, will be opened at the judgment, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and condemns all who trifle with its sacred contents.

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:14-17.

Christian Truth: Volume 31, Songs in the House of My Pilgrimage

Brief Remarks on Psalm 119:54-63

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

Happy indeed when the soul in truth can say so.

It is language uttered in the presence of God—breathed into His ear—the overflowing of a heart that loves, values, and delights in the sacred Word.

And what is that Word, we may ask, but the revelation of God Himself—the unfolding of His counsels concerning the Son of His love, and His ways with and counsels about the families of the redeemed, whose lips shall fill the wide earth and yet wider heavens by-and-by with His unending praise? The past, present, and future we find there unveiled so that we may know what has been, what is, and what shall be. There too are revealed those things which God has prepared for them that love Him—things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man."

Oh, think of that! Could you behold all the beautiful things the eye of man has ever seen from Adam's day to ours, listen to the most enchanting sounds that have ever charmed the human ear, and acquaint yourself with the grandest conceptions of the mind of man from Eden until now, all would be infinitely surpassed by the things which God hath prepared—things clothed with such moral beauty, grandeur, and perfection as renders them worthy of Him who has prepared them all.

And these things, mind you, are not held in reserve or kept secret, and intended as some sweet surprise when we reach the shores of eternity, but are made known now, and in words which the Holy Ghost has chosen. The Holy Spirit Himself is also given unto us that we might know the things which God has so freely made ours; for the natural man, with all the advantages of education and cultured intellect, understands them not; they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 2:9, 14). In •these astonishing revelations then the "new man" in the saint of God delights. The beauty, depth, and fullness of them he increasingly learns; they are the joy and rejoicing of his heart; they become his songs in the house of his pilgrimage.

"I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." Here the ways pass under serious review; they are measured by the pure and perfect Word of the Lord, and the walk ordered and regulated by His testimonies. There is also readiness of heart to obey, not saying, as in Luke 9, "suffer me first" to do this or that, but, like Abraham, who, when told to offer up Isaac, rose up "early in the morning" to carry out the divine command. "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." This is very beautiful; it shows a heart governed by the Word.

Oh that this admirable feature were more clearly seen in the saints of God! Alas! it is often hardly to be discerned at all. The will of God is known about certain matters, and yet slowness of step in carrying it out. The heart runs not with joyous alacrity along the path of obedience. Perhaps to obey involves the giving up of much to which one naturally clings, and the will being at work there is hesitancy and delay. How different from what we find here, and how unlike the Lord, who said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." To Him indeed the path of obedience was a path of suffering and shame; yet He could say, "The Lord God hath opened Mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." Isa. 1:5-7. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Verse 63: "I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts." Here is holy fellowship, as in 2 Tim. 2:22: "Flee... but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." There can be no fellowship, according to God, where He is not feared, nor His precepts kept. It would be fellowship in irreverence and disobedience. How little is this thought of!

The Christian Shepherd: 2003, Hunger for the Word

“How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” (Psa. 119:103).

Starving people often have no appetite. Instead of grabbing the food which is offered them, they eat with little enthusiasm. Having had nothing in their stomachs for so long, the victims felt no hunger. They had passed the stage of desiring food. This is typical of many Christians. The Bible doesn’t appeal to them anymore because they have gone without its nourishment for so long. They are suffering from spiritual malnutrition; their yearning for the Lord’s things has almost vanished.

The more you study and meditate upon Scripture, the more your appetite is whetted for its nourishment and sweetness. It becomes sweeter and richer as you feed upon it daily. But the opposite is also true. The less you eat the Word of God, the less you’ll relish its health-giving promises, resulting in spiritual weakness and loss of appetite for God’s Word.

Let us each pray, “Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies” (Psa. 119:36). Set a daily pattern of personal Bible study, even if it’s only a few verses. As you obtain spiritual nourishment, your appetite for God’s Word will return, and soon you’ll be looking forward with eager anticipation to those times when you can feast your soul on its satisfying truths.

Spiritual vigor is measured by spiritual appetite. “Thy words were found, and I did eat them.... Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart” (Jer. 15:16).

Anon. (adapted)

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Father's/Son's Work, The

Question: 1. Psa. 110:1. Is this, as Mr. J. Gall conceives, the Father's "evangelistic work?" Is the Son's work "by outward judgments?"

Answer: In both statements there seems no small confusion through inattention to scripture.

1. The Father and the Son, as such, do not appear in Psa. 110. It is wise to adhere to scripture. The true correlates here are Jehovah and Messiah. No doubt the persons may be otherwise and elsewhere so regarded; but beyond controversy what the Psalm reveals is Jehovah saying to David's Lord, the Messiah, Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Nor in fact does scripture ever, that I remember, speak of the right hand of the Father, but of God, and avoids it pointedly as in Acts 2:33. Surely also the N. T. which speaks of "evangelistic work" connects it with the Son yet more than the Father. It was He, not the Father, Who came to seek and to save the lost. It is not said of "the Father," but that "God so loved the world that He gave" &c. The truth is that in the O. T. Jehovah and His Anointed have perfect communion in "outward judgments," as in the N. T. Father and Son have in "evangelistic work." The Law, Psalms, and Prophets prove the former, as the Gospels and Epistles the latter, the Revelation bringing us round transitionally to the world-kingdom of the Lord and His Christ, and the eternal state which follows again confirming their fellowship in judgment as before in grace.

Nor can any interpretation be more egregious than that Jehovah's making Messiah's enemies to be Messiah's footstool means "converting grace." Subjecting them to Christ it is, but this, as 1 Cor. 15 slums, for actively putting down and annulling all antagonistic power. Such is one of the main objects of "the kingdom," which is as distinct from the gospel and the church as from eternity.

Acrostic Psalms, Acrostic Psalms: Psalm 119:25-32

Each of the verses from 25-32 begins with Daleth.

Ver. 25—Down to the dust my soul cleaves;

Quicken Thou me according to Thy word.

Ver. 26—Declared have I my ways, and Thou heartiest me;

Teach me Thy statutes.

Ver. 27—Do Thou make me to understand the way of Thy precepts;

So shall I muse of Thy wondrous works.

Ver. 28—Dropping-as-if-melting is my soul through heaviness;

Make me to stand according to Thy Word.

Ver. 29—Deceitful ways remove Thou from me;

And graciously favor me with Thy law.

Ver. 30—Delighted I in [lit. chose 1] the way of truth;

Thy judgments have I laid (before me).

Ver. 31—Do not shame me, O Lord;

I have cleaved to Thy testimonies.

Ver. 32—(Directing my steps) in the way of Thy commandments I will run;

For Thou shalt enlarge my heart.

Acrostic Psalms, Acrostic Psalms: Psalm 119:17-24

Each of the verses from 17-24, begins with a Gimel.

Ver. 17—Grant favor unto thy servant,

That I may live and keep Thy Word;

Ver. 18—Give the opening of the eyes that I may behold-

Wonderful things out of Thy law;

Ver. 19—Greatly am I estranged from the world;

Hide not Thy commandments from me;

Ver. 20—Grievously my soul breaks -

For the longing it hath for Thy judgments at all times;

Ver. 21—Going astray from Thy commandments-

The proud are cursed and rebuked by Thee;

Ver. 22—Grant that reproach and contempt may be removed-

For I have kept Thy testimonies;

Ver. 23—Great men (lit. princes) did set and speak against me;

But Thy servant did meditate in Thy statutes;

Ver. 24—Greatly delightful and instructive

Are Thy testimonies.

Acrostic Psalms, Acrostic Psalms: Psalm 119:9-19

2.-Ps. 119.SA 119:9-119:19{

Each of the verses from 9-19, begins with Beth.

Ver. 9—By what shall a youth cleanse his way,

To guard (it) according to Thy Word?

Ver. 10—By (or, with) my whole heart I sought Thee;

Let me not wander from Thy commands.

