

# THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

"COMFORT YE, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE, SAITH YOUR GOD."  
"ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE."  
"JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER."

No. 704, }  
NEW SERIES. }

AUGUST, 1924.

{ No. 1,904,  
{ OLD SERIES

## The Family Portion ;

OR, WORDS OF SPIRITUAL CAUTION, COUNSEL, AND COMFORT.

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 COR. i. 4.

### THE GOSPEL FEAST.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."—ISAIAH lv. 1.

THE great and unspeakable blessings of the Gospel of the grace of GOD are often in Scripture symbolized by a feast. "In this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined" (Isa. xxv. 6, R.V.). In our LORD'S parables the same figure is used. The parable of the king who made a marriage for his son contains the words, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner : my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready : come unto the marriage" (Matt. xxii. 4). The parable of the "great supper" also sets forth Gospel blessings under the figure of a feast. Our LORD JESUS CHRIST claims to be the Bread of life. He who comes to Him shall never hunger. He who believes on Him shall never thirst. There is no satisfaction in the world. There is full satisfaction in CHRIST. He is "the true Bread from heaven." To His hungry people He is "a feast of fat things."

It is fitting that the GOSPEL MAGAZINE should be full of Gospel truth. It is our desire that the LORD'S hungry and thirsty people should ever find real spiritual food in its pages. The Gospel feast

is therefore a fitting subject for our *Family Portion*. That feast is referred to in the text at the head of this article. Let us make it the subject of our meditation in the LORD'S name.

I. *First, think of the viands of this feast.*

1. *They are abundant.*

The Divine Host says, "Come ye to the *waters*." The plural "waters" suggests abundance. The LORD says, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and *floods* upon the dry ground: I will pour My SPIRIT upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring" (Isaiah xlv. 3). The streams of grace are abundant. There is no limit to the supply which flows from "the Fountain of living waters." That Fountain never runs dry. Millions have drunk thereat in past ages, and still the water of life flows on in rich abundance. The pouring out of GOD'S SPIRIT upon His people is symbolized by water. When our LORD was at the Feast of Tabernacles we read that, "In the last day, that great day of the Feast, JESUS stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the HOLY GHOST was not yet given; because that JESUS was not yet glorified)" (John vii. 37-39). Here our LORD teaches that the supply of the SPIRIT which He dispenses to His thirsty people is abundant and copious. It is likened to "rivers of living water." The HOLY SPIRIT is the Divine Agent Who communicates all the blessings of the Gospel Feast to the LORD'S chosen people. He regenerates, He quickens, He convicts of sin and causes true repentance. He testifies of CHRIST to the soul. [He dwells in the hearts of GOD'S people, bears witness to their sonship, and causes them to bring forth abundant fruit. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST, Which He shed (poured) on us *abundantly* through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOUR" (Tit. iii. 5, 6). The abundant outpouring of the SPIRIT upon the vessels of mercy issues in their being "washed," "sanctified" and "justified" (1 Cor. vi. 11). Thus the abundant provision of the SPIRIT conveys all spiritual blessings to GOD'S believing people. Abundant mercy

and abundant pardon are their portion. (See 1 Pet. i. 3; Isa. lv. 7). There is no stint in the viands which the LORD provides for His hungry people.

2. *They are refreshing.*

Solomon says, "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country" (Prov. xxv. 25). The traveller, wearied and tired with his journey, is refreshed when he takes a draught of cold water. How much more is the weary, tired sinner refreshed when he hears the good news of a full, free, and eternal forgiveness of all sin through the blood and righteousness of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Such a one is ready to say,

"I came to JESUS, and I drank  
Of that life-giving stream,  
My thirst was quench'd, my soul revived,  
And now I live in Him."

3. *The viands of this feast are cheering.*

"Come, buy wine and milk," the LORD says. The Psalmist speaks of wine as that which "maketh glad the heart of man" (Psa. civ. 15). Truly the old wine of the Gospel maketh glad the hearts of those who drink it. It gives true joy to the soul.

"I came to JESUS as I was,  
Weary and worn and sad,  
I found in Him a resting-place,  
And He has made me glad."

When the Samaritans, under Philip's preaching, had partaken of the Gospel Feast, "there was great joy in that city." When the Ethiopian eunuch had fed upon CHRIST as his holy Substitute, "he went on his way rejoicing." When at Antioch in Pisidia, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed," and thus, fed upon the viands of the Gospel feast, they "were filled with joy, and with the HOLY GHOST." It is the GOD of hope Who fills His people "with all joy and peace in believing." When Christian was relieved of his burden, he gave "three leaps for joy." Nothing gives joy so much as a sense of "blood-bought pardon."

"Believing, we rejoice  
To see the curse remove;  
We bless the LAMB with cheerful voice,  
And sing His bleeding love."

Do modernists know anything of this joy? "Cheerful songs" are sung by those who glory in the blood of the LAMB.

4. *The viands of this feast are nourishing.*

"Waters," "wine," and "milk" are the figures employed to symbolize the blessings of the Gospel. Milk suggests the nourishing nature of Gospel viands. Newborn babes in CHRIST are exhorted to desire the sincere milk of the Word that they may grow thereby. CHRIST is both milk for babes and strong meat for them that are of full age. He says, "He that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst" (John vi. 35). Full nourishment is found in Him. Coming to, and feeding upon, Him, the soul delights itself in fatness.

5. *The viands of the Gospel are sure blessings to all who partake of them.*

They are called in this chapter the "sure mercies of David" (ver. 3). The LORD JESUS, the SON of David, has purchased them by His atoning death. Eternal life, free and full forgiveness, peace with GOD, adoption into His family, parental blessings, and a place in the FATHER'S house in heaven are some of the sure, certain, and permanent mercies provided for hungry and thirsty sinners.

Abundant, refreshing, cheering, nourishing, and sure—these words give us a faint idea of the character of the viands spread out on the Divine banqueting table.

II. *Secondly, let us think of the persons who are invited to this feast.*

They are a people who are *thirsting* for the blessings of the Gospel. To such the invitation is given. "Ho, every one that *thirsteth*, come ye to the waters." The invitation presupposes such a mighty change in the sinner, who before was dead in trespasses and sins, that he is longing for and seeking for spiritual blessings. In his natural state the sinner has no longing for these things. One of the depressing experiences of those who make known the Gospel is the utter indifference to its message which characterizes the greater number. So far from hungering and thirsting and seeking after the things of GOD, we read that "There is none that understandeth, *there is none that seeketh after GOD*" (Rom. iii. 11). By nature there is not even one who seeketh after GOD. Yet before a man can experience GOD'S mercy and abundant pardon

he needs to seek the LORD and abandon his evil ways and thoughts. This is clear from the words, "Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our GOD, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. lv. 6, 7). It follows, therefore, that a thirsty sinner is a convicted sinner. He is one who has been quickened and awakened by the HOLY GHOST. He has been convinced of his sinnership and of his lost and perilous state, and he is thirsting, like the Philippian jailor, to know how he can be saved. We remember the peculiar delight which filled our heart on one occasion in this village when a poor woman who was ill in bed sent for us expressly to hear how she could be saved. It was an immense joy to us to have the subsequent assurance that the LORD had used us as a means of blessing to her soul ere He took her to Himself. Spiritual hunger and thirst are really rare, but O, how blessed are they who "hunger and thirst after righteousness." "They," says our LORD, "shall be filled" (Matt. v. 6). "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Psa. cvii. 9). The man who is full and self-satisfied is sent empty away, but "He hath filled the hungry with good things" (Luke i. 53). O, do we hunger and thirst for the blessings of salvation? If so, the LORD says, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." O, what encouragement there is here for the thirsty sinner. Think of the promises He gives to thee, O thirsty sinner. He says, "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground" (Isa. xlv. 3). He says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink" (John vii. 37). What could be more encouraging than that? He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). Those who are consciously burdened with a sense of their sins are graciously invited to come. The LORD JESUS will warmly welcome such comers. He will relieve them of their burden. He will give them rest, pardon, and peace.

"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." No thirsty soul need hesitate to come to the waters. Nay rather, "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxi. 6; xxii. 17). Yes,

“whosoever will, let him take.” If you have the will to take the water of life, take it without hesitation. “Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved” (Song of Solomon v. 1). Blessed are they that have a thirst for the water of life. Blessed are they whom the HOLY GHOST has made willing to take the water of life freely.

The invited guests may also be described as *bankrupt people*. They are destitute of money wherewith to purchase the blessings of the Gospel, and they know it. They know that nothing which they can do can purchase satisfaction for their longing souls, nothing which they can do can procure pardon, peace, and salvation. Well, the LORD says to such, “Ho, he that hath no money, come to the waters; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk *without money and without price.*” You have no money. Well, come without money. The blessings of the Gospel are freely and gratuitously bestowed upon the hungry and thirsty soul. CHRIST hath purchased them with His precious blood. He hath given His life a ransom instead of His many people, and they are justified *freely* by GOD’S grace through the redemption that is in CHRIST JESUS.

How fully Toplady realized this truth. We remember the late Thomas Davis, Vicar of St. John’s, Harborne, saying to us on one occasion something to this effect. He said the natural man, apart from the teaching of the SPIRIT, is inclined to say, “*Something in my hand I bring,*” but the man who realizes he is a poor, penniless, bankrupt sinner will say with Toplady,

“*Nothing in my hand I bring;  
Simply to Thy cross I cling;  
Naked, come to Thee for dress;  
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;  
Foul, I to the Fountain fly;  
Wash me, SAVIOUR, or I die!*”

Yes, indeed, we have nothing wherewith to secure Divine favour. We are *naked, helpless, and foul*. JESUS alone can clothe us with His righteousness. He alone can rescue us from merited doom. He alone can wash us and make us white by means of the Fountain of His atoning blood. As Cowper says,

“Sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains.”

O, then, ye thirsty and penniless sinners, come ye to the waters.  
As Hart says,

“Come, ye needy, come and welcome,  
God’s free bounty glorify ;  
True belief, and true repentance,  
Every grace that brings us nigh,  
Without money,  
Come to JESUS CHRIST, and buy.

“Let not conscience make you linger,  
Nor of fitness fondly dream ;  
All the fitness He requireth,  
Is to feel your need of Him :  
This He gives you ;  
’Tis the SPIRIT’S rising beam.”

The invited guests may also be described as *an unsatisfied people*.

“Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread ?  
And your labour for that which satisfieth not ?”

Evidently, through the SPIRIT’S work upon their hearts, they want food but they try to purchase it, and the food which they endeavour to pay for is not bread after all. They try to earn the blessings of salvation by their own works, and they look to outward ordinances for satisfaction. Awakened to a deep sense of their sinfulness, they endeavour to get peace by turning over a new leaf. They put their trust in Church-going, Bible-reading, the saying of prayers, and an outward amendment of life. None of these things give satisfaction in themselves. They find all their efforts to earn pardon are fruitless. The hungry soul needs CHRIST. He is the Bread of life. He meets the need of the convicted sinner. O, if you want satisfaction, “eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.” CHRIST alone is good for the sin-sick soul. He alone satisfies. You own yourself to be a guilty, lost, hell-deserving, and helpless sinner. Well, for such as thee CHRIST died. He bore the penalty of thy sins in His Own body on the tree. He was wounded for thy transgressions. He hath redeemed thee from the curse, having been made a curse in thy stead. O, if the HOLY GHOST assures thee of this blessed truth, thou wilt go on thy way rejoicing. Thy soul shall be satisfied, and pardon and peace shall be thy portion. “Whosoever drinketh of this water”—the water of the world—“shall thirst again : but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never

thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John iv. 13, 14).

