

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."

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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 CORINTHIANS i. 4.

THE ASCENDED LORD

"Jesus Christ, Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him."—1 Peter 3 : 22.

In the June issue, 1954, we wrote on "The Ascended Lord" from the words "Such a High Priest became us" (Hebrews 7 : 26). In that article we spoke of the Lord's exaltation, of the completion of His one offering, and of His present intercession. In this "Family Portion" we desire to take up the subject again, drawing the attention of our readers to certain aspects.

The account of the Lord's Ascension appears in the record of Acts, chapter one :

"While they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight" (Acts 1 : 9).

He went up in visible form, and they were given the assurance that "*this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven*" (Acts 1 : 11). Hence Peter in his preaching said : "And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things (Acts 3 : 20, 21).

A glimpse of the Lord's present glory was given to Stephen, of whom we read :

"He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7 : 55).

He said :

“Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God” (Acts 7 : 56). As they stoned him, the martyr said : “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7 : 59).

Similarly, in the Book of “The Revelation of Jesus Christ,” John was given some five visions of the glory of the Ascended Lord. After the wonderful vision of the glorious majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, as recorded in Revelation 1, John left the record : “And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead” (Rev. 1 : 17).

It was the Lord’s own final prayer that He should be received up in glory :

“And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was” (John 17 : 5).

He had finished the work which the Father had given Him to do, and now He was to enter upon “the glory that followed.”

We have some beautiful hymns which speak of this, taking the soul of the child of God out of himself and helping him to look unto Jesus. As Dr. Watts wrote :

Behold the glories of the Lamb
Amidst His Father’s throne;
Prepare new honours for His name,
And songs before unknown.

The Ascension was the beginning of the Lord’s exaltation. It is to be distinguished from His resurrection. While the resurrection manifested His triumph over death, the ascension manifested His divinity and dominion over all. “Sit Thou at my right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool” was the Father’s word.

But while the Ascension marks His exaltation, His majesty, His power, His dominion, His glory, yet He is revealed as the sympathetic High Priest of His people :

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4 : 14-16). The child of God needs the sympathy, the human feeling, as well as the almighty power of the Ascended Lord. It is this that encourages him to “come boldly”—speaking every word, pouring out all his heart, his sorrows, his discouragements, his unworthiness, his utter helplessness. It is thus that he experiences mercy and finds grace to help in time of need. Of Christ as both God and Man Joseph Hart has written :

A Man there is, a real man,
With wounds still gaping wide,
(From which rich streams of blood once ran),
In hands, and feet, and side.
(Tis no wild fancy of our brains,
No metaphor we speak;
The same dear Man in heaven now reigns,
That suffered for our sake).
This wondrous Man of whom we tell
Is true Almighty God;
He bought our souls from death and hell;
The price His own heart's blood.

There are many other aspects of our Lord's Ascension into heaven. It was expedient for us, He declared, that He should go away. In bodily presence, when on earth, He could be but with a few. By His Spirit, sent by Him, He is present with His people everywhere "all the days."

As we thus think of the Ascended Lord, may "our hearts and minds thither ascend and with Him continually dwell" (Prayer-Book Collect).

W.D.S.

THE LATE MISS ALICE C. ALEXANDER

THE first music which this "waste howling wilderness" offered my sister was made by the falling of the North Sea waves upon the rocks at Carnoustie. In 1873 they removed to the Mersey. My sister left home in 1888, never to return except during holidays.

Under the ministry of Mr. Bradbury and in Grove Chapel, she was awakened to her need of the Lord's saving mercy. Later she joined the church ministered to by Mr. Hazelton in North London : she loved him much in the Gospel.

She was much comforted by seeing the fruit of her labours in the gospel call being heard by one of her pupils. The reality of it was manifested in teacher and scholar being staunch friends. I might say that to the end she had a life-long love for her friends, "Ministers and Men," in the North.

After Mr. Hazelton's death his flock and the Particular Baptist one in Kilburn joined forces. My sister left London in 1930, and till the end went to Portland Road Chapel in Worthing.

As long as her abilities allowed she ardently wrought for the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society. But her abilities gradually left her : she grieved that she could not go, but was convinced that so was the will of God. So she sat and read Bunyan, or Rabbi Duncan, with (longest and last) the Bible.

We saw many tender mercies in the goings of her latest days, and the Lord was with us at the funeral, which was led by Mr. G. Rose.

J.A.

Wayside Notes

THE UNFAILING ADVOCATE

NOTES OF A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. WILLIAM PARKS, B.A.,
RECTOR OF OPENSHAW, MANCHESTER

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."—1 John 2 : 1.

THE greatest plague that a living child of God experiences is sin. When he first is brought to a knowledge of God in Christ Jesus, and is able in some little measure to realise a sense of pardoning mercy, he is happy, sweetly happy. He says to himself, "Now, I should like the wings of a dove, and fly away, and be with God for ever : my sin is gone!" But very soon he discovers that he has not done with sin. Yea, perhaps he is beset with some terrible temptation, and finds to his dismay that he is still a poor sinner.

And then he begins to think thus, "I could believe that all my past sins and iniquities were pardoned, the sins of my thoughtless, reckless life, when I was without hope and without God in the world. I could believe that my soul was safe when the Lord revealed Himself to me; but now I have broken out afresh—I have sinned since my pardon, and my belief is shaken. Is there any warrant for me holding that this fresh sin will be pardoned?" To whom I answer, Yes, yes, my poor brother or sister, every warrant : as assuredly as you have been pardoned your past sins, so will you be pardoned your present sins, so will you be pardoned your future sins. And simply because of your interest in Christ—because Christ ever liveth to make intercession for you.

Now, mark you, I do not tell you this great truth to make you careless in your life. Sin is ever hateful to God; sin will ever bring its own punishment with it to the soul of God's sinning child. It will bring darkness and fear and unhappiness and dejection; but sin even can never separate a soul from "the love of God that is in Christ Jesus." Your minister's address to you is the same as the apostle's : "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." The Gospel with its glorious message gives no licence or encouragement to sin. Yet it proclaims that, even if a man sin, there is an Advocate with the Father, even Christ Jesus, whose blood cleanseth from all sin.

I.—TO WHOM ADDRESSED

I.—To whom is this word addressed?—I at once answer, *Not* to every one. Christ is not the Advocate for all. For, independent

of Scriptures which positively tell us this, we logically infer that He cannot be; for such is the almighty influence of His advocacy, that if He were the Advocate for all, all *must* be pardoned. The Universalists shockingly disparage Christ. They make His atonement a mere experiment. And they make His advocacy another experiment. They thus undify Christ, and lower Him to the position of the Unitarian's Christ. But such a Christ as that can be of no earthly use to a poor bankrupt sinner. The price is not high enough. The influence is not great enough for his desperate circumstances. Those parties may retort and say, we "shockingly disparage Christ's love in attempting to limit it to a certain people." To