Ver. 11—Bestowed I Thy word, in my heart,

That I might not sin against Thee,

Ver. 12—Blessed art Thou, O Jehovah;

Teach me Thy statutes.

Ver. 13—By my lips have I declared

All the judgments of Thy mouth,

Ver. 14—1By the way, I have rejoiced in Thy

Testimonies as over all riches.

Ver. 15—By means of Thy precepts I will muse

And have respect to Thy paths.

Ver. 16—By thy statutes do I delight myself:

I will not forget Thy words.

Young Christian: Volume 16, 1926, I Am Thine: Psalm 119:94

This is a wonderful stone for the sling of faith. It will slay any Goliath of temptation, if we only sling it out boldly and determinately at him.

When self tempts us (and we know how often that is), let it be met with “ye are not your own,” and then look straight away to Jesus with “I am Thine.”

If the world tries some lure, old or new, remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said: “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own;....but I have chosen you out of the world;” and lest the world should claim us as “his own,” look away to Jesus, and say, “I am Thine.”

Is it sin, subtle and strong and secret, that claims our obedience? Acknowledge that “ye were the servants of sin;” but now, “being made free from sin, ye become the servants of righteousness,” and conquer with the faith—shout, “I am Thine!”

Is it a terrible hand-to-hand fight with Satan himself, making a desperate effort to re-assert his old power? Tell the prince of this world that he hath nothing in Jesus, and that you are “in Him that is true,” a member of His body, His very own; and see if he is not forced to flee at the sound of your confident “I am Thine!”

But after all, “I am Thine” is only an echo, varying in clearness according to faith’s atmosphere, and our nearness to the original Voice. Yes, it is only the echo of “Thou art Mine,” falling in its mighty music on the responsive, because Spirit-prepared, heart. This note of heavenly music never originated with any earthly rock. It is only when God sends forth the Spirit of His Son in our hearts, that we cry, “Abba, Father.” It was when the anointed but not yet openly crowned king had gone out to meet Amasai, and the Spirit came upon him, that he said, “Thine are we, David.” Therefore do not overlook the Voice, in the gladness of the echo. Listen, and you will hear it falling from the mysterious heights of high-priestly intercession: “They are Thine. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine.”

This is no vague and general belonging to Christ, but full of specific realities of relation ship. “I am Thine” means, “Truly I am Thy servant.” I am Thy chosen soldier. I am Thy ransomed one. I am Thine “own sheep.” I am Thy witness. I am Thy friend. And all these are but Amens to His own condescending declarations. He says we are all these, and we have only to say, “Yes, Lord, so I am.” Why should we ever contradict Him?

In deeper humility and stronger faith let us listen further to the voice of our Beloved, as He breathes names of incomprehensible condescension and love. Shall we contradict Him here, in the tenderest outflow of His divine affection and say, “Not so, Lord”? Shall we not rather adoringly listen, and let Him say even to us in our depths of utter unworthiness, “My sister, My spouse,” “My love, My dove, My undefiled,” answering only with a wondering, yet unquestioning, “I am Thine,” “I am all Thou choosest to say that I am”?

The echo may vary and falter (though it is nothing short of atrocious ingratitude and unbelief when it does), but the voice never varies nor falters. He does not say, “Thou art Mine” today, and reverse or weaken it tomorrow. We are “a people unto Thee forever,” and why grieve His love by doubting His word, and giving way to a very fidget of faithlessness? Love that is everlasting cannot be ephemeral; it is everlasting, and what can we say more?

The more we by faith and experience realize that we are His own in life and death, the more willing we shall be that He should do what He will with His own, and the more sure we shall be that He will do the very best with it, and make the very most of it. May we increasingly find the strength and rest of this, our God-given claim upon God. “I am Thine;” “He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love.”

Christian Treasury: Volume 1, Wise and Safe Thing to Do, A

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." Psa. 119:11.

This, truly, is a wise and safe thing to do. Let us consider it. Let us understand it. Let us imitate it. There are three special points suggested, namely: What have I hid? Where have I hid it? Why have I hid it?

1. What have I hid? "THY WORD." It is not man's word, but the Word of God, that liveth and abideth forever. This is the thing to hide. It is a treasure worth hiding. No thief can steal it, no moth corrupt it. It increases by being hidden in the way here spoken of. We cannot set too high a value upon the Word of God. So the Psalmist thought when he "hid" it. This expression sets forth how intensely he prized the Word. "I have hid it." He placed it out of the reach of every one and everything that could deprive him of it-may we ponder it-may we understand it may we imitate it!

2. Where have 1 hid it? "IN MY HEART." It was not in his head or in his intellect, but in his heart- the seat of his affections-the center of his moral being-the source of all the influences that swayed his entire career. This is the right place to hide the Word. It is not hiding it under a bed, or under a bushel, or in the earth. It is not basely cushioning it, through a slavish dread of men, lest they should sneer at us, or oppose us. We must hide the Word where the Psalmist hid it, even in the heart. May we ponder this-may we understand it-may we imitate it!

3. Why have I hid it? For a very weighty reason-a most important reason. "THAT I MIGHT NOT SIN AGAINST THEE." It was not that he might have a rich fund of new ideas to talk about and show off. Nor was it that he might be able to confound in argument all his opposers and silence them. The Psalmist did not care about any of these things. He had a horror of sin-a holy horror; he knew that the most effectual safeguard against sin was the Word of God, and therefore he hid it in his heart. May we ponder this-may we understand it-may we imitate it! J.T. Armet

Young Christian: Volume 9, 1919, A Clean Way

The question is asked in Psalm 119:9: “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?” and the answer given is, “By taking heed thereto, according to Thy Word.”

On the day of our conversion, we were made “clean every whit;” cleansed from all our sins, and set on the way to glory. This washing never needs to be repeated: it is “once for all.” But between the day of conversion, and the day of the believer’s entrance to heaven, there is the pilgrim pathway; the daily walk through a world filled with defilement and corruption. In order that his “way” may be “cleansed,”

God has given him His Word. The “plain path” in which the Father desires His children to walk is there marked out, and warning given concerning the snares and pitfalls that lie alongside that path. By “taking heed” to his way according to that Word, the child of God is preserved from the surrounding defilement that he would otherwise easily come in contact with, and have his communion with God disturbed and broken.

But, be it remembered, it is only as the Word is obeyed, that this is secured. It is not enough to know the Lord’s way; it must be trodden. He not only requires to see the tempter’s snare, but to avoid it—to flee from it. Some seem to try how near they can walk to temptation without falling into it, but the believer who “takes heed” to his way, by the warnings of the “Word,” will give it as wide a berth as he possibly can. He will “abstain from all appearance of evil.” (1 Thess. 5:22).

This, dear young saints, is the safe and happy path. If you want to have the sunshine of the Lord shining upon you, as you journey along to your home above, then let every step of your way be ordered and controlled according to God’s Word. Follow wherever it leads you. Keep clear of all that it warns you of. Thus, O Lord, shall our way be cleansed, by “taking heed thereto, according to Thy Word.”

Gospel Gleanings: Volume 11 (1911), "My Strength, and Song, and My Salvation"

PSA. 118:14.

“THE Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.” Such is the utterance of the writer of this Psalm. Of whom, then, does the psalmist thus speak? “The Lord is my strength and song.” Generally where Lord is printed in capital letters in our Bible it means “Jehovah.” But in this verse as well as in verses 5, 17, 18 and 19 of this same Psalm, it is not Jehovah but “Jah.” “Jehovah” is the name by which He is known to His chosen people Israel as the One who has placed Himself in covenant relationship to them (Exod. 6:2-4). But “Jah” is “the assertion of the necessary, continuous, eternal, personal existence of God,” apart from any such special relationship to a peculiar people. Here we have what He is in His own essential eternal being. And so it is His catholic or general relationship to every creature, rather than to a favored few.