III. *Thirdly, let us think of the nature of this invitation.*

It is *earnest and pressing*. The LORD seems to stand in a prominent place and to call out, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." Not content with this He calls out again, "Come ye, buy and eat." Then He adds, "yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Then, after expostulating with the invited ones for spending money on that which is not bread, and their labour for that which gives no satisfaction, He again says, "Come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live." The LORD is really in earnest in regard to the calling out and the salvation of His people. He means them to hear His voice. He means to save them. They are the objects of His eternal love. They were redeemed by the blood of the everlasting Covenant, and, out of love to their souls, He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His SON. "Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called." That is to say, it is His intention effectually to call them by His SPIRIT working in due season. By that SPIRIT'S working He awakens in them a thirst for the water of life, and, in the words of the prophecy, He earnestly calls them to come to the waters. Hath He wrought in thy soul a thirst for the water of life? Listen now to His Voice calling thee to come to the waters. Thou art thirsting for Him and He is thirsting for thee, and He will not be satisfied until thou art partaking to thy fill of all the blessings of the Gospel. If thou wouldest see how earnest the LORD is in regard to the salvation of His people, behold Him as the Shepherd going after the lost sheep "until He find it." Then "when He hath found it, He layeth it on His shoulders, rejoicing." Ah, He rejoices over His people. What then? "When He cometh home, He calleth together His friends and neighbours, saying, Rejoice with Me; for I have found My sheep which was lost" (Luke xv. 4-6).

The LORD is not indifferent to thy salvation, O hungry and thirsty sinner. He means to seek and to save thee. He *will* do it. "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah liii. 11).

This invitation is *discriminating*. It is not given to everybody.

It is only meant for the thirsty, the penniless, the unsatisfied. Art thou thirsty? Then the LORD says to thee, "Come to the waters."

Hast thou no money? Then He says, "Come, buy and eat."

Art thou unsatisfied? Then He says to thee, "Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

Lastly, the invitation is *free and gratuitous*.

"Yea, come, buy wine and milk, *without money and without price*." The banquet is free, gratuitous to every thirsty, bankrupt sinner. *It is all of grace*. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of GOD: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephes. ii. 8, 9).

May the LORD apply this message to the hearts of His thirsty people.

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#### THE HOLY SPIRIT IN NOAH'S TIME.

"*My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh*" (Gen. vi. 3).—With whatever shade of meaning the word rendered *strive* may be connected, the general import unquestionably is, that the forbearance long exercised was about to close, that the antediluvians had rejected the testimony of the Spirit, addressed to them by inspired or Spirit-filled men, and despised every call to repentance and faith. *He Who thus speaks of His Spirit is undoubtedly Christ*. This we learn from Peter, the inspired commentator on the words in Genesis, who says that Christ by the Spirit went and preached to these antediluvians or spirits in prison, who were alive when Noah preached to them, but were spirits in prison or hell when Peter wrote his Epistle (1 Peter iii. 19). The Spirit of Christ speaking by Enoch and Noah was about to leave that corrupt generation to its doom. The Messiah, having received the Spirit by anticipation for the purposes of His kingdom, on the ground of the coming atonement, preached the Gospel to them by the mouth of Noah, and the message was impiously rejected. The Spirit of Christ, who filled and animated all the prophets, not only summoned them to repentance, but testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow (1 Peter i. 11)—(Prof. Smeaton's *Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, p. 19).

## Wayside Notes.

### CHRIST A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH.

*“To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice.”—JOHN xviii. 37.*

OUR Lord Jesus Christ was standing in the presence of Pontius Pilate, His earthly judge. In answer to a question which Pilate put to Him He said, “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” We need to distinguish between His declaration that He was born and His declaration that He came into the world. Every ordinary man can say, “I was born.” Only Christ could say in addition, “I came into the world.” These latter words imply His pre-existence. He Who was born came to be born. He existed before His birth and before His conception. He could say, “I came down from heaven” (John vi. 38). He could say, “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world” (John xvi. 28). He Who was born in Bethlehem is One “Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” “By Him were all things created. . . . and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist” (Col. i. 16, 17). Hence He is “Over all, God blessed for ever” (Rom. ix. 5). He it was Who in human form stood before Pilate, and declared that the reason why He came into the world—that world which He Himself had created—was to bear witness unto the truth.

Let us think of Him as a Witness to the truth.

1. *First, He was a QUALIFIED Witness to the truth.*

A witness speaks what he knows and testifies what he has seen. A man who is ignorant of facts cannot bear a faithful witness to them. Christ, however, was fully qualified to bear witness to the truth, for He was “full of truth” (John i. 14). There was no room for any falsehood in His testimony, for He was “full of grace and truth.” Truth came by Him. It was fully revealed by Him. He was the very embodiment of truth. He was truth incarnate. He only could say, “I am the Truth” (John xiv. 6). The Holy Ghost is “the Spirit of truth,” and Christ was full of the Holy Ghost. The Father gave to Him the Spirit without measure. There was

nothing but truth in Christ. "The truth is in Jesus" (Ephes. iv. 21). He is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God of truth. The Father, Who is a God of truth, dwelleth in Christ, as well as the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth (John xiv, 10, 11, 17). Christ was fully qualified to bear witness to the truth. He knows all things and He is "The faithful and true Witness" (Rev. iii. 14). His testimony must be true, for "A faithful witness will not lie" (Prov. xiv. 5). There is no fact of which He is not cognizant. He knows all about the facts of creation, for all things were created by Him. He knows all about the facts and teachings of the Old Testament; for the record of them was given by His Spirit Who inspired the Old Testament writers. It was the Spirit of Christ Who was in them Who testified of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow (1 Pet. i. 11). He knows all the truth which was and is in the mind of His Father; for He is in the bosom of the Father. He declared His Father's mind, and revealed His Father's character, and spake His Father's words of truth. "He Whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God" (John iii. 34). There can be no question that Christ was fully qualified to bear witness to the truth.

2. *Secondly, He was a PROPHEMIC Witness to the truth.*

His testimony was given as One Who was a Prophet. He was the Prophet like unto Moses. Those who witnessed his wonderful miracle in feeding the 5000 with five loaves and two small fishes, said, "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world" (John vi. 14). His disciples described Him as "A Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" (Luke xxiv. 19). A prophet is one who speaks God's word. The office of a prophet is illustrated by the case of Moses and Aaron. The Lord said to Moses, "See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh" (Exod. vii. 1, 2). Aaron as a prophet was to speak the word which Moses as a god put into his mouth, while Moses himself received his message from the Lord. The Lord said of Aaron and Moses, "He (Aaron) shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a

mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God." Moses, however, did not speak his own words to Aaron. The Lord said to Moses, "I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." Thus the word which Aaron spake was the word of the Lord. (See Exod. iv. 12, 15, 16).

This is emphatically true of Christ. The word which He spake all through His earthly ministry was the word of His Father. "He Whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God" (John iii. 34). Jesus said, "He that sent Me is true; *and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him.*" "As My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things." As a Man, the incarnate Son of God spake only His Father's word. He claimed to speak the truth as a Man. He said, "Now ye seek to kill Me, *a Man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God*" (John viii. 26, 28, 40). This was our Lord's claim. He claimed to be a Man Who spake the truth which He had heard from God. He testified His Father's word. He spake the words of God. To deny His testimony is to deny the truth of the words of God. To doubt what Jesus said about the Old Testament is to doubt the truth of the word of the Father. Christ's testimony to the truth of the Old Testament is the Father's testimony. If we accept Christ's testimony to the Old Testament, then we must believe in the truth of all its teachings and narratives from Genesis to Malachi. If we reject His testimony, and say that He was not a Man Who told the truth, then we must regard Him as a false prophet and as an impostor. The result will be disastrous in the extreme. A fallible and untrustworthy Christ cannot be the object of our faith, and without Him our case is absolutely hopeless. If His word is not trustworthy, then we cannot trust either the Old Testament or the New. The whole foundation of our faith completely collapses. All through John's Gospel our Lord claims to speak His Father's word. "I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father Which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John xii. 49, 50). "The word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's Which sent Me" (John xiv. 10, 24). "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me." "I have given them Thy word." And what does the Lord say about His Father's word? He says, "Thy word is truth," and

He prays that the Father may sanctify His people through His truth. They could not be sanctified through error and falsehood, legends and fables (John xvii. 8, 14, 17).

To reject Christ's word is also to reject the word of "the Spirit of truth." It was in the power and under the influence of the Spirit of truth that our Lord executed His prophetic office. He taught under the power of the Spirit. He was anointed with the Holy Ghost to preach the Gospel (see Luke iv. 14, 15, 18). Christ's testimony as a Prophet was the testimony of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Yet Liberal Evangelicals daringly say that some of our Lord's statements "are not to be taken as statements of historical fact." In reference to our Lord's declarations concerning Lot's wife, Jonah, and the authorship of the one hundred and tenth psalm, they say, "*On the one hand you have One Who confessedly 'spake with authority,' but, on the other, you have human intelligence, God's gift to man, which, after weighing all the evidence and in a spirit of complete reverence, decides that these statements of our Lord are not to be taken as statements of historical fact*" (*Liberal Evangelicalism*, p. 97).

To us such a declaration is appalling in the extreme, and is all the more awful and dangerous because it is made by men who claim to reverence our Lord and Saviour.

3. *Thirdly, our Lord was a SCRIPTURAL Witness to the truth.*

We mean that His testimony to the truth was based on the Old Testament Scriptures. Much of His teaching was based on those Scriptures. He believed in their plenary inspiration. He believed they were prophetic and therefore inspired in their character. He rebuked two of His disciples because they were "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." All the Scriptures, He taught, bore testimony concerning Himself. The law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms all contained predictions concerning Him, and these, He said, "must be fulfilled" (Luke xxiv. 25-27, 44-46). "The Scripture," He declared, "cannot be broken" (John x. 35). If, therefore, we listen to Christ's voice and follow His testimony we shall believe "all things which are written in the law and in the prophets" (Acts xxiv. 14). We shall utterly repudiate the thought that any of the Old Testament narratives are legendary and fabulous. We shall unhesitatingly reject the supposed "assured results" of the Higher Critics. Our Lord's

testimony as the faithful and true Witness settles for us once and for all the question as to the truth of the Old Testament. He is "over all, God blessed for ever," and we say, "Yea, let God be true, and every man a liar" (Rom. iii. 4).

4. *Fourthly, our Lord was a PUBLIC Witness to the truth.*

Much of His testimony was public. He said, "I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him" (John viii. 26). His sermon on the Mount, though addressed to His disciples, was delivered in the hearing of the multitude. Some of his parables were spoken to the world. His discourse on the Bread of life was given largely to the unconverted. His testimony concerning the Old Testament narratives of David and the Shewbread, Jonah and the men of Nineveh, the Queen of Sheba coming to Solomon, the marriage of Adam and Eve, the Word of God spoken from the bush, the authorship of the one hundred and tenth psalm, and the murder of righteous Abel was given to the world. (See Matt. xii. 3, 39-42; xix. 4, 5; xxiii. 35; Mark xii. 26, 35-37).