“Jah is my strength and song.” This is not an expression peculiar to the pious Israelite as was the writer of this Psalm. It is the language of faith, and God is no respecter of persons. Have you, then, whether Jew or Gentile—for all mankind are divided into these two classes, so that—to one or the other you belong—have you, whichever you be, “called upon Jah in distress” (verse 5)? Have you cried to God as a helpless, guilty sinner? “To this man will I look even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (Isa. 66:2). “Jehovah is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in Truth” (Psa. 145:18). The psalmist cried and was answered. “Jah answered me and set me in a large place” (ver. 5).

Now in this fourteenth verse we have more. “Jah is my strength and song.” Have you ever felt how helpless you are? When we were “without strength... Christ died for the ungodly.”

How often have you tried to do better—to turn over a new leaf, as men say! But all in vain. You have not been able to please yourself even, much less to please God. For “without faith it is impossible to please him,” and you have not yet turned to God, believing in Him. Oh, will you not then cease from your own works, which are powerless to save or even to make you better? You are without strength, because you are a sinner, a guilty sinner. Turn, believingly, to God, and you will find Him to be your strength; and not only your strength, but song. No longer trusting to self and your efforts, see a work already done for you. Christ has died; and by His death He has made purification for sins. You could not aid in this work in any way. He did it “by Himself” (Heb. 1:3), and because of its accomplishment He has taken His seat on high—“on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” No higher place could He take. And “God has highly exalted Him and given him a name that is above every name.” For He is worthy.

How good of God to send this Saviour, for nothing less than a Saviour could possibly avail, so utterly ruined and strengthless were we. But (Psa.130) with Him is “forgiveness” (ver. 4), and “mercy” and “plenteous redemption” (ver. 7). “Jah is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation.” When were these words first uttered? When Israel had crossed the Red Sea and seen all their enemies “dead upon the sea shore.” “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto Jehovah, and spake, saying, I will sing unto Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. Jah is my strength and song,” etc. (Ex. 15:1, 2). And these four words—Jah, strength, song, salvation—are here brought together and occur for the first time in Scripture.

Why this significance? Because the shelter or the blood, and redemption from the power of the enemy had now been set forth and experienced; and the redeemed soul can now therefore sing to, and of, the Lord. So we, also, who believe, resting on an eternal redemption found on Calvary, now sing a “new song” which shall never cease. We give “thanks to the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness,” and “in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins”—for, like pious Simeon, we by faith can say, “Mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”

Truly, this Jah, the everlasting God, has become our salvation. The sinner who believes on God who raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead,—exalted now by God’s right hand a Prince and a Saviour, is justified; and being justified by faith, he has peace with, and boasts in, God through our Lord Jesus Christ. God is for us. And if God be for us who can be against us? is the language of the rejoicing and triumphant soul.

Exod. 15 speaks of a salvation once in the past celebrated by Israel, and they sang. Psalm 66 tells us that “praise is silent for thee, O God, in Zion,” and so it now is. Driven out of their land (Matt. 22:7) because of their sins, and their crowning guilt of rejecting the Deliverer who came to His own, but His own received Him not, there is now, alas! no song on the lips of the Jews. But a day is coming when, repentant, they shall say, “O Jehovah, I will praise thee... Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for Jah Jehovah is my strength and song; and he is become my salvation” (Isai. 12).

To you, my reader, is the word of salvation sent. Hear it then, believe it, and you shall find God to be your strength, and song, and your salvation.

Gospel Gleanings: Volume 11 (1911), Cry of Distress, and the Answer of Grace, The

Ps. 118:5

“I CALLED upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.” What a contrast is here between the deliverances of men (few indeed, too) and the manner of God’s deliverances, His delivered ones being also many — “a great multitude which no man could number.” For there is here not deliverance only, but a large place into which the answered one is now brought. Truly, God’s ways are above our ways.

“Distress.” Can there be in this world a greater distress than what is felt by the one into whose soul the word of God has entered and plowed up the conscience? To find out how I stand as in the sight of heaven—guilty! “Guilty—before God.” What an awful discovery is this! Yet, how true! Now is the truth made known in its fullness since Jesus Christ came, and died for our sins, and ascended on high. When here on earth the Lord Jesus told out the state of man in these words, “The Son of man came to seek and save that which is lost.” Have you taken this ground before God—as one that is “lost”? If lost then, is there no hope? Yes, but only in turning away from yourself, or from any creature, to God above. “I called upon the Lord.” No other call can avail. Your case is too desperate for any man or angel to take up. “Look unto me… for I am God, and there is none else” (Isai. 45:22). The Psalmist called upon the Lord, and the Lord answered. Are you entitled to call? What saith

the Scripture? “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13). Is not this plain, and encouraging? Be not heedless. God is waiting to hear your call. He knows your distress. He delights to answer the cry of faith. “Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed,” or confounded (Rom. 10:11). The references are given so that you may turn to them, and know that they are the testimony of God Himself in His word. “If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater: for this is the testimony of God, which he hath testified of his Son” (1 John 5:9).

Not only is there “deliverance,” but entry into a large place. Why should God so go beyond our call? Because He delights, not only in mercy, but also in goodness—in grace. “Rich in mercy,” there is, moreover, the greatness of His love (Eph. 2:4, 8). And all this righteously, because of His Son whom He gave and raised again from the dead— “who was delivered up for our offenses and raised again for our justification.” “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and we exult in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 4:24-5:2). Is not this a large place indeed? And why not yours?

Believe, then, on God who justifies the ungodly. Then is faith reckoned to you as righteousness— “justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24; 4:3, 5)

Christian Treasury: Volume 3, One Minute Message, A

There are sunny days; there are cloudy days; there are days of gladness and days of sadness, but the day in which we can rejoice is the day that the Lord has made.

We read in Psa. 118:22-24 that the stone which the builders rejected has become the head stone of the corner. The Lord Jesus, rejected by His own people Israel, becomes the foundation stone of all our faith and hope of eternal life. Crucified and slain, He arose triumphant over His foes and to all who believe in Him, He gives eternal life.

Salvation is the work of the Lord and His glorious work from beginning to end. To those who have received the Lord Jesus into their hearts, it is a precious thing that the Lord gave Himself a ransom for us that He might take us to be with Himself for all eternity.

The day that the Lord has made is the whole age of grace. There is no more keeping the law with its rites and ceremonies, no more fear of judgment. We are saved by His work and the commandment He has given is to love Him and to love one another. It is not a day wherein we dread to leave this life but a day that gives us the blessed hope of seeing Him face to face and to be with Him for all eternity. There never was a day like this nor will there ever be again. We have our hopes set on things above, not on things of the earth. Our affections are towards Him; we do not look for earthly blessings for He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ. Truly it is a day wherein we can rejoice and be glad.

W. Stevens

Christian Truth: Volume 36, Heavens Are the Heavens of Jehovah, The: Earth Hath He Given to Children of Men

Psalm 115:16 J. N. D. Trans.

Let us turn our attention to the planets of our solar system, of which there are nine: Mercury, Venus, the Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. These are given in the order of their distances from the sun. They have no light of their own, but reflect the light of the sun in varying degrees. Each planet revolves on its axis, and each travels a regular orbit about the sun. The planets range in size from Mercury, the smallest, with a diameter of 3012 miles (the earth is 7926 miles at the equator) to Jupiter, the largest, with an equatorial diameter of 88,800 miles. The earth is medial in size; there are four smaller and four larger ones.

Notwithstanding the relative smallness of the earth when compared to an innumerable host of stellar bodies, it is the most important planet in the heavens for several reasons. It is here and here alone that man is found. Quite obviously no life can exist on the surface of the burning stars, and no astronomical observations to date have observed life of any kind on any of the known planets except Earth which occupies a unique place in the universe of God.

These considerations take us back to Gen. 1 and 2, where we have the divine record of God's having originally created the earth. Next we are told of a subsequent chaotic state, and finally God's careful preparation of the earth for man, after which He created man in His own likeness and image, and gave him dominion over the earth.

A verse in Isaiah is conclusive proof to the Christian that God did not create the earth in a chaotic state-"He created in not in vain" (chaotic); Chap. 45:18. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." Heb. 11:3.

We are not told how or when the chaotic state came about, but merely that it was such, and the t darkness covered the face of the deep at the time when God began to prepare it for man. Sufficient room is left between the first and second verses of Gen. 1 to account for all the real and conjectured ages of the geologists and pseudo-geologists. God merely tells us of its original creation and then passes down to the time of its being readied for the human family. We need not concern ourselves with what or how many changes it may have undergone. What we need to know, God has told us; that is, He created it originally, and then later set it in order for man. After all was ready, the Godhead took counsel: "Let us make man in our image [representative], after our likeness [moral likeness, sinless]." This is how man came to be upon the earth-all the vain reasoning and conceit of man notwithstanding. God created him and gave him to be its lord; but alas, he soon sinned and fell. He lost the likeness of God, but still retains His image, or is His representative here.

The sun and stars were created in God's original work, but all was placed in its present relation to the earth in the week of His work of preparation. We now learn from astronomers that the earth is 92,897,000 miles distant from the sun. God knew just exactly what distance

was needed to have it do its part in sustaining life on earth. If the sun were much closer to the earth, then everything would be burned up; if it were much farther away, everything would have been enveloped in a perpetual deep freeze.

Each year the earth travels 583,400,000 miles around the sun at a velocity of about 66,000 miles per hour (this makes all man's boasted speed of travel look insignificant) and it never falters or needs repair. Its speed is constant. Here again we see the wisdom of God in the speed and in the size of the earth's orbit, for if this were changed it would affect its relation to the sun with resultant disaster for life on earth.

The earth is tilted 23 degrees on its axis; this produces our seasons with utmost regularity. And God has promised that while the earth remains, "Seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Gen. 8:22. If the earth were not tilted in this way, life would soon have become impossible here, for without the warming of the polar regions as they are briefly turned toward the sun each year, their increasing accumulation of snow and ice would soon affect all the water balance of the whole earth.

Every 23 hours, 56 minutes, 4.1 seconds, the earth makes a complete revolution on its axis, and this does not change by even a second from generation to generation. Man cannot make such a timepiece. At the equator the earth's surface moves slightly more than 1000 miles per hour. Let us consider how very important this rotation is to our very existence. Saturn makes its rotation in only 101/2 hours, which if done by the earth, the days and nights would be far too short for proper benefit to be derived from the sun; for example, it takes the long hot days of summer to mature the corn and other crops. Mercury, on the contrary, only revolves on its axis once in 88 days. Just think of dark nights 88 times 24 hours long, or the

hot burning sun for 88 long days without intermittence. To add to the comparison, Mercury also travels on its orbit about the sun in 88 days; thus by the same timing for its rotation and revolution it always keeps just one side toward the sun. If this were true of the earth, then one side would be burned up and the other side cold, to say nothing of the fact that all the weather and water would be disrupted.

In God's preparation of the earth, He placed the moon in its present relationship as a satellite of Earth. It travels in an orbit around the earth. At least six other planets also have satellites, or moons-Mars and Neptune have two each, Uranus five, Saturn nine, and Jupiter eleven. These are

planets. Earth's moon is sometimes called the.

secondary "lesser light" which God set to rule the night, and the "greater light" was to rule the day. We might consider the typical significance of these in that the Lord Jesus is spoken of as "the Sun of righteousness" by Malachi, and He will truly be the Light that will rule the millennial day, while morally, at present, this world is enveloped in the darkness of night. The true Light once entered the world and was cast out of it; since then it has been a long dark night. The Church has been set for light here while the Sun of righteousness is hidden. The Church, like the moon, has no light of its own, but sheds reflected light on this poor darkened scene.

People little realize the important place that the moon plays in the affairs of Earth. To mention just one thing, the tides of the oceans (which in some places rise to 50 and 60 feet) are created through the gravitational pull of the moon. The moon keeps an average distance from the earth of 238,860 miles. Suppose that this were only half that distance; then the tides would be so great as to engulf large areas of the world.

We may well apply the words of the Apostle Paul, when he thought on the wonders of God's dispensational ways with men, to the wonders everywhere apparent in creation, if men only had eyes to see them: "0 the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counselor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." Rom. 11:33-36. Man was God's crowning work of creation, and then He abundantly supplied him with everything needful, and many things for his pleasure and comfort. All creation is an intricately woven pattern of most delicate balance-the air we breathe, the water we drink, the foods we eat, the sunshine and the rain, the great ocean currents ("the paths of the sea"), and the winds which we feel, besides the great jet streams of air which move at tremendous velocity in the higher elevations.

David sang of God's wonders in the creation of the human body, saying "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made"; and then he adds, "Marvelous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." Psalm 139:14. "0 Lord, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches." Psalm 104:24.

God not only placed man on Earth, but He gave it to him, as we read, "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath He given to the children of men." Psalm 115:16.

But there is still a stronger claim for the preeminence of the earth above all other heavenly bodies; that is that this is the place where God has been revealed. After man sinned and brought ruin into the scene that God had pronounced very good, he was tried in various ways to see if there could be any recovery. At every fresh test, man only failed, and often more signally than before. Finally God sent His beloved Son into this world. Yes, this small planet is the very place where God came in human form. He came into the scene of His own creation, only to be refused. "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." John 1:10. He came in lowly guise-was born in a stable, was a carpenter, a lowly and poor Man who at times had not where to lay His head. He who was so truly human that He was weary with His journey and sat on the well at Samaria, was the Lord of glory. He who came "full of grace and truth" met poor sinners where they were.

"Thou wast 'the image' in man's lowly guise, Of the invisible to mortal eyes;

Come from His bosom, from the heavens above, We see in Thee incarnate, 'God is love.'

"No curse of law, in Thee was sovereign grace, And now what glory in Thine unveiled face! Thou didst attract the wretched and the weak, Thy joy the wanderers and the lost to seek."

The earth bears this distinction, that here it was that God was pleased to reveal Himself in the Person of His Son. It was here on this terrestrial globe that angels for the first time beheld their Creator. (See Luke 2:13, 14 and 1 Tim. 3:16.) God spoke to the fathers in the Old Testament times, by the prophets, but after that, He spoke in the Person of His Son (Heb. 1:1, 2). Wonder of wonders that God should come so near to His poor fallen creatures! and that He should occupy Himself with this little planet. The Apostle John said by revelation: "That which was from

the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us)." 1 John 1:1, 2.

That blessed One came so near that they could hear, nor was it indistinctly; they could see, and not obscurely, for He remained long enough for men to contemplate Him. They could even handle Him, as John who rested on His bosom at supper time, and alas, He was taken by wicked hands and crucified.

When He was here He was light revealing darkness, but He was also love. If there had been only light it would have repelled the sinner, but the love drew many to Him. The poor woman of the 4th of John, did not respond to His overtures of love and offers of a gift, so He as light exposed her whole life in His presence. This together with the love that first manifested itself to her brought out a full confession of her sins, and at the same time won her heart.

"Thou the light that showed our sin, Showed how guilty we had been: Thine the love that us to save,Thine own Son for sinners gave."

The physical wonders of creation may well astonish us, but the glory of God revealed in Jesus the Son on earth is beyond words to express. Truly this earth is the center of all God's ways, and the place where His love, His grace, His goodness, His holiness and truth, are also displayed. Everything meets in the Son, and fully at the cross. There too the perverse wickedness of the human heart was told out to its fullest extent-its innate hatred to God when He came in grace and truth.

Well may we praise Him for this display of His heart. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." 1 John 4:9. His beneficent goodness to His creature in creation is wonderful, but all pales into comparative insignificance before the full revelation of HIMSELF. It is in this that we learn to know God.

"O God, how wide Thy glory shines!

How high Thy wonders rise!

Known through the earth by thousand signs,

By thousands through the skies.

"Those mighty orbs proclaim Thy power;

Their motions speak Thy skill;

And on the wings of every hour,

We read Thy patience still.