5. *Fifthly, our Lord was a PRIVATE Witness to the truth.*

In His private discourses to His disciples as well as His public witness to the world, all He said was the word which His Father had given Him to speak. Thus when He referred privately to the Prophet Daniel, to Noah and the Flood, to Lot and the destruction of Sodom, to the fate of Lot's wife, He was speaking His Father's word. (See Matt. xxiv. 14, 37-39; Luke xvii. 28-32). In like manner His last discourse given to His disciples in the upper room, was a delivery to them of His Father's word (see John xiii. to xvi.). "Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak" (John xii. 50). We cannot point to a single word which He spake which was not the word of the Father.

6. *Sixthly, Our Lord was an EVANGELICAL Witness to the truth.*

He bore witness to Gospel or Evangelical truth. He bore witness to the truth in regard to sin. He alluded to the Fall when He said of the devil, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it" (John viii. 44). The character of the devil here infallibly given harmonizes with his character as seen in the third chapter of Genesis. Our Lord bore witness to the effects of the Fall. He said, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders,

adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. xv. 19). He also taught that our fallen nature cannot be improved. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (John iii. 6) Ruin by the Fall was one of the great truths to which He bore witness. That ruin is so great that man is utterly unable and indisposed to bring about his own salvation. His condition is such that "He cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God" (Article X. of the Church of England). The common idea that he can arrange for his salvation by his own free will is opposed to our Lord's teaching on human inability which is one of the sad results of the Fall. "No man," He says, "can come to Me, except the Father Which hath sent Me draw him." "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (John vi. 44; Matt. xi. 27). "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3), but we cannot thus know God and His dear Son unless the Son Himself reveals the Father to us. Thus we are wholly dependent on Divine, discriminating, and special grace if we are to be saved.

The absolute need of Regeneration was another great Evangelical truth to which the Lord bore witness. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3-7).

He also bore testimony to the penalty of sin. No clearer testimony to the solemn truth of eternal punishment is given than that which our Lord Himself gives. (See Matt xxv. 46).

Thank God, however, He not only bore witness to the truths about Ruin and Regeneration, but also to the great, blessed, and cheering truth about Redemption. He came, He declares, "to give His life a ransom for many." He shed His blood "for many for the remission of sins." He laid down His life for the sheep. He was to be lifted up, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." His death on the cross was the great exhibition of God's infinite love for hell-deserving sinners. Such, however, can and will be saved through Christ the Redeemer, the Surety, and the Substitute of His people. By Him, if any man enter in, he shall be saved. He is the way of salvation. He is the way to pardon and to the heavenly mansions. (See Matt.

xx. 28 ; xxvi. 28 ; John x. 11, 15-18 ; iii. 14-16 ; x. 9 ; xiv. 6). The future resurrection and glory of His redeemed people were also truths to which He bare witness. (John xi. 25, 26 ; xiv. 2, 3 ; xvii. 24).

And besides all these Evangelical truths, He bore testimony to that electing and Covenant love of God for His people the outcome of which is their eternal salvation. (See John vi. 37 ; xvii. 2). Thus all the great Evangelical truths were taught by Him Who told the truth which he had heard from His Father. Many of these are being denied by Modernists and Liberal Evangelicals, but we cannot reject them without virtually denying that our Lord was "the faithful and true witness."

He is "the true Light," to give light to them that sit in darkness (John i. 9 ; viii. 12 ; Luke i. 79).

He is "the true Bread" to satisfy the wants of hungry souls (John vi. 32-35).

He is "the true Vine." There is no life and no fruit apart from union with Him. (John xv. 1). He is "the true God," and His true people can say He "hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true" (1 John v. 20).

He came to bear witness unto the truth. He became incarnate for that very object. Dare we say that He failed in carrying out His design ? God forbid ! So far from saying such a thing we believe that He is "the truth," that He is "full of truth," and that all "the truth is in Jesus."

He says, "Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice." Every one who belongs to the truth, who is eager for the truth, who is influenced by the truth, heareth His voice. Do we hear His voice, or are we listening to modernistic voices who deny the truth of His utterances ?

The inspired Word of truth speaks of two classes of persons in relation to the truth.

It speaks of those who are "destitute of the truth," of those who are "never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," of those who "resist the truth," of those who "turn away their ears from the truth." (See 1 Tim. vi. 5 ; 2 Tim. iii. 7, 8 ; iv. 4.)

On the other hand, every one who is of the truth heareth Christ's voice.

Our Lord brings these two classes together when He says,

“ Because I tell you the truth, ye believe Me not. Which of you convinceth Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me? *He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God*” (John viii. 45-47). Evidently only a regenerated man, one born of God, will hear the words of God which Christ spake. Such a one has eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand the precious truths which Christ spake. Unregenerated persons do not listen to Christ's voice, they do not believe His testimony, they resist the truth and turn away their ears from it. This latter class is referred to in solemn words in the Apostle Paul's teaching concerning the man of sin, and those who are influenced by him. He says, “ Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and *lying wonders*, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; *because they received not the love of the truth*, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, *that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth*, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

The regenerated people of God, however, are blessedly referred to in the words of the Apostle which follow. Of them the Apostle says, “ But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and *belief of the truth*: whereunto He called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess. ii. 8-14).

We are living in solemn times. We are face to face with the truth of Christ and the error of Antichristianism. The question may well be asked, Are we on the side of the truth to which Christ bare witness, or are we on the side of the error which emanates from Antichristianism and from Satan who abode not in the truth? The choice lies between Christ and Antichristianism.

May we be found amongst those who are of the truth, and who daily hear Christ's voice and follow His footsteps.

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## Pilgrim Papers.

## WELLSPRINGS.

“ *And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither; and Elisha went over.*”—2 KINGS ii. 14.

THIS chapter gives us one of the most beautiful pictures of love and devotion between a servant and his master. Elisha had been called to minister unto Elijah as he was pursuing his daily and lawful calling, ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen. The Lord had commanded His servant Elijah that Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah should be anointed to be prophet in his room. Elijah went and found the son of Shaphat, “ plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth; and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.” We read how Elisha left the oxen and ran after the prophet and begged of him that he might first go and bid farewell to his father and mother and then follow him. After slaying a yoke of oxen, boiling their flesh and distributing unto the people, “ he arose and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.” In the ten years’ ministry which followed, as he saw some of the mighty acts of Elijah’s God, the love of fellowship deepened and they became of one heart and one soul. Anyhow, when the time for the parting drew nigh, their hearts were knit together in brotherly love, and the servant could not bear the thought of separation from his beloved master. But behind all this, intuitively the younger may have realized the fact that he was to be Elijah’s successor. The love and attachment would grow, through contact and fellowship, between these two friends of God. We have, therefore, the touching incident of Elisha’s cleaving unto his master, following him, his resolution not to leave him, and his requesting of him “ a double portion of his spirit,” in other words, the asking for the birthright privileges, “ the right of the first born,” to be his.

Thus, when the Lord was about to “ take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind,” we read how tenderly and resolutely Elisha followed his master, even when urged by the prophet to tarry elsewhere. So they went together to Bethel, Jericho, and the Jordan. “ As my soul liveth, I will not leave thee,” said the younger to the elder. In his heart was the poignant sorrow of knowing that the Lord was about to separate them, and take from him his loved master that day. Very solemnly and it would seem with tones of sanctified sorrow had Elisha answered the sons of the prophets when they asked: “ Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day? ” “ He said, *Yea, I know it: hold ye your peace.*” Then as fifty sons of the prophets stood and viewed Elijah and his servant standing by Jordan, the prophet took his mantle, wrapped it together, “ and smote

the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground." Then alone, the aged prophet addresses his servant, "Ask what shall I do for thee, before I be taken from thee? And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." The sequel shows that, although Elisha had "asked an hard thing," yet it was done. When the "chariot of fire and horses of fire" translated the Lord's faithful servant from earth to heaven, Elisha saw it, and he cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more, and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. And he took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither, and Elisha went over." The prophets viewing the scene said, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha."

Thus much for the beautiful narrative, which leads up to our text: "*Where is the Lord God of Elijah?*" What was the Lord God to Elijah, beloved reader? The dignity and separatedness of his calling were declared in those profound words: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, *before Whom I stand*" (1 Kings xvii. 1). He recognized, as every God-chosen and God-sent minister does, his high and holy calling, "to stand before the Lord to minister unto Him and to bless in His Name." The apostle reminds each child of God, however humble his allotted sphere, "Ye see your calling, brethren." May the Lord give to each one of us grace to walk worthy of Him unto all pleasing, that we may be subject to our One Master in Heaven before Whom we stand.

Then, again, the Lord God of Elijah had been all He had promised to His servant. Elijah had declared upon the strength and unerring wisdom and rectitude of his God that judgment was to fall upon a guilty land, and that dew and rain should be withheld, and that consequently famine of bread would follow. But Elijah's God fed His servant miraculously meanwhile, and made birds of prey to bring him his food. Then Elijah's God guided His servant to Zarephath, where a widow woman was commanded to sustain him. Oh! how "the Lord God of Israel" reveals His character here as the great *I Am!* A famine in the land. A poor woman, and she a widow and with a son to keep, commanded to sustain a prophet, and that, too, upon the last meal left her in the house. Not a cake left, but just "an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse," and she had gone out to gather two sticks, and to return to her desolate home to prepare a last meal for herself and her son that they might eat it and die. But the Lord God of Elijah was the Creator and preserver of men. He was the Omnipotent God. Creatures and circumstances are all subject to Him, and He could sustain the whole household and work the further miracle that "the barrel of meal

wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the Word of the Lord which he spake by Elijah."

You and I may not have been in such providential straits as this, beloved, but we know and have proved that the Lord God of Elijah works for us in our home and domestic upheavals, in our daily difficulties and our constant trials in the pathway of life, and spiritually our souls have proved salvation from famine, "Since Jesus is our Living Bread." We have been spiritually where Elijah was in a natural experience when "it came to pass, after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land." Oh! how oft we have cause to mourn the dry and barren condition of our souls. We cry out for the blessedness we knew when first we saw the Lord. We mourn and are in shame and confusion of face, as our souls drag so heavily after eternal joys and "cleave unto the dust." But Elijah's God is yours and mine, beloved reader, through His matchless and unspeakable grace, in Christ Jesus, and we can confidently sing, "He'll not leave us at last in trouble to sink." May we, when in a low place, take the sword of the Spirit in our hand again and beg of Him to revive our drooping faith. We need to recall the days that are past, which were the days of the Lord God of Elijah and "the years of the Right Hand of the Most High" to our souls. Thus we shall be encouraged to look to and lean upon Him still, and little faith will sing:

"Kind Author and Ground of my Hope,  
Thee, Thee for my God I avow,  
My glad Ebenezer set up,  
And own Thou hast helped me till now;  
  
I muse on the years that are past,  
Wherein my defence Thou hast proved,  
Nor wilt Thou abandon at last  
A sinner so signally loved."

Then Elijah's God had used His servant as a comfort in that widow's home, when her son "fell sick" and died. We know how the prophet prayed unto the Lord and that "the Lord heard the voice of Elijah," and he gave the child back to life and the prophet "delivered him to his mother." I like to think that the Holy Spirit has left on record in that golden chapter xi. of Hebrews, that, "by faith women received their dead to life again," and that we may conclude that this dear widow was one of "the household of faith," and that the Lord God of Elijah was also her Lord God. I think it was the immortal Toplady who wrote that the prophet was sent there and the poor widow who was commanded to sustain him was converted by him, and that Luke iv. 26 brings Elijah's visit as an argument in favour of election. "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the Word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth," she said.