"Part of Thy name divinely stands

On ev'ry work impressed;

Each is the labor of Thy hands,

By each Thy power's confessed.

"But when we view Thy strange design

To save rebellious worms,

Where vengeance and compassion join

In their divinest forms,

"Here Thy bright character is known,

Nor dares a creature guess

Which of the glories brightest shone-

The justice or the grace.

"Now the full glories of the Lamb

Adorn the heavenly throne,

While saints on earth that know His name,

Their Lord and Savior own.

"How blest are we who have a part In the immortal song!Wonder and joy become our heart,And praise and thanks, our tongue."

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, "Reverend" in Psalm 111:9?

Question: Psa. 111:9. What is the strict meaning of the word here translated “reverend?” Does it bear on the official title taken by so-called Christian ministers? J. S., M. D.

Answer: As the word in question simply means “fearful,” “dreadful,” “terrible,” and is so translated elsewhere in the O. T., it will be obvious that it applies to God as manifesting His ways of old, not at all to its modern usage. There is no real ground therefore for charging the clerical class or its supporters with profane appropriation of Jehovah’s title, as is sometimes done. For they give or take the title in the quite different sense of respect paid to a consecrated class. As a matter of fact “reverend” seems a prefix of courtesy in use rather late, not legal or canonical. Its assumption was thus open to the officials of all denominations, without definite right or sanction. Hence as some pious dissenting chiefs despised what the more vulgar seized with eagerness, so the established clergy began sixty years ago to fall back on the more legal style of “clerk,” or their distinct ecclesiastical status of vicar, rector, &c., as the case might be. The question was raised in the Courts of Law, and decided in favor of a dissenting tombstone inscription, in which a widow claimed it for her deceased husband. It was proved, it seems, that ancient usage gave “reverend” as a title to lawyers! before it was also accorded to men of ghostly pretensions; so that any exclusive application was invalid. But all such contention was clearly of the world. Therein titles of earthly and present honor have their place. But Christians are not of this world, as Christ is not. God set in the church as He chose; but apostles, prophets, teachers, &c., were not recognizable in the world. And the Lord had solemnly warned His disciples on this head. See Matt. 23:8-12, Mark 10:42-45, Luke 22:24-27, When the cross lost its power both in truth and in practice, flesh asserted itself unblushingly, and the offices of His servants in the church were turned into badges of rank in the world: a chaos which reigns everywhere really, but more or less conspicuously, to this day. Hence the haughtiest offender, even when flaunting his peacock feathers, proclaims himself “servus servorum Dei.” Who can wonder that, when carnal vanity and worldly pride (arrogating the right to beat or anathematize fellow-servants) took the place of love and lowliness, hypocrisy and hatred came in like a flood over Christendom! Nor is there real escape from the evil save in unfeigned self-judgment by Christ’s word, and cleaving with full purpose of heart to Christ’s name, not as Savior and Lord only, but as center and Head.

Scripture Queries and Answers, Scripture Queries and Answers: Reverend; PHI 3:11

Q.-Psa. 111:9. What is the strict meaning of the word here translated " reverend?" Does it bear on the official title taken by so-called Christian ministers? J. S., M. D.

A.-As the word in question simply means " fearful," " dreadful," " terrible," and is so translated elsewhere in the o. t., it will be obvious that it applies to God as manifesting His ways of old, not at all to its modern usage. There is no real ground therefore for charging the clerical class or its supporters with profane appropriation of Jehovah's title, as is sometimes done. For they give or take the title in the quite different sense of respect paid to a consecrated class. As a matter of fact " reverend " seems a prefix of courtesy in use rather late, not legal or canonical. Its assumption was thus open to the officials of all denominations, without definite right or sanction. Hence as some pious dissenting chiefs despised what the more vulgar seized with eagerness, so the established clergy began sixty years ago to fall back on the more legal style of " clerk," or their distinct ecclesiastical status of vicar, rector, &c., as the case might be. The question was raised in the Courts of Law, and decided in favor of a dissenting tombstone inscription, in which a widow claimed it for her deceased husband. It was proved, it seems, that ancient usage gave " reverend " as a title to lawyers! before it was also accorded to men of ghostly pretensions; so that any exclusive application was invalid. But all such contention was clearly of the world. Therein titles of earthly and present honor have their place. But Christians are not of this world, as Christ is not. God set in the church as He chose; but apostles, prophets, teachers, &c., were not recognizable in the world. And the Lord had solemnly warned His disciples on this head. See Matt. 23:8-12, Mark 10:42-45, Luke 22:24-27, When the cross lost its power both in truth and in practice, flesh asserted itself unblushingly, and the offices of His servants in the church were turned into badges of rank in the world: a chaos which reigns everywhere really, but more or less conspicuously, to this day. Hence the haughtiest offender, even when flaunting his peacock feathers, proclaims himself " servus servorum Dei." Who can wonder that, when carnal vanity and worldly pride (arrogating the right to beat or anathematize fellow-servants) took the place of love and lowliness, hypocrisy and hatred came in like a flood over Christendom! Nor is there real escape from the evil save in unfeigned self-judgment by Christ's word, and cleaving with full purpose of heart to Christ's name, not as Savior and Lord only, but as center and Head.

Q.-Phil. 3:11. What is its bearing? M. A.

A.—The verse is not intended to raise the least doubt or uncertainty in the believer's mind, but to convey the deep blessedness of.that glorious goal, the " out-resurrection " from the as the apostle puts it here only. So incomparable was it in his eyes that, in the view grace gave him of it, he welcomed the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, being conformed to His death (as indeed he was to be literally), if in any way to arrive at that wondrous result of Christ's resurrection. He minded no labors nor pains nor shame meanwhile to win and know Christ thus. He would not have his own righteousness if he could, which is of law-nothing but what is by faith of Christ, the righteousness that is of God conditioned by faith: all of His grace, and in His righteousness, and according to Christ both along the way and at the end in glory.

Christian Truth: Volume 28, Fullness of the Divine Word, The

The purport of this paper is not to dwell at length on the general teaching of Psalm 110, but simply to call attention to the fullness there is in the opening verse of it, as taught us by the Lord Jesus, the subject of it, and by the Holy Spirit who indited it. We tread therefore on sure ground, for we deal not with conclusions or surmises of men, which may or may not be correct, but have before us divine teaching as to that which the words were intended to contain and to convey.

The first, as far as we know, who drew attention to this portion of the Word was the Lord Jesus Himself when in the temple at Jerusalem shortly before His crucifixion. Having been questioned as the teacher successively by the Herodians, the Sadducees, and the Pharisees, and having given them each an answer, which silenced these different classes of questioners, He whom they professed to regard as a teacher, in His turn interrogates the Pharisees: "What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He?" To this they returned a ready response, "The Son of David." Again the Lord interrogated them: "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right

hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son?" (Matt. 22:42-45.) This question none could answer. Had they known the solution of that which seemed like a riddle, truth as to the Person of the Lord would have been understood, and statements which they characterized as blasphemous, would have been made clear to subject hearts. To us who have the advantage of fuller divine teaching, the answer is simple enough. Yet, although the Pharisees were in ignorance about His Person, the Lord by His reference to this Psalm made it clear to all, to them if they would receive it, as well as to us, that David, when he penned it, was really writing of the Christ.

The general subject of the Psalm having thus been stated, further teaching about it was postponed till its partial fulfillment could be asserted. The opportunity for this was not far distant. A few weeks later, Peter on the day of Pentecost called the attention of his numerous listeners to its statements, and pressed upon them its legitimate teaching. The Lord's ascension to heaven had in part fulfilled it. For of whom did David write? Not of himself, said Peter, for his sepulcher was with them to that day. David therefore had not risen, but Christ had; and, further, He had ascended to heaven, in proof of which He had shed forth that which they saw and heard. A bodily ascension then David sang of, not a spiritual one; an ascension in person with a human body, not one in spirit, was what the Holy Spirit by David here taught. David's sepulcher, still tenanted by its occupant, proved that David had not ascended into heaven; and the language of the verse proved that the king was not writing of himself. But He of whom the words spoke—Christ—had ascended; and on the authority of this Psalm, which spoke of Him, Peter announced that God had made him Lord and Christ. The Master had declared David thus wrote of the Christ. The Spirit by Peter calls attention to His being made Lord, a title of dignity, but not an assertion of divinity.