And then, again, we think of what must have been the feelings of

Elijah when he was sent to declare that solemn and unpleasant message to Ahab as recorded in 1 Kings xviii. The whole chapter is so familiar to us and so heart-reaching. The Lord God of Elijah would prove Himself to be the true God and used His servant the prophet to convince his enemies that He was the only and True God, the God before Whom Elijah stood, upon Whose Sovereignty he rested, Whose decree is final and absolute, and Whose love for His own is as great as His power. This was Elijah's God, and oh! wonderful and beyond our understanding or explaining, He is your God and mine, dear reader in Christ Jesus, and all for His dear sake! But this great prophet was also "a man of like passions as we are." He had his low times and disconsolate seasons and reactions. Thus, after such a wonderful sign granted him in convincing Baal's worshippers of the true God, and answering his servant's request, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word," we find the prophet a poor lonely and disconsolate man, away in the wilderness, sitting under a juniper tree, and requesting for himself that he might die! Where is the Lord God of Elijah *now* in His servant's experience? But are we better than he? Does not our faith sink fathoms deep and our hope reach expiring point, when some cloud dims our horizon, some perplexing Providence crosses our path and obscures the sun and lands us into darkness and dismay? Deep calls unto deep, new difficulties arise, and we, who once were rejoicing and going "from strength to strength," seem now to be utterly cast down, strengthless and weary with the constant battling. But how does the Lord overtake this trying experience? Does He chide and rebuke, and remind His child of his sins and deserts? Oh, far from it. The Lord may have passed by and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, but that is not all. He does not leave one of His children to sink under His righteous judgments, but He draws near to them and draws them near to Himself, yes, near enough that they may hear *a still small voice*, the voice of a gentle breeze. And that will melt the hardest, and break the heart of stone.

"Law and terrors do but harden,  
All the while they work alone:  
But a sense of blood-bought pardon  
Will dissolve a heart of stone."

Was it not old Honest in "Pilgrim's Progress" who said, "Were a man in a mountain of ice, yet if the Sun of Righteousness should rest upon him, his frozen heart shall feel a thaw, and thus it has been with me"? The "heart of stone" which we so often have to deplore is soon softened when Jesus deigns to glance one glance of love upon it.

And this reminds us that we have as Elijah's God and ours a God in Christ to deal with us and in Whom is all our hope: "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" He is God in Christ for His People, and for Christ's sake. He will not, He shall not, fail. He cannot turn

away His mercy nor cease from loving us in His own Beloved Son.

And so, dear reader, may not you and I take up this word of royal challenge, and in every perplexing step of life, and in our joys and sorrows, say, *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?* and recall alike the merciful deliverances, the answered prayers, the miraculous interpositions, the Divine compassion and the fulfilment of all His words of promise, as did His servants the prophets and as assuredly do all His children.

Where is He? Oh! our comfort is that He is a God near and not afar off, and that He has deigned to dwell in us and walk in us and has promised never to leave us and never to forsake us. In that promised Presence it is and shall be assuredly well for every one of Zion's pilgrims. The Lord, the God of Elijah, "liveth and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my Salvation be exalted." The weakest worm of Jacob can claim "the Lord God of Elijah," and *He shall not fail.*

R.

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#### HEAVEN'S GATE.

Wide open stands the gate,  
 Since Jesus died for me,  
 No money need I bring,  
 His blood has set me free.

No merit I can plead,  
 'Twas nought but grace and love,  
 For sinful ones like me,  
 That brought Him from above.

When I was dead in sin,  
 My soul was dark and cold,  
 He brought me life and health,  
 Christ led me to the fold.

Atonement He has made,  
 Redemption's now my song,  
 No longer I'm my own,  
 To Him I now belong.

He washed me white as snow,  
 And cleansed me from all sin,  
 That He might welcome me,  
 His Father's house within.

Lord Jesus, keep me clean,  
 And pure from every stain,  
 A polished vessel bright,  
 Thine image to retain.

C. T.

## Sermons and Notes of Sermons.

### THE FATHER'S PROMISE.

A SERMON PREACHED BY THE LATE REV. JAMES ORMISTON,  
AT ST. MARY-LE-PORT CHURCH, BRISTOL.

*“And, behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”—LUKE xxiv. 49.*

*(Continued from page 250).*

**THE Promise of the Father.** Some interpreters consider that the primary reference here to promise is a promise made of the Father to the Son. No doubt all the promises—all Gospel promises, all Covenant promises—were originally addressed by the Father to the Son as Mediator, because all fulfilments of promises must pass through His Hands and He must have come forth to fulfil the promises; therefore the promises are addressed first, we must consider, to Christ Himself. You might turn to an instance of this in the Epistle to Titus: “Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; in hope of eternal life, which God, That cannot lie, promised before the world began.” That was before man was. To Whom then did God make promise of eternal life before the world began, if not to Christ? And He made promise of eternal life to Christ on condition of His fulfilling all righteousness; on condition that He should become the Sin-bearer of the sinner, the Reconciler of the sinner; that He should shed His atoning blood for the remission of the sinner’s sin and the making—effectually making—of his peace with God. And so it is the work of the Lord Jesus, as Mediator—to Whom the Father made the promise—it is the work of Jesus to see to it that His redeemed people all come into possession of everlasting life. It is the office of Jesus to see that the sinners He died for are quickened by the Holy Ghost. And so I may take a first view of our text as some, I remark again, have already taken it, the promise of the Father made to Christ Himself, but in their order, in their turn made to those whom He represented: “The Promise of My Father shall come upon you; I will send the Promise,” by which we are to understand: “I will send the substance, that which is promised. I will pour out My Spirit upon you.” And Christ gives pledge here to His disciples that when He returns to the Father He will pour out of the Holy Spirit according to prophecy and promise. And they waited those ten days in the confidence of His promise. They occupied themselves, as I have said already, in the things of God. How much cheer there must have been in those daily meetings, what gladness of heart, what heavenly-mindedness must have characterized that holy waiting on God. How little interest they must have taken in earthly things during those ten days. All their thoughts were occupied with the

coming blessing which should be to them *power*, power from on high, not human power, not of the earth—from on high. The blessing was to come directly from the Hand of God, the Chief of all blessings next to Christ Himself, for without the Holy Ghost, dear friends, we should none of us have been found this morning amongst the living—the living to praise God. It comes that we may have life, life eternal, because God the Holy Ghost has taken of the things of Christ, Christ risen and glorified, and shown them unto us. Again, as often, I lovingly urge upon you, *honour the Spirit*, honour the Holy Ghost in His Person, in His Godhead, in His office, in His grace, in His work. These dear people of God, gathered by command Divine, “Tarry—sit ye still—in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high,” were like so many empty vessels, so many empty vessels purged and made ready to receive the fulness of the Holy Spirit. And that is the attitude which to-day believers need to take up—to seek to be purged vessels, empty, waiting for coming blessing. The promise of the Father still holds good, the promise of the Father is full of virtue, grace, and power this morning. Are we purged, empty vessels? Are we gathered here in this building somewhat in the same spirit as that in which these early believers gathered in the upper room, waiting for the fulfilment of the promise at the Hands of the promise-making and the promise-keeping Lord? Jesus did not forget His promise, though He took ten days ere He fulfilled it. I have often thought of what may have been among His counsels in thus delaying the promised blessing. Surely amongst these reasons must there be this, to quicken the faith of His people, and to stir up their hearts in prayer and supplication; and, mark, whatever serves in the Lord’s Hands to stir up believing prayer in our hearts is itself a blessing, it may seem to us blessing delayed, but it is in itself a blessing. Oh, let us be thankful when the Lord stirs up our nests and *obliges* us unto prayer; when prayer becomes a necessity of our spiritual being, when we use every opportunity to turn aside for prayer—private prayer, family prayer, public prayer. But there are times when the Lord causes our prayers to be more earnest, more vehement, when we, as it were, *wrestle* in prayer—these are times of blessing. It was when Jacob was rendered lame, when he halted upon his thigh, he got blessing; when the Lord brought down his strength He yet accompanied that ordeal with the conveyance of blessing, distinct blessing. And often has it been when we have been at our worst, at our lowest point, He has appeared for us in marked blessing, and so we look back upon many a past deliverance in association with deep soul exercise as markedly showing us the ways of the Lord.

The disciples thus gathered together like empty vessels. You remember how it was in the case of the widow of old who was in sore financial difficulties, and the prophet, the Lord’s sent servant, was empowered to help her out of the difficulty. He asked her what she had got. Well, she had almost nothing—just a pot of oil, but that was enough for God’s servant in God’s strength, and as you all

remember out of her poverty the Lord enabled the prophet to multiply her store for her. He said, "Send and get empty vessels and pour out into them." "Borrow the vessels," he said, "borrow not a few, see they are empty, empty. Fill not a few." And empty vessels were procured and they were filled with oil. They filled all the vessels, all the empty vessels that could be got and then, and *not till then*, was the oil stayed.

And so it is with us if we are in our right frame, if the Lord has given us the grace of emptiness to wait upon Him and before Him to be filled. No position in itself more blessed is than that—silently and hopefully and prayerfully waiting on the God of the promises for the promised blessing. May He add that blessing now for Christ's sake. Amen.

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### "BEWARE OF DOGS."

#### TWO VIEWS OF THE CAUTION.

WHAT a common warning these words contain. Both in town and country they are often met with. Surely there can be but few people who have not seen these words at some time or other upon the gate or other adjunct of various houses and buildings. The notice contains both a warning and an instruction. The caution is affixed in some prominent position that all persons approaching the premises may receive intimation—be they visitors, or be they intruders—that watch dogs are kept to protect the property from evil-doers. The visitor learns to be careful and circumspect, and the intruder, if wise, is warned away.

In this country we are thankful for the provision God has made for us in the gift of faithful dogs, and a dog is a general favourite. In the East it is far otherwise. That eminent student of the customs of Bible Lands—the late Rev. James Neil—tells us in one of his books: "With few exceptions dogs are never individually owned or cared for, but roam the cities and villages in wild packs." "Their very name is one of contempt, and they are only just tolerated because they act as scavengers." "They are regarded as vile and unclean." "Dogs are never allowed in the houses, never stroked by the master, or cared for by the children." "Only when quite young are they fed by the children." Hence the importance of remembering that the word translated "dogs" in Matthew xv. 26 is "kunaria," that is, little dogs or puppies. The Lord said to the Syrophenician woman: "It is not meet (or becoming) to take the children's bread and to cast it to little dogs." This gave her hope (as He meant it should) and she quickly replied: "That is so, Lord, and yet the little dogs are allowed to come and pick up the crumbs." This explanation of Mr. Neil's is helpful and cheering.

Often as the notice, "Beware of the dogs," may have been read, it is possible that it may not have been fully realized that it is practi-

cally a Scriptural expression. The Apostle Paul in writing to the saints and their teachers at Philippi (chap. iii. 2), exhorted them to "*Beware of dogs*, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision."

Here the apostle is referring not to animals, but to men. The literal dog was an unclean animal. The Israelites were forbidden to use its flesh as food. The habits of the dog being, in the East, such as have already been described, there gradually grew up an association with the name, and thus to call a man "a dog" was to speak of him in a most offensive manner. When Elisha warned Hazael (2 Kings viii. 12-13) of the evil he was about to commit, Hazael replied, "Is thy servant *a dog* that he should do this great thing?" Again, when David would bring home to Saul what an unholy thing it was, and how unworthy it was, to seek his death, he inquired, "Is the King of Israel come out after *a dead dog*?" (1 Sam. xxiv. 14).

The wise man was inspired by the Almighty to declare that a man who makes a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus, and then grows weary and turns back to his worldly ways, is "as *a dog* returning to its vomit" (Prov. xxvi. 11).

The value of *a dog*, or the price at which it was sold, might not, under any circumstances, be brought as an offering to the Temple under the old dispensation (Deut. xxiii. 18). In that very solemn Psalm—the twenty-second—the Psalmist prays to be preserved "from the power of *the dog*," and what can he refer to but to the power of the devil? That power which the devil uses either by assaults within upon the soul, or by attacks without from evil-doers.

Then the prophet Isaiah was stirred up by the Holy Spirit (chap. lvi. 10, 11) to caution against "*blind watchmen*" who, so far as warning against error, are like "*dumb dogs*," but nevertheless greedily seize all they can from the sheep.

Finally, we have the last message from the Lord to His Church (Rev. xxii. 15), in which He declares that "*dogs*" cannot enter the heavenly City.

Now to sum up. What do we learn concerning the apostle's warning to "*Beware of dogs*"? Surely this: the Christian must avoid all fellowship with those who boast of their own strength, and rely upon their own goodness as a ground of salvation. That those who are engaged in opposing the Truth are taking part in a very unholy and sinful object. That those who turn away from the Truth and follow any other "gospel" are to be avoided. That no unsanctified method may be employed to gain support for the Lord's cause. That a constant fight must be maintained against the devil and all his emissaries, and that false teachers are to be shunned and opposed, for they rob the flock of the Bread of Life and do so from corrupt motives. They neither enter heaven themselves, nor suffer others to enter. This is the verdict of the Lord Jesus (Matt. xxiii. 13).

## SERMONETTES FOR STAY-AT-HOME SUNDAYS.

BY THE VEN. ARCHDEACON NOYES, M.A., B.D.

“*What think ye of Christ?*”—Matt. xxii. 42.

THIS question was put to the Pharisees by the Lord Jesus. He did not mean: “What do you think of Me?” but “What do you think of the Christ, your Messiah, whom you are expecting to come, according to the promises and prophecies of Holy Scripture.” “Whose Son is He?” asked Jesus. And they answered, “The Son of David.” This was correct as far as it went (Matt. i. 1), but it was only half the truth. The Lord, therefore, asked further: “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 called him Lord, how is He his Son?” (vv. 43, 44). Let us here notice, first of all, that the Lord affirms the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures. “How then doth David *in the Spirit* (R.V.) call him Lord?” This is more explicit still in Mark’s Gospel, where we read the words of Jesus, “*David himself said by the Holy Ghost*” (Mark xii. 36). Here is the Lord’s own testimony that David spake by the Holy Spirit. It was David’s mouth that spake the words, and David’s pen that wrote them, but the words were “God-breathed” words, the words of the Holy Spirit. It is evident that the Pharisees, too, believed in the full inspiration of their Old Testament Scriptures, for they, like the Sadducees named in the same chapter, were silenced by the Lord’s reference to the Scriptures. “And no man was able to answer Him a word; neither durst any man, from that day forth, ask Him any more questions” (v. 46).

The words cited by Jesus from the CXth Psalm proved that the Christ was David’s Lord as well as David’s son. And Jesus born of the Virgin Mary was David’s son, and has a legal title to the throne of David (see the Genealogies in Matt. i., and Luke iii.). But he was also Jehovah incarnate, as proved by abundant testimony—the testimony of John the Baptist, John i. 34: “And I saw, and bear record that this is the Son of God” (see vv. 29–34); the miracles which he wrought; the Holy Scriptures which testify of Him; and His resurrection from the dead (see John v. 31–39). No truth is so amply borne witness to in the Word of God as this. For example, we have the testimony of each of the Three Persons of the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father testified from Heaven: “This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased” (Matt. iii. 7). This was at Christ’s baptism. The same words were heard at the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 5). The Son of God testified of Himself when He asked the blind man to whom He had given sight, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him, and Jesus said unto him, “Thou hast both seen Him, *and it is He that talketh with thee*” (John ix. 35–37). And the Holy Spirit, by Paul, bears testimony that He

was "Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. i. 4). And all the Apostles, by their spokesman Peter, affirmed, "We believe and are sure that Thou art Christ the Son of the living God" (John vi. 69).

The question, "What think ye of Christ?" put by the Lord Jesus to the Pharisees, who believed that the Old Testament Scriptures foretold a *Coming One*, known as their "Messiah" or "Christ," that is the *anointed One* of God, the one appointed to be their Prophet, Priest, and King (see John i. 41 and 45), is a question equally applicable to professing Christians to-day: "*What think ye of Christ?*"

1. The true believer thinks of Him as "God manifest in the flesh" as "The Word" who was with God in the beginning, and was *God*, and who became flesh, and tabernacled amongst us (John i. 1, 2, 14). It has been well said that the acceptance or rejection of this verity determines one's eternal destiny, for the inspired words written by the Apostle John are: "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son, hath (the) life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not (the) life" (1 John v. 11, 12).

2. The children of God, moreover, think of Him as their *Saviour*. They have learned by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, that they are, by nature and by practice, utterly sinful in God's sight, and that they need an Almighty Saviour. Such they have in Christ Jesus, who "came into the world to save sinners," and by whose finished work upon the cross, full expiation was made for all their sins, original and actual, and their full and perfect redemption accomplished. Such are their thoughts concerning Christ, gathered from the Holy Scriptures.

3. They think of Him as the One who rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and there ever liveth to make intercession for them, for, "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. vii. 25).

4. They think of Him as the *Coming Saviour*. "For our conversation (i.e., citizenship) is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. iii. 20).

Appended is a hymn written by the Rev. John Newton, formerly Rector of St. Mary, Woolnoth, in the heart of the City of London, England, who tells, in his autobiography, how he was brought by sovereign grace from the depths of degradation to be a preacher of "the Gospel of the grace of God." In it he expresses, in simple poetic language, the thoughts of both believers and unbelievers on the question: "What think ye of Christ?"

"What think ye of Christ? is the test  
To try both your state and your scheme;  
You cannot be right in the rest,  
Unless you think rightly of Him.

As Jesus appears in your view,  
 As He is beloved or not ;  
 So God is disposed to you,  
 And mercy or wrath is your lot.

Some take Him a creature to be,  
 A man, or an angel at most ;  
 Sure, these have not feelings like me,  
 Nor know themselves wretched and lost.  
 So guilty, so helpless am I,  
 I durst not confide in His blood,  
 Nor on His protection rely,  
 Unless I were sure He is God.

Some call Him a Saviour, in word,  
 But mix their own works with His plan ;  
 And hope He His help will afford,  
 When they have done all that they can :  
 If doings prove rather too light,  
 (A little, they own, they may fail)  
 They purpose to make up full weight,  
 By casting His name in the scale.

If asked what of Jesus I think ?  
 Tho' all my best thoughts are but poor,  
 I say, He's my meat and my drink,<sup>3</sup>  
 My life, and my strength and my store ;  
 My Shepherd, my Husband, my Friend,  
 My Saviour from sin and from thrall ;  
 My hope from beginning to end,  
 My portion, my Lord, and my All."

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#### NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS.

As Adonibezek looked at his mutilated hands and feet, he thought of former days when he was the captor instead of, as now, the captive. There was a sad parallel and a sadder contrast between the two occasions. *Then*, he himself cut off the thumbs and great toes of the vanquished kings : now his own royal members were gone, and he reflected, "As I did unto them—so has God requited me." He was a foreigner and a Gentile, but he acknowledged a law which had been made by God for the government of nations and individuals. Adonibezek did not look to agents or instruments. He said, "God has requited me"; and he was carried to Jerusalem and died there, whether at once or later we may not know. But in Jerusalem he died, the city that was (and is ?) to be the city of the Great King. Neither may we know in what frame of mind or condition of soul. We may hope that God showed him, as He has showed thousands as little deserving (ourselves among them if we are taught of Him), more of Himself, immeasurably more, even to His secret love to a helpless sinner, and what that embraces. We may fear that the dying king

got no further than an intellectual knowledge of Him Who rules in righteousness and equity and justice. But whether we hope or fear, we remain ignorant.

“God hath requited me.” It was the fear and prospect of this that made Lamech tremble when he “slew a man to his wounding and a young man to his (own) hurt.” That was centuries before the law was given in so many words to Moses, and made a statute and an ordinance to Israel for ever. Samuel quoted and acted upon it when as judge, he sentenced Agag to death, and saw the sentence carried out. And we know what the fate of David would have been, if God in His prerogative of mercy, in His unchangeable love, had not delivered him from his legal deserts. But even with the Lord’s own message of forgiveness, the judgment remained that he should receive in kind for his transgression. And not for the last time David fell into the hands of the Lord Whose mercies are very great. Over and above all the “right statutes and good laws” which He gave, the “eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth,” He reserved to Himself the right of retribution and said, “Vengeance is Mine.” This was one of the things that the wise Solomon taught his son. “Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me. I will render to the man according to his work.” “Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord and He shall save thee.” Not that such commands were new with Solomon. When God from the holy mount gave His rule, “An eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth,” He told His people, “Thou shalt not avenge thyself nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” Christ said so when He came not to destroy but to fulfil the law, when He opened before His disciples and before us the greater demands of His love, the greater promises of His grace, the greater revelation of good things. He said—and is it not New Testament Gospel?—“with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” Over and over again—using different words—He said the same thing, often enough to make us, if we know anything of our own hearts and of the power of temptation, to fear continually: often enough to make us, if we know anything of His overwhelming kindness and reward, to hope more and more. When He said, “Pray for them that despitefully use you,” did He not open a new and living way for the redeemed to walk in and find rest for their souls? The blessed Spirit in the Epistles took up and enforced the same thing, until it is one of our most familiar sayings, “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” “Whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.” “He that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.” The great and the small are judged righteously. I wondered once if the fact that there is no respect of persons with God accounts for this, that sometimes we think that a servant will find when she leaves a place what a good place it has been after all—and what a mistake she has made. But it comes to pass that she gets one in which she is happier than she

was in ours. Perhaps she had a grievance which God alone understood and which was as real as ours and He judged and appeared for both.

“There is no respect of persons with Him.” There was none when He gave the Church to His beloved Son, for then, before the world was, the children had done neither good nor evil. There is no respect of persons when the blessed Spirit comes to the dead soul and breathes life into the helpless and passive heart. What a source of strength and consolation it must be to know or even to hope that God for His own sake has begun to show us His salvation. If the cause of His mercy and kindness is in Himself, then we have an anchor to the soul amidst all the fluctuations of our feelings. We know that He will have “respect to His Covenant” that He made with Christ. Not one of His can be missing. And we know something of His tender compassion and pity, for in all our weariness or labours of mind, soul, or body is He not the same Lord Who heard the groaning of Israel, looked upon them and “had respect unto them”?

FOLLOWER-ON.

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### IN THE MIDST.

WE have considered together, dear readers, the Personal “before” and “behind.” It was suggested to me by a beloved reader to write on “In the midst.” It is so sweet to me to consider Him in all His ways and tender actions that I know many dear fellow-believers will rejoice with me to behold Him not only before and behind, but, as it were, mingled with us and in us, being “in the midst.” May the Holy Inspirer of truth Himself guide our thoughts and hearts and understanding, enabling us so to look, so to see, so to read, that we may “behold wondrous things” as He opens our eyes to see Jesus “in the midst” of all.