Yet He was, He is, God; and this same verse is quoted in support of the teaching of His divinity.

His Lordship as owned by God is clear; His divinity as declared by God is equally indisputable. "But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?" Heb. 1:13. Here it is the Apostle Paul who takes up the Psalm, and draws attention to the place now occupied by the Lord Jesus as demonstrative of the truth of His Person. For while Psalm 102, quoted in that same chapter of the Hebrews, takes us back to the past, and Psalm 45 carries us on in thought to the future, the quotation from our Psalm tells us of the present, thus together forming a threefold witness to His divinity. Peter then in the Acts notices the title bestowed on the man Jesus, Paul in the Hebrews reminds his readers of the place He now occupies. His ascension to heaven, and the dignity conferred on Him, were Peter's theme, so he quotes the whole verse. His divinity was the subject of Paul's teaching, so he brings forward only the latter part of it.

But we have not exhausted the teaching of these few inspired words. For the Apostle Paul refers to them three times, once more in this same epistle, and again when writing to the Corinthians.

Where the Lord is, is a testimony to His divinity; for who could sit there but one who is God? It is a Man who sits there, it is true; for before He sat down on high, He had drunk of the brook by the way; but Jehovah alone could be by the side of Jehovah in heaven. Not only, however, are we reminded of His present place, but His attitude also we learn is instructive. He sits as High Priest for a continuance (Heb. 10:12; Gr.), whereas the priests on earth were standing daily. These latter stood, because their work was really never done; each day, each week, each month, each year, called for renewed service at the altar. He sits, because His sacrificial work is ended. To the divinity of His Person we see this Psalm bears witness, since it reveals to us where He is now; to the perfectness of His work, as never to be resumed, it also calls attention, since it expressly tells us of His attitude on high. He sits, the token that His work is done. Where He sits, throws light on His Person, and by consequence on the value of His atoning work. That He sits for a continuance, speaks volumes as regards the completeness of it. But more. He sits in expectation. But of what? To minister again, as it were, at the altar? To offer Himself afresh? No, that has been done once for all. He awaits now only God's recognition of the service He rendered to Him, by putting all His enemies under His feet. Do we rest then on our estimate of the work of Christ? No, it is Christ's estimate of it in which we are invited to share—God's estimate of it too, as witnessed by the expectation of Christ, and attested to by the Spirit's presence on earth, and by His teaching through the Word.

But further, our Psalm speaks of His enemies. "Thine enemies." God will treat them as His own enemies surely, but they are written of as the enemies of Christ. Who then are these? What will be classed in this category, when God puts Christ's enemies under His feet? When too will that be effected? On these points the Psalm, which is silent, receives elucidation from the New Testament; and this serves to remind us that there is at times more in the Old Testament scripture that what at first sight appears, needing, however, the teaching of the Holy Spirit to disclose it. In this instance, it is 1 Cor. 15:25, 26 which declares it. "For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Here by the omission of the pronoun, the thought of the Psalm is expanded to its full dimensions, and the duration of time during which that clause of its first verse will be in process of fulfillment is revealed to us. "Thine enemies" wrote David; "all enemies" wrote Paul. Nothing which can be classed as an enemy of God or His people will be exempted; but, till death itself shall be destroyed, of which Rev. 20:14 gives the account, the full mind of the Spirit, who revealed the truth by David, and commented on it by Paul, will not have been carried out.

How full then is this word! Of the Christ and Lord, David wrote, of His divinity he taught, and by the Spirit's reference to the words he penned, a light is cast both on the finished character of Christ's work, and on the enemies which are to be put under His feet. With all this in so few words, we may well remember the importance of not merely skimming the surface of the Bible, but of digging, as it were, more into its depths, as far as the Holy Spirit gives us light on its pages, its clauses, and its words.

Scripture Queries and Answers, Scripture Queries and Answers: The Father's/Son's Work; Christ's Session on the Father's Throne

Q. 1. Psa. 110:1. Is this, as Mr. J. Gall conceives, the Father's " evangelistic work? " Is the Son's work "by outward judgments? "

Q. 2. Is it true, as Canon Faussett says, that "Christ as the Son of God never gives up His session on the Father's throne"? X.

A. In both statements there seems no small confusion through inattention to scripture.

1. The Father and the Son, as such, do not appear in Psa. 110. It is wise to adhere to scripture. The true correlates here are Jehovah and Messiah. No doubt the persons may be otherwise and elsewhere so regarded; but beyond controversy what the Psalm reveals is Jehovah saying to David's Lord, the Messiah, Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Nor in fact does scripture ever, that I remember, speak of the right hand of the Father, but of God, and avoids it pointedly as in Acts 2:33. Surely also the N. T. which speaks of "

evangelistic work ' connects it with the Son yet more than the Father. It was He, not the Father, Who came to seek and to save the lost. It is not said of " the Father," but that "God so loved the world that He gave " &c. The truth is that in the o. t. Jehovah and His Anointed have perfect communion in "outward judgments," as in the N. T. Father and Son have in "evangelistic work." The Law, Psalms, and Prophets prove the former, as the Gospels and Epistles the latter, the Revelation bringing us round transitionally to the world-kingdom of the Lord and His Christ, and the eternal state which follows again confirming their fellowship in judgment as before in grace.

Nor can any interpretation be more egregious than that Jehovah's making Messiah's enemies to be Messiah's footstool means "converting grace." Subjecting them to Christ it is, but this, as 1 Cor. 15 slums, for actively putting down and annulling all antagonistic power. Such is one of the main objects of "the kingdom," which is as distinct from the gospel and the church as from eternity.

2. That Canon F. believes Christ will come again, we are assured. It is indeed the common creed of Christendom. This means that Christ will cease to sit at God's right hand, and on the Father's throne, in order to sit on His own throne. The divine intimation which tells us that He, the risen Man, sits there, tells us that He will leave it to tread down, and rule in the midst of, His enemies. His friends will then reign along with Him. When all things have been subjected to Him, then He delivers up the kingdom which is given Him for that purpose, that God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) may be all in all. This is the eternal state, the new heaven and new earth (not in the incipient or millennial sense, but) fully and finally, all evil having been judged. But the coming of the Lord is not at the epoch of sitting on the great white throne which follows the millennium; for the earth and the heavens will then have fled, and no place be found for them. His coming, or rather appearing, the second time, is where He came and appeared the first time; and, therefore, as Rev. 19 and many other scriptures show, before the millennium begins. Of course the Father's throne will be left before taking His own throne.

Q. 3. Is it not laid down in scripture that to be an evangelist is much more than to teach? Such seems to be the meaning of 1 Cor. 4:15. J. H. S.

A. Not so, though comparisons are odious; and it is the plain call of grace for the teacher to uphold the evangelist, as for the evangelist to give all honor to the teacher. Each fills up a different and all-important part of ministerial work, each a gift from Christ for the perfecting of the saints to the edifying of His body. But while the evangelist might be a babe, the teacher needs ripe spiritual intelligence. The truth, however, is that the apostle by ten thousand "instructors " in Christ does not refer to the teachers, but to the meddlesome talkers at Corinth, to whom he gives the rather slighting title of . (as in Gal. 3:24). So was called the slave that led the child to and from school, a boy-ward, not his teacher. Paul had toward the Corinthian saints the affections of a father.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Last Clause of Psalm 109:4

Question: Psa. 109:4. What is the force of the last clause? H. J.