Let us look first to the Cross on Calvary where hung three sufferers, Jesus in the midst. With words of love, though in extremity of suffering, He comforted the loved disciple, committing His mother to his care, and He gave His mother the consolation of being cared for by the loved disciple. He comforted the dying, believing sufferer by His side: “To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.” He has comforted the hearts of all His dear people since with the triumphant cry, “It is finished.” Sin put away; for the Father, “laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” He completed the sacrifice and made an end of sin. We stand in Him monuments of His grace, of His love and of His joy. Thus “in the midst” on Calvary He conquered sin and death. Love was triumphant and Love was the conqueror.

Then, in succeeding days, when as yet the eyes of His people were hidden from the full comprehension of the mighty outcome of the suffering on Calvary, we find that as His disciples talked and wondered and pondered over the news of His resurrection, Jesus Himself stood in the midst. What were His words of greeting? “Peace be unto you.” Reassuring and sweet as these words were, their poor natural

fears were uppermost. They "supposed that they had seen a spirit," and they were terrified. Just to think of it. Jesus loved, Jesus known, Jesus heard, yet the form and voice of Jesus feared. They were startled. Did He reproach them? No, He *knew* their frame. He *remembered* they were dust. He said: "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My Hands and My Feet, that it is I myself; handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken He shewed them His hands and His feet." And while they yet believed not for joy and wondered—Ah! we can understand this, overweights of joy cause us often to exclaim, "Is it true, or am I in a dream?"—He thought of another display of His reality and asked, "Have ye here any meat?" They had, He took it and did eat before them. Then He opened their understanding in the Scriptures concerning Himself. What a wonderful Bible study that must have been! All of life, all of joy, all of wisdom is revealed in things concerning Himself.

We read in another of the Gospels that when the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, "came Jesus and stood in the midst, saying, Peace be unto you." "Then were the disciples *glad* when they saw the Lord." This is the highest gladness now.

One of the most comforting and precious verses in the Bible is that of St. Matt. xviii. 20: "For where two or three are gathered together in My Name there am I in the midst of them." The knowledge of this has rejoiced many little gatherings of Christian believers, many thin congregations where Christ is exalted, and many small meetings, where two are gathered together, just two, and where three are together, just three, when He is the bond of union, there He is in the midst.

Going to Old Testament days when His people Israel were His special care, we have many tender assurances of His presence in the midst: "Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." His greatness is strength to His people. "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved," no, indeed, "if God be for us who can be against us?" If God is in the midst of us *none* can move us. "God shall help her" and He will not tarry till the last exhausting moment. "God shall help her and that *right early*."

There is a passage in Ezekiel xliii. 7: "The place of My Throne and the place of the soles of My Feet where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever." "The place of My throne," His regal seat from whence are dispensed His power, His authority, His sovereignty, the highest place to which He will exalt His people, for He says, "Where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever." Then, "the place of the soles of My Feet," the place of His humblest, lowliest, loved ones. We read in Deut. iii. 3, "Yea, He loved the people . . . and they sat down at Thy Feet." That is the place of learning and of looking up to Him. Thus the place of His throne and the place of the soles of His feet, the ground where the lowly and meek

sit down, form the meeting place, "Where I will dwell in the midst for ever."

Many of us have rejoiced in the language of Zephaniah, "The Lord thy God *in the midst* of thee is mighty. He will save. He will rejoice over thee with joy. He will rest in His love. He will joy over thee with singing." It is such a deep love song. First His own illimitable power, mighty. Secondly, His place "*in the midst of thee*"—*thee*. Thirdly, His all-availing comforting assurance, "He *will* save." Fourthly, His joy, "He will rejoice over thee"—*thee*, with joy. Fifthly, "He will rest in His love." Not only will His love abide, but this word has a double meaning, the *silence* of love as well as the rest, the love which is oftentimes too deep for speech, when just the delight of being together satisfies. And finally, "He will joy over thee with singing." Voice finds expression not in simple speech only, but in the highest form, in singing. And this Lord is in the midst of *thee*, dear reader, protecting, loving, rejoicing. What a song *the Lord's song* must be! What a rapture to the believer's sensitized, opened ear.

Then in Zech. ii. 5, the Lord gives another precious word, "For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her." Round about, outside her for protection. What enemy can attack or break through a wall of fire, and especially when the Lord Himself is that wall of fire? "And I will be *the glory in the midst* of her." He Himself the glory. Don't let us think of the glory being *our* glory. It is the Lord's glory displayed *in the midst* of His people. "Sing and rejoice (verse 10), O daughter of Zion, for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of *thee*, saith the Lord." Though these verses refer primarily to Jerusalem and the future state of Israel, yet they are a picture in which the Lord enables us to discern the spiritual Israel, and are written for our comfort who are "joined unto the Lord" in Christ Jesus.

In closing let us glance for a minute with St. John into the revealed vision of the life to come. "I beheld, and, lo, *in the midst* of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as it had been slain." And again we read of those "who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. *Therefore* they are before the Throne . . . He that sitteth upon the Throne shall dwell among them. . . . The Lamb which is *in the midst* of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

What a happy lot is thine, dear child of God! Rejoice in His power, His love, His joy, His presence here. Thou shalt rejoice *fully* up There.

NETTIE.

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THAT Church which is Christ's mystical body consisteth of none but only true Israelites, true sons of Abraham, true servants and saints of God.—Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, b. iii., s. 1. 1600.

## A CANADIAN NEWSPAPER ON THE ABSENCE OF BIBLICAL TEACHING.

IN the course of a leading article in the *Lloydminster Times*, bearing date June 24th, 1924, the Editor writes as follows on the evil effects of an education apart from the teaching of the Bible. He says:—

“The *Star* well asks, ‘Is education a failure?’ And they ask this question in the light of the increasing amount of lawlessness and crime, especially among the young. We have no hesitation in saying that the education obtainable at Chicago University is a failure—and a bad failure at that; as it is in hundreds of other scholastic and collegiate institutions—because it is only a partial education, the most essential elements being entirely overlooked—indeed, worse than being ignored—positively repudiated.

“We refer to the absence of old-fashioned Biblical teaching. The great mass of our growing boys and girls are entirely denied even the reading of the Bible,—and they are being dragged up without ‘the fear of God before their eyes.’ Consequently immorality and crime must necessarily increase,—as is absolutely proved by statistics. There are more hold-ups, abductions, triangle miseries and murders among the young than ever before. We are reaping the crop of one generation that has been flagrantly denied religious teaching—and millions more are being reared in absolute ignorance of their duty towards God and their fellow creatures,—coolly thinking that the end justifies the means.

“Much of the trouble may justly be laid at the parents’ door. They have lost control of their children, who have had too much liberty to go and come almost as they liked. With absolutely no religion in thousands of homes, and the same state of things at practically all the schools, what else can we expect but almost an entirely atheistic population in the future, with ‘the survival of the fittest’ for its creed?

“The Apostle Paul wrote: ‘This know also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy; without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those who are good; traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.’

“We have sown the seed—and the reaping must follow—it is inevitable, for ‘whatsoever a man (or a nation) sows, that shall he also reap.’ No, education has not failed—but the particular brand so prevalent now-a-days has; and the only hope for Canada, the United States, and the World is to get back to the Bible,—let it be read and taught in the homes and its verities pressed home,—and in one generation a great difference will be apparent.

“The inane, mamby-pamby, wish-washey and emasculated preaching of thousands of churches these days, both in the States and Canada, is responsible for much of the looseness of morals and manners among

the young who attend. There is no old-fashioned preaching of 'The soul that sinneth shall die' brand; hell is never mentioned, sin is ignored; and one wonders what so many of the poor blind guides think they are for. Surely it is true of thousands: 'Messengers are there, saith the Lord, *but I never sent them!*' It seems that the time has come when the Press has to take the place of the Pulpit, and call loudly for national repentance.

"We have got this off our chest—and it is as true as anything our readers will hear at the churches on Sunday next."

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LETTER OF THE REV. W. ROMAINE UPON THE BIBLE.

SOUTHAMPTON,

Oct. 14, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have good news to tell you from a far country, as refreshing as cold water to a thirsty soul. God has spared me to read over my Bible once more. O what a treasure—what unsearchable riches are there in this golden mine! I never dug deeper, nor found more precious jewels than upon this last perusal. You know it is my constant custom, as soon as St. Dunstan's lectures are over, to begin the Bible, and without stopping or interruption, to go on from Genesis to the end of the Revelation. This exercise is always begun with prayer, and carried on with settled dependence on the Spirit of prayer, and I am always wishing to ascribe all profit (and it has been very, very great) to the praise of the glory of His grace. At present I am not reading my Bible in order to find out some new truth, but to be established in what I do know, and to attain more confirmation of it. This I would chiefly seek for, that I may get growing experience of the wisdom of God, and of the power of God in His Word, and may thereby enjoy the blessings of His love promised in it. With this view, I send you some of my observations on the reading of the Bible in the year 1783. I am happy in believing that your heart harmonizes with me in them. One of the first things to be noticed and expected is the actual fulfilling of the promises to this day—namely, that the Holy Spirit is still in the Word. He works in it, and by it. He makes it at present, as much as ever He did, the great ordinance of God unto salvation, as you may observe in Isa. lix. 20, 21; hence it is called the ministration of the Spirit, because in it He holds forth Jesus Christ to be the Almighty Saviour; and whomsoever He calls by it to come to the Saviour, He makes His call to them effectual. They receive the Spirit by the hearing of the Word, as Gal. iii. 2. This, my good friend, is what you and I should above all things seek. We should be always praying for the Spirit to accompany His own Word. It is our duty to hear and read; but we should always do it with the fixed dependence of our hearts upon His Divine teaching; without which the Word itself will profit us nothing, as we read, Heb. iv. 2: "The Word

preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them who heard it." May the good Spirit keep us in the use of means, but entirely dependent upon Him in the use of them ! Thanks be to Him that in this frame of mind I have once more gone through His Word, settled and grounded more steadfastly than ever before ; but the Word of God can be made useful to me only by the Spirit of God.

The next thing that engaged my attention was the Divine and infallible truth of the Holy Scriptures, of which I have been convinced with all the riches of the full assurance of understanding. Our Lord said in His last prayer, "Father, Thy Word is truth." And I say the same. I have set my seal to it on this last reading : every line, every word, is according to the mind of the infinitely wise God. It is His revealed will ; and it discovers to us objects in God's light, as He sees them ; whereby the Holy Spirit renews us in true knowledge after the image of Him that created us. He brings our understanding to submit to be informed by His unerring Word. Whatever it reveals of Jehovah, of the Three Persons in Jehovah, of the God-Man, of His salvation, of the way of receiving the benefit of it in time and in eternity ; He has made me willing to live in entire subjection to its teaching. My constant inquiry is—What it reveals. Not why ? I study to know it, not as a metaphysician, but as a Christian. I seek, not so much to comprehend it as to believe it. Nothing appears to me more reasonable than that my reason should submit to God's reason ; and therefore I am kept praying for Divine grace, to make His Word, like the light of the sun, clear in my head, and fruitful in my heart.

My dear friend, let me recommend to you this method of reading your Bible. Ever take it up as the oracles of God—the infallible standard of truth. The abiding persuasion of this will save you a great deal of trouble, and will bring you in vast profit. You will not have much occasion to consult authors, or to spend your time in perusing many books. If you take up your Bible with a settled conviction that it is the truth of God, and that it has the stamp of Divine authority, this will be the means of your understanding more of the Scriptures than all the comments in the world could give you ; because your mind, having received the impression of Divine truth, is now disposed to receive the impression of Divine power ; which is another matchless excellency of the Word of God.