Answer: “And I [am, or am to] prayer.” So the holy sufferer describes it. Instead of his love they were his adversaries, and he gave himself up to prayer in consequence. How astonishingly true of the Lord! though no attentive mind can apply the psalm exclusively to Him, nor even every word to Him in ever so general a way. There is no reference to Christ’s priestly or intercessional character; still less does it depict Him as the fountain and source of all prayer, however truly He may be so. To draw from this expression the inference that from all eternity His Father heard Him is forcing scripture. The real thought intended is the giving up oneself to prayer in presence of those who are adversaries without cause.

Young Christian: Volume 15, 1925, He Satisfieth the Longing Soul

In Psalm 107:9 we read these lovely words: “He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.” Are we who are Christians, longing souls, hungry souls? Can we say as in Psalm 42, “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God!”

Are we longing to know more of the Lord Jesus; longing to “Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”? Are we desiring, as newborn babes, the sincere milk of the Word that we may grow thereby? If so, we shall be filled. He fills and satisfies the longing soul.

When the Lord Jesus was down here, and fed the multitude in the wilderness, He did not merely appease the pangs of hunger, for we read, “They did all eat, and were filled” — satisfied.

God delights in giving. He is the giving God. He has no need to act sparingly, either in temporal or spiritual things. He gives richly, He gives freely, He has given His own Son for us, and with Him will freely give us all we need to enjoy Him, to feed upon Him, to delight in Him. God the Father wants us to find our delight in the One in whom He finds all His delight—His own beloved Son. “He fills the hungry with good things.”

The Remembrancer: 1909, "My Meditation of Him Shall Be Sweet"

SA 104:34{

The solitariness of our Lord in worship is much to be observed. As it is said of Him, He got up before day, or went out into a solitary place, to pray, that He might be marked as alone in prayer. So it is said, He withdrew Himself and prayed; He continued all night in prayer; He was alone praying. Nor is He once seen in prayer even with His disciples, though He owned their praying, both teaching them and encouraging them to pray.

Why, then, was this? If He taught and encouraged them to pray, and also prayed Himself, why did He not join them in prayer?

This may be the answer. His prayers had a character in them which none others could have had. He was heard " for His piety " (Heb. 5). He needed no mediator, but stood accepted in Himself. He pleaded no one's merit; He used no mercy-seat with blood upon it. This was the character of His communion in prayer; but into this there was no entrance for any worshipper but Himself. He prayed in a temple erected, as it were, for such a worshipper as the Son of God, who offered prayer at an altar the like of which was not to be seen anywhere; it had no pattern on the top of the mount. He was a worshipper of a peculiar order, as He was a priest of a peculiar order, or a servant of a peculiar order. He did not owe service, but He learned it; He did not owe worship, but He rendered it. He was the voluntary Servant (Ex. 21:5; Heb. 5:8) and the personal accepted Worshipper. Thus He prayed "alone."

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, "There Go the Ships"

Question: Psa. 104:26. Does it not seem remarkable that the Psalmist, in the midst of the rehearsal of the works of God, should introduce a work of man 9— “There go the ships.” Is there just ground for the supposition that by ships are intended fleets of the little nautilus (“which spread their thin oar and catch the driving gale”), creatures of God? Vers. 27-29 seem to exclude the idea of ships being meant. C.J.D.

Answer: No doubt the allusion to “the ships” in ver. 26 is a singular and notable introduction, between the marine creatures small and great before, and the one specified after. But the reference has all the more force. The ships glided majestically, and are ever an object of interest to the observer; while the bulky creatures that played within its waters did not escape notice, though not so continuously. “Moving things countless” naturally led from living creatures of the deep to the ships which made their way visibly across the sea. Even they for the purposes of those concerned (and how wide these interests all over the world!) were as dependent on God’s care as any of its objects which the Psalm contemplates from the heavens, and the earth, the mountains, the valleys, the springs, the grass and the herb, the wine, oil, and bread, the birds and the wild-goats, the sun and the moon, the monarch of wild beasts and the monarch of creation, before the great and wide sea comes before us.

On the other hand the Nautilus, interesting as it is, presents no such conspicuous object on the sea. Here and there it may abound as in the warm waters of the Pacific and the Australian Oceans, and off the coasts of Asia and Africa and some of their islands. But even so they make no show on the smallest scale comparable to “the ships;” they are as a snail on land compared with the house of man. So rare was the sight of one at sea, that the scientists say “the recovery of this interesting animal was reserved for a British voyager” (Mr. G. Bennett, who describes its capture on 24 Aug., 1829, in his “Wanderings in N.S. Wales,” &c) It struck them as “like a small dead tortoise-shell cat”; and this being so unusual a sight there led to the sending the boat, alongside at the time, to ascertain its nature. Is it conceivable that genus Nautilus of the first Fam. Nautilidae, of Order B. Tentaculifera of D’Orbigny [Prof. Owen’s Tetrabranchiata] of the Cephalopoda, should be here meant? “The ships” are an exception, but one so graphic as to fall naturally into this wonderful picture around man as its center according to God: no sufficient reason appears to warrant their exclusion.

Scripture Queries and Answers, Scripture Queries and Answers: There Go the Ships; A Gloss, or of God?

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Q.—John 8:1-11. Is this story a gloss, as so many of the learned reckon, or is it of God? L. L.

A.-When celibacy was an idol, we can understand how unacceptable were the Lord's words. Even Augustine attributed its omission to infirm or no faith. Yet bearing in mind that our earliest copies are of that age, we see marks proving a willful omission, with ample testimony to its existence. But the Christian can recognize the Shepherd's voice, such as no forger ever invented, and can note that the fact supplies the occasion for the discourse that follows, as in chaps. 4; 5; 6, which otherwise would deprive chap. 8 of its analogous starting-point. Beyond just question it is of God.

Q.-Does not , tree, and , imply not the traditional form of a cross, but rather a pole or stake? L. L.

A. The " tree " was rather generic; and even the Jews used it as a sign of curse and degradation, after killing the evil-doer. The " cross," as more specific, sometimes applied to impaling, at others to suspending the body from the middle, but still more widely to proper crucifixion by nailing the sufferer to an upright beam with a transverse to which the stretched arms were fastened. So the inspired description proves it was in our Lord's case; where there was also an elongation of the central board, bearing over the head the memorable words which Pilate wrote to the dire offense of the Jews. Its form then resembled, not an X as some fancy, but a T with that headpiece surmounting the center of the cross-beam, pretty near what is generally conceived.

Simple Testimony: Volume 20, “Man Goeth Forth Unto His Work.”

Psa. 104:23.

THIS is the special dignity put upon man—he “goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening." It is a dignity which belongs to God. And this psalm bears witness to that fact in a very striking way. It sets before us, first of all, God's work in varied and beautiful connections, the psalmist, exclaiming at length, "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches. "And then, having spoken of God's work, he says," Man goeth forth unto his work.”

That man has his daily task—"his work"—distinguishes him from all other creatures above and below him. Angels are ministering spirits; the waters obey His decree; the young lions roar after their prey and seek their meat from God, but man, man alone, as made in the image mid. likeness of God, "goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening.”

Now this puts supreme value upon work. It is the order of the universe, and man's chief duty. This argument finds its strongest support in the fact that God worked. The very opening page of revelation reveals Him thus employed. Such is man's place in the universe. He is a worker. The very first direction Adam received was, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.”

We may learn from this that to be unemployed is one of the very worst things that can befall a man. Someone has well said if we would be happy it is of the first importance to find our proper work. Most of the wrecks in life are caused either by having no work, or insufficient work, or uncongenial work; and the spirit of than is never so cheerful as when it finds that satisfying labor for which it is fitted. Find this by all means if you would be happy. Everyone has his own proper work. You may not have found it; it may not be the work you are doing now; but work there is for everyone. "Man goeth forth unto his work." Yes, you have your own particular work to do, as though there was no one else in the wide world to do it.

This gives immense dignity to life. How dignified is the description in the psalm before us—"the beasts of the forest creep forth," but "man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening"! In this way, as we have shown, he imitates God. Can there be anything higher? Did not our Lord Himself, as Man, go forth unto His work and to His labor until the evening? God gave Him a work to do, and on the cross He could say, "It is finished.”