The Spirit of God still works in it and by it ; as in the first creation, so in the new creation, He does all by His Almighty fiat. He speaks, and it is done ; He commands, and is obeyed. He is a creating Word ; He calls, and the dead hear. It is a life-giving Word. He follows the call, and the quickened sinner believes—faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God ; and this faith is as great a demonstration of Divine power as raising Christ from the dead was ; as you may see, Ephes. i. 19, 20, etc. Then He puts His Word into the inward parts, and the believer is enabled to feed upon it, and to be nourished thereby, even up unto life everlasting, so that he often says to his Lord—"Jesus, to whom should I go ? Thou only hast

the words of eternal life." This Divine efficacy of the Scriptures is the principal thing by which God magnifies His Word, above all His Name. He has made it His ordinance, like the fixed laws of nature—by which He still keeps up intercourse and communion between Himself and His people, and gives them to see and to enjoy His perfections. His Spirit makes it effectual to begin and to carry on fellowship with the Father and the Son. And thus He is daily magnifying it, by realizing the promises, and putting believers into possession of the graces and blessings promised in it. So that it is to this hour, the mighty power of God, as truly as when He spake the world into being; as effectual as when He said, "Lazarus, come forth." My dear friend, may you and I feel it more, still more: may we live happy partakers of its influence; and whenever we hear it, read it, or meditate upon it, may we get fresh experience of the power of God in His Word; which will bring us another blessing peculiar to the Scriptures; by acknowledging them to be the truth of God, and finding them to be the power of God, we shall come to experience their Divine sweetness.

It is by continual dependence on the teaching of the Spirit in and by the Word, and by mixing faith with it, that we come to find its value, and to taste its pleasures; for it then opens a new world to us, a spiritual and eternal world—it reveals to us the God of that world—our Father loving us in His Son. It makes known the Son's wonderful Person and His heavenly work in salvation, with all the blessings of it, which faith brings into present enjoyment. The believer is made alive to them, and then has his spiritual senses exercised upon them; and each sense has its proper object and its peculiar delight, as we read—O come, taste and see how gracious the Lord is—hear His voice, for it is sweet—smell the good odour of His perfume, for His Name is as ointment poured forth—come and handle the Word of God. What a paradise is here! as real, but more blessed, than Adam's. Believe me, sir, I know you do. In my last reading, God has thus blessed me; what the Word reports, the Spirit has realized. In the way of believing the promises, I have found the fulfilling of them. I speak for God, and for His glorious Word. Away self! The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, does by it, at this day, make good His Name and His office. "He shall take of Mine," says Jesus, "and shall show it (manifest it) unto you"; the spiritual world, all the graces, all the glories of it—He will not only manifest them to you clearly but He will also enable you to believe them with a pleasing earnest, and to enjoy them with many a sweet foretaste of the glory that is to be revealed.

There is a very delightful account of this in the 19th Psalm. What if I should set my seal to it, and say that I know what is spoken in the first part concerning the light of this world to be matter of fact, as well as what is spoken in the second part concerning the light of the spiritual world—would not you allow me, sir, to be a competent judge of both? And when the same prophet adds—"O, what love have I unto Thy law! I rejoice in it as one that findeth great spoil! yea; it is dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver!" Blessed be

God, I find it so. Indeed, upon every reading of the Bible it grows more precious to me, as it did to David; because it is not only the discovery, but it is become also the conveyance of the unsearchable riches of Christ: these are revealed in the Word and applied by the Word. Faith is the lawful key which opens the infinite treasury and hears the proclamation of grace: "O ye that are seeking durable riches—these, all these are yours. Come, take all you want—use all you wish. You cannot do the free Giver a greater favour than to enrich yourselves daily out of His boundless store. Read His promises—how exceeding great, how exceeding precious they are; read His faithfulness to them. Only trust, take, use—all that is in the promises shall be yours in time, yea, yours in eternity." This proclamation of grace I have heard. I believe it. Blessed be a promise-keeping God! I enjoy it. And I can assure you, sir, there is more to be had out of Christ's fulness than any one upon earth has yet enjoyed. For He not only giveth fresh grace, but also more grace. I have never been more thoroughly convinced of this than upon my last reading. God has humbled me, and has made me feel more of my own poverty, and has thereby led me to live more upon Christ's everlasting treasury. You do suspect me of boasting: O no, I would glorify the Word and work of the Almighty. A beggar would not be reckoned proud for saying, "When I was just starving I met with a charitable person, who not only fed me but also feasted me, and then most generously provided for me all the rest of my days." Should not such a one acknowledge his benefactor, and bless him? So do I. Thanks be to Him Who realized to me His Word—Who opened mine eyes to see wondrous things out of His law—Who often made me to look up and say, "O, how sweet are Thy words unto my taste; yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth." Blessed be God for His good Word: it is really manna; it is angels' food; it comes from Heaven; it tastes of Heaven!

When I sat down to write, I little thought my pen would run so fast, or that it would hold out so long. Will you excuse this long scribble? You will. I am writing to a friend who knows that I have still much more to say of my last reading. I bespeak your candour, while I am mentioning one thing more; and that is, the great end and design of the Scriptures, which is to conform us to it. This is the completing work of God the Spirit by His Word; all the rest were to lead to this. When the Word is understood, and believed, and lived upon, then He makes it the means of conforming the whole man to it. The believer is cast into the mould of it; he takes the impression—every feature. It is so assimilating, every tint is to be seen upon him. He lives the Word; it is to be read in his looks, visible in his walk, manifest in his tempers. See him, study him: he is the lively picture of a Bible Christian; let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ. By this rule he orders it; he seeks to be a pattern of the truth as it is in Jesus, and does not seek in vain. The Spirit by faith makes Jesus very precious. The heart loves Him, loves to be like

Him ; much fellowship with Him endears Him more to the heart, and it becomes true liberty. It is real happiness to have constant communion with Him, especially to feel the influence of His cross and the power of His resurrection.

My much beloved, may this be your experience. Outstrip me as far as you can ; may your sentiments, your affections, your life and conduct, all of them be conformed to the rule of God's Word. I shall pray for it, for you and for yours, that you may live by Gospel motives, and do all to Gospel ends. And may the Bible be made good, and fulfilled to you in earth and in Heaven !

I stop, but not because my subject is exhausted. I have daily fresh matter of praise. Still I am reading and admiring. New beauties spring up. Yearly, daily, I shall have praises to give for this most blessed book ; and if I live to walk with you on Heckfield Heath, I may continue the subject. May your Lord and mine open our understandings, that we may understand the Scriptures !

W. R.

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THE "GOSPEL MAGAZINE" FUND.

THE Trustees of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE gratefully acknowledge the following donations for the Fund :—

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THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

WE shall be thankful, if it be God's will, that Great Britain and her Overseas Dominions shall take a prominent part in bringing relief both to their own hardly pressed sons and daughters and to other peoples in distress. But economic prosperity, increase of wealth, the development of resources, and the restoration of satisfactory international intercourse are not everything. Our country has discharged a higher mission in the past, and the same duties still devolve upon her in the present and the future. We cannot feel otherwise than uneasy when we consider the manner in which the religious denominations regard and treat the Bible now, as compared with the reverence which they displayed for it even half a century ago. Nor can we deny a further cause for uneasiness when we think of the rebellion against God's truth and righteousness which has developed such large dimensions within the Church of England. Ritualism and Modernism have

marred the clear-toned testimony that used to go forth from this land, and they may destroy it altogether. Then, if unhappily that comes to pass, only dissolution will await the Empire which has ceased to fulfil its real purpose and carry out its real work.—*The English Churchman.*

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## Correspondence.

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### A WARM TESTIMONY.

*To the Editor of THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE.*

KEMPSHOTT HOUSE,  
KEMPSHOTT ROAD,  
STREATHAM, S.W.

26th June, 1924.

DEAR MR. HOUGHTON,—I feel constrained to add my testimony to that of others respecting the GOSPEL MAGAZINE. More than a score of Magazines come to me each month, all of them Evangelical and Protestant, sound, I believe, in their teaching, because faithful to God's Word, some of them "earnestly contending for the faith," but not one is so practically helpful as the GOSPEL MAGAZINE, not one do I read with so much spiritual profit.

With kindest regards. Faithfully yours in "the work of the Lord,"

JOHN B. BARRACLOUGH.

P.S.—I like your article on "The Church of God" very much indeed.

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### GOSPEL BOOK MISSION TO THE ARMY AND NAVY.

*To the Editor of THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE.*

DEAR FRIEND,—We are now in the midst of our summer work, labouring hard to supply our many workers in the various camps, etc., with Gospel literature for distribution. Though the times are difficult and anxious we believe that the Lord who has sustained us so long will provide what is necessary through His people. A seaman told me last week that he quite enjoyed reading the Magazine and sermon given him. A Chaplain to sailors writes: "I beg to thank you most sincerely for the parcel of literature you so kindly sent me for the sailors. I can assure you that I am very glad to get them, as such a present is so rare in these days, and the sailors appreciate them very much." Away at sea from all means of grace these men do indeed value the Gospel literature thus provided for them.

Yours sincerely,

21, *Firfield Street,*  
*Totterdown, Bristol, July, 1924.*

R. E. BRIDER.

## Our Young Folks' Page.

### "THE ROOT OF THE RIGHTEOUS."

As you read the title of our subject this time, I can quite imagine your saying, "What a strange one it is!" The words occur twice in the twelfth chapter of Proverbs, verses 3 and 12. They caught my attention, and caused me to search the Scriptures to see what the Lord has to say to us about the root of the righteous. You know who are meant by the righteous. Although it says in Rom. iii. 10, "There is none righteous, no, not one," there are, through the infinite mercy of God, thousands of people living *now* who may be described as righteous, and millions of the righteous are beyond the reach of all sin and sorrow, in the presence of the King. The righteous, then, are those who are resting for salvation on the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose perfect righteousness is reckoned to their account.

But think now of "the root." It evidently refers to the new *life* or new *principle* implanted in the heart of a sinner by the Holy Spirit of God. I have heard it said in reference to a person—"Oh! I believe *the root* is there," meaning that there was spiritual life in that person, but the life was not as plainly seen as it ought to have been. If there is spiritual *life*—that is the root.

You will quite agree with me when I say that the root is not in everybody. How solemn are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in reference to rocky-ground hearers in the parable of the Sower—Luke viii. 13—"These have no root!" Notice next that the root is out of sight, and as we can only know of the presence of an ordinary root by the fruit it bears, so others can only judge of us by our behaviour, and what they can see of our life in words and actions. It is very interesting to see from God's Word that the root is implanted *in love*. In Ephes. iii. 17, we get the expression "rooted and grounded in love." Therefore no crossness, unkindness, or bad temper can come from the root. Then it is said to be *in Christ*. The Colossian Christians are described as being "rooted and built up *in Him*." Therefore how safe and secure are those in whom is the root! Prov. xii. 3 says, "the root of the righteous shall not be moved." This reminds us of the precious words of the Lord Jesus in John x. 27, 28, the last few verses of Romans viii., and "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3).