Now while this principle is of universal application, we wish to bring it to bear especially upon the subject of Christian work. If God wrought in creation and thus set man an example He intended him to follow (perhaps we may never have thought of the six days' work in this light), He has also wrought in saving power through our Lord Jesus Christ, and He intends every believer to follow this example likewise. We speak only of the principle. The Lord Jesus Christ before He left this world said to His disciples, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father" (John 14:12). If we pass on to the Acts, we read, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching, the word." Here we find that believers, without being apostles (for the apostles, we are distinctly told, were left at Jerusalem) or having received any human ordination, went everywhere preaching the word. They had, something better than human ordination—they had divine communication. They were taught of God. Human learning is all very well in addition to this, but without this it is sometimes worse than useless.

This striking incident is mentioned not because every Christian is necessarily a public teacher or preacher, but because in a general way it conveys the idea that there is something for all to do. If this idea could be revived, it would be of untold blessing to the Church and the world. The prevailing notion is that nearly all preaching and Christian work, both at home and abroad, is to be done by a select few. The fatal consequence of this is that an immense wealth of talent lies wholly unused. The fact is, painful as it may sound, there are thousands upon thousands of believers in our land who will not let the Holy Ghost use them. They never preach a sermon; they never visit the sick; they never give away a tract; they never testify for the Master; or they do these things so seldom as not to be worth taking into account. In hundreds of churches, chapels, of meeting rooms everything is left in the hands of one man, or only a few. There are thousands of Christians who do nothing.

It would be impossible to estimate the annual spiritual loss thus sustained. Forgive us for looking at the matter from such a business point of view, but it is the best way of bringing this glaring defect forcibly under our attention. If people in this country acted on the same principle in business affairs, if the few worked and the many were idle, England's prosperity would decline immediately. But this is just what has been and is taking place in the Church. No wonder such a small impression is made upon the world!

If things were as they should be, many a Christian would probably go abroad carrying his business with him and preaching the gospel at the same time. If he had to settle in a place, it would be where the gospel is needed. He would not go abroad simply to get rich, but with the idea—while earning enough to keep himself—to spread the truth. It is not assumed that everyone could do this, but the opportunity is open to thousands who do not now avail themselves of it. How can we expect to impress others with the importance of Christianity when we ourselves are so careless of it? Take another branch of service—tract distribution. This again is in the hands of the few. And yet it is a kind of service that is within the reach of all. A little courage, a little politeness, abundance of prayer, and the thing is done. It requires no gift. And yet it is service that yields very great encouragement, and was never more needed than at the present day. In the face of the degrading literature that is gaining an ever-increasing circulation, and ruining hundreds of lives, and of the spread of Romanizing influence, something of an opposite character is sorely needed.

“Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening." What work is it to which you go forth?

We do not mean merely manual or mental labor—we mean work as a Christian. If you are converted you have some work to do for God over and above your secular employment. If every believer realized this the effect would be astonishing. There would be a regiment where now there is only one man, and a whole army in place of a few scattered individuals.

It, will not always be easy, doubtless. The highest work is never easily done. It will require labor. This our text implies. "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening." "To his labor." Without this our work will never be well done. But where it is labor to do the work God has given us, and for which we are fitted, that labor becomes ever more sweet and easy.

We are reminded, too, that there is to be a limit to our labor. "Man goeth forth... until the evening." Here we see divine consideration for our weakness. God would never put more upon us than we can bear; and we do well to remember this gracious provision, and fall in with the divine plan. Here, again, God Himself becomes our example. Did He work for six days to teach man the nobility as well as the necessity of work? He also at the same time introduced evening and morning as marking the periods of labor and repose. We cannot afford to act differently. Generous souls there are who wear themselves out; always spending, and seldom recouping. This fact should make each one careful to do his part. If all were doing this, there would not be the necessity for the few to overstrain themselves. It is because this is not the case that we see men and women, conscious of the appalling need, taxing themselves to the utmost, and going down in their prime. "Until the evening." This may be taken in three ways: (1) We must put a limit to each day's work, and have regular periods of repose. This is necessary in order to gather strength for the next day, and gain the needed preparation. And the Lord's people may greatly help by seeing that the worker gets sufficient quiet without interruption. (2) There is the evening of life. Man has to go forth until the evening. Blessed are they who have labored on until they find their powers decline, and one service after another has to be given up, and the calm, still evening closes life's busy day—a day filled with good works. (3) And beyond all that there is the evening of death—"The night cometh, when no man can work." How it behooves us to do all we can now! The last day of our going forth to our work is marked either by the Lord's return, or that moment when the physical powers will fail. Till then let us fill our appointed task, and let us learn what a noble position man has been given, distinct both from angels above him and the beasts beneath him. "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening.”

Bible Treasury: Volume 8, Scripture Queries and Answer: Ginetai

Q. Psa. 21:2, 4.—What is meant by “He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him?” and when did He ask? Was it as the Messiah, as in Psa. 102:24, and answered in resurrection?

But why asked for? Was it not of necessity, so to speak, that as a man He should ascend to His Father?—Psa. 16:11.

M.

A. If we compare Heb. 5:7 (and Gethsemane's cry, I think the force of the Psalm will be evident. The answer in the Psalm is not being preserved from dying; but life as risen in glory above, made most blessed forever, not sparing life for a time here, but honor and great majesty laid upon Him as man in a higher and more glorious condition. Christ as a man, though mighty to do all things, asked everything of His Father. Dependence was His perfection. At Lazarus' tomb He asked, knew His Father heard Him always; asked in John 12; asked that the cup might pass. Only the word is not used of Him. The necessity of an event does not hinder asking. Everything in God's purpose will be necessarily accomplished; but He leads men's hearts to ask, as the moral filling up of their relationship with Him. In Christ, as man, this was perfect.

Q. What is the proper force of in 2 Peter 1:20? Is it true that the verse refers to the coming of prophecy, whence it draws its origin, rather than how its meaning is to be interpreted? Is it true of all prophecy alike (for example, 1 Tim. 4:4) that it is not of self-interpretation?

A. I take prophecy in this passage to mean the subject matter of the prophecy when the actual declaration of the mind of God in the revelation made to the mind of the prophet is given, which is the force of . But this cannot be gathered like the words of an oracle merely from the words not carried on beyond their own force on the subject of which the utterance speaks. Coming from the Holy Ghost; the words are a part of the great scheme of God with His ends always in view. Hence I apprehend prophecy of scripture. A particular prophecy may be recorded in scripture, not in the sense of a prophecy of scripture. Thus when Pharaoh's servants dreamed it was not a prophecy of scripture. Joseph gave the (the word used in Aquila), and they were as thus interpreted a prophecy of the fall of the two servants; but could not come under the character of prophecies of scripture. They ended through bringing about God's purpose as to Joseph in diverse fate of the two servants. In prophecies of scripture the Holy Ghost gives as from one mind, though partially revealed what is in that one mind, what is a link in the chain of all the counsels and purposes of God. is practically tantamount to . Still there is more thought of result. The prophecy (that is, the mind of God in what is said) does not derive its being from a particular interpretation of an isolated communication, like the servants' dreams.

Prophecy among the heathen was not in the proper sense of the word the revelation itself, but the carmen which expressed the god's mind. That is, it expressed the import of the revelation as expressed in the language into which it was put for the inquirer; only, as the word of God, He took care that the communication should be as divine as the revelation. (1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21.)

So I should not call Agabus' prophecy a prophecy of scripture, though it be more connected indeed with the scheme of God in Christianity. Thus the prophets sought what the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand, and the prophecy to gave the mind of God as to its place in the divine plans. Prophecy is not properly the revelation of the thing to the prophet, but the communication of it by the prophet as the Holy Ghost moved him to speak. This, when a prophecy of scripture, was not an isolated communication which began and ended in itself in what it had to tell. does not characterize a scripture prophecy.

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