The other verse in Prov. xii. tells us (verse 12), "the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit." Many years ago, a Christian lady, bidding us farewell, gave us a parting text, which is very beautiful—Jer. xvii. 7, 8. You will see there the blessedness of the one who trusts in the Lord. He is like a tree that "spreadeth out her roots by the river." Of such an one it is stated, "neither shall cease from yielding fruit." May this fruit of the Spirit be seen in richer abundance in the lives of those of us in whom the Lord has begun His work of grace. Do not forget that the root needs nourishment, which can only be found in the Scriptures of Truth. May we delight in them and meditate upon them day by day.

E. A. H.

## Triumphs of Grace over Death.

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### MR. ROBINSON COCKBAINE.

“BEHOLD, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah, . . . the mighty man, and the man of war, the judge and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, the captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator” (Isa. iii. 1-3). As the tidings come in rapid succession of the gathering Home of one after another of God’s faithful witnesses in different spheres of spiritual work these words seem full of solemn significance.

It falls to me who have known him from my childhood to sorrowfully record the removal from our midst here in Bristol, in March last, of Mr. Robinson Cockbaine, last but one of the original city missionaries, one of the righteous in the righteousness of Christ for whose sake country, city, street, and household are not only spared but greatly blessed, who are the salt of the earth which saves it from corruption. This man of God came to the south from Cumberland, where his occupation was affecting his health, but evidently because the Master had some better thing in store for him, a high and holy calling and service. He offered himself to the London City Mission, but the state of his health forbade his working in that vast city, and he applied to the United Bristol Mission, established in 1856 on the same principles by the Rev. S. A. Walker, then Rector of St. Mary-le-Port, and after coming before the Committee they sent him for the necessary medical examination. Here, again, the doctor could not pass him for such physically exacting work in such surroundings as it entailed. But his steps were being ordered by the Lord, and the Committee were moved to propose to him a six months’ trial of the work which had been laid upon his heart. The length of his connection with the Mission was fifty-three years, and then he was called Home. God’s thoughts are not our thoughts, neither His ways ours. He had prepared a work for His servant in this city which none but he could do, and no ill-health nor any other cause could hinder His thought. And thus dear Mr. Cockbaine went forth to long years of faithful, devoted, self-denying, zealous service, his particular charge a thickly-populated district in one of the poorest parts of our city. Details of his abundant, God-blessed, fruitful labours I must omit. His record is on high. His heart was full of love to his Lord and Saviour for His great love wherewith He had loved him, and therefore it was full of love to poor perishing sinners, and out of the abundance of his heart his lips were always ready to speak, as his pen was to write. His friends set great value on his letters. From whatever quarter of the city the cry of need reached him he would respond, often walking long distances, answering, too, the unvoiced cry, for his graciously tender, sympathetic, sensitive spirit understood when the need was there and he answered. Called often, too, to minister at the graveside, he desired humbly and earnestly to

use this solemn, perhaps only opportunity, in dependence on the Lord the Spirit, to awaken the godless and careless whose hearts might be unusually softened and made receptive, and who might never again come under the sound of the Gospel. Lovingly the faithful words would be spoken, words of comfort, too, and hope.

Deeply and experimentally taught in the Word of God, it was his one constant companion up to the very end. Once, he told me, returning from evening service he felt very wearied in body, and determined to go to rest directly after supper, but when he reached home he sat down with the Book in his hands, and turning to the Acts of the Apostles could not put it down till he had read it right through. Thus does a child of God rest, refresh, and renew the tired body and enjoy royal banquetings that the world knows nothing of. A year ago he was reading the Bible through for the forty-fourth time. Monthly, for upwards of thirty years, the missionaries met my father in the vestry of St. Mary-le-Port Church. There were nine at first, all devoted, spiritually-minded men, well versed in the Scriptures, their one Authority. They met for the study of God's Word, for prayer, and consultation—seven years were spent in the study of the book of Job alone. All but one of that little company are now "together with Him." In providence and in grace dear Mr. Cockbaine knew much of "the deep places of the earth," knew, too, that they were in the Hands of Omnipotence, and were His equally with "the strength of the hills" of which he also knew much. He glorified God in the valleys often with fears and with great trembling, but when he entered the valley of the shadow of death and passed through, there was no fear and no trembling. He went out with joy and was led forth with peace. As I stood beside him for the last time, on his 84th birthday, his face was "towards the sunrising," with a wonderful light on it, radiant with a happiness not of earth. It was as if he "hailed the glory dawning in Immanuel's Land," that pleasant Land. One more week's pilgrimage and he would be there. It was an indescribably happy farewell as we talked, he, his dear wife, and I—of the glorious time coming, of the Day of resurrection, that morning without clouds. He was full of it. "It will be soon," he said. He told us how one day reaching the Vestry he had broken down, and said to my father that as he came along everything had spoken of death—the river, the trees, leaves dead and dying. The thought had overwhelmed him. "Ah, but *afterwards* the resurrection," had been the swift, comforting answer. And he spoke of the fear as a thing of the past, as if death were behind. The time had come, and it was not death but resurrection. "I am the Resurrection and the Life." With such a Presence there was no place for fear. "Thanks be unto God Which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Not many hours after, unconsciousness supervened, and a few days later his wish—"Oh, that I had wings like a dove"—was granted, and he was "at rest," for ever with the Lord. The painful evening sowing had been his as well as that of the vigorous morning. Patiently,

unmurmuringly, unselfishly, with much reading and prayer, the burdened winter months of trial had been borne, but the Everlasting Arms were round about him, and for his earthly comfort he had the loving, vigilant care of his wife, his sons and daughters, the love also of grandchildren. Shall we not remember them in their sore bereavement?

L. ORMISTON.

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## Protestant Beacon.

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### CHRIST'S PRESENCE IN THE CHURCH.

(FROM "STRANGE FIGURES," PP. 37-41, BY THE LATE  
REV. JAMES NEIL, M.A.).

THIS last familiar form of *Metonymy*, by virtue of which the Principal is put for his Agent, throws a flood of light on the words of our Blessed Lord, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them," and "Lo, I am with you all the days, (even) unto the end of the age." Many earnest believers, amongst them a large proportion of that body known as "The Brethren," take these words literally, and actually teach that *the Lord Christ as well as the Holy Spirit is personally present* in all the gatherings of His Church. But other plain Scriptural statements contradict this view. After the Lord's ascension, Peter distinctly speaking of Jesus, the Christ, says: "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things (that is, 'the end of the age'); of which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." To the stunned and sorrowing disciples who had seen Him depart, the angels say, "This same Jesus, Who has been taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as ye beheld Him go into heaven"—that is, clearly, at His Second Advent, but they give no hope of His coming personally before that time, or in any other way. He Himself said of leaving His people, "Days will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them;" "It is expedient for you that I go away;" "I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more," etc. In keeping with this we read that when Stephen, in the extremity of martyrdom, was comforted with a vision of Christ, he saw Him not here, not down by his side on earth, but far above on high, for he cried, "I see *the heavens opened*, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." All the texts that speak of His ascension and His present session at the right hand of the Father, "to appear in the presence of God for us," point to His present personal absence from His waiting Church; and so do such allusions to Himself as He makes in the parable as "a certain nobleman" who "went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return," for when the "nobleman" returned it was the time of open and final judgment for His professed servants, and of open and final punishment for His avowed foes.

Besides, the very fact of our Blessed Lord having taken upon Him a body—a true human body—and so having circumscribed and limited His Divine Nature, renders it as impossible to suppose that the risen “Man, Christ Jesus,” can be in two places at one time, as that any of the risen and glorified saints or an angel from heaven could be so personally present. To assert such a thing would involve the denial of His true resurrection and ascension, of His present possession of a real and spiritual body, and of the comforting and important truth of His present session at the Father’s throne, “to appear in the presence of God for us.”

Now these, at first sight, apparently contradictory statements of His presence and absence here on earth during this dispensation are both fully, practically, and most comfortingly met, if we hold that Jesus is now present with His people, as represented by the Holy Spirit, Who, unlimited by any bodily conditions, can be, and is, literally present, with a real and personal presence, wherever the Lord’s people meet in His Name. This is the meaning of the Master’s words, “I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Advocate (*parakletos*), that He may be with you for ever,” that is, clearly, in a way in which He could not Himself be personally present with them during the dispensation then about to dawn. When therefore, He adds immediately those words of comfort, “I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you,” we cannot help perceiving that this coming here is figurative—the figure, in a word, of *Metonymy*, that species of it by which the principal is put for his agent—and is spoken of His coming by and through the agency of His Spirit, the *Paraklete*, or Advocate, Whom he has just before promised. This explanation, too, applies to all those passages where He promises before His Second Advent to be present with His people.

Christ’s presence now is by the Holy Spirit only, and not by any bodily presence. Behold what a world of mischievous mysticism this simple explanation sweeps away! How it cuts down at the roots Rome’s monstrous doctrines of transubstantiation and transaccidentation, or the change of the bread and wine in the Lord’s Supper into the body and blood of Christ, and the idolatrous mass founded upon them. From what confusion and error it would have saved Luther and many other good Protestants if he and they had fully realized, first, the boundless use that is made of figurative language in the East, secondly, that the Bible is an Eastern book, and thirdly, that the figure of *Metonymy* is one of the most varied, beautiful, and familiar of the figures of speech.

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#### AGED PILGRIMS’ FRIEND SOCIETY.

THE July quarterly Record contains an excellent portrait of the late beloved Secretary, Mr. John E. Hazelton, with two specially written articles respecting him. Copies will be furnished post free on application to the Office of the Society.

The 54th Anniversary of the Hornsey Rise Home was held on July 4th, when the Rev. A. Hewitt, of Chelmsford, preached in the afternoon, and the Rev. F. Peacock, M.A., of Portsmouth, preached in the evening. Both services were much enjoyed.

Sales of Work were held at the Camberwell Home on June 12th, opened by Mrs. Francis Abel Smith, and at the Hornsey Rise Home on July 4th, opened by Mrs. Joseph C. Dennis. Sales have also been held at Twickenham and Marden. A sale has been fixed to take place at Cranbrook on Wednesday, August 6th.

A garden meeting, on behalf of the Society, will be held at "Navarino," Walton-on-the-Naze, on Wednesday, August 13th. Friends will be heartily welcomed.

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## Reviews and Notices of Books.

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SUPPOSED BIBLE CONTRADICTIONS HARMONIZED. By GEORGE WILLIAMS. Second Edition. Pp. 80. Price 1s. net. (C. J. Farncombe & Sons, Ltd., 30, Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E.C.4.)

The author of this volume fully believes in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. Evidently, therefore, he would rightly deny that there can be any real contradictions in the original writings of the Old and New Testaments. The Holy Ghost, their Divine Author, could not contradict Himself. "There are," however, as the author of this book declares, "many hundreds of supposed contradictions in the sacred writings." This book is an honest attempt to reconcile these supposed discrepancies. We have read the book with considerable care, and we cannot say that all the author's explanations satisfy us. We are fully convinced, however, that our inability to reconcile some of the supposed contradictions arises from our own ignorance. If we had full knowledge of all the facts, these supposed contradictions would all disappear.

Meanwhile, we can heartily take up the position occupied by our infallible Lord and His inspired apostles. To them the whole of the Scriptures were inerrant. We cannot go wrong if we take the same view of the Scriptures which they did. We may honestly admit that we cannot always explain every seeming discrepancy, but this arises from our inadequate knowledge, not from any error in the original Scriptures.

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A MAN may be a true and visible member of the Holy Catholic Church, and yet be no actual member of any visible Church.

Many there be, or may be in most ages, which are no members of the visible Church, and yet better members of the true Church than the members of the Church visible for the present are.—*Jackson on the Church, 1670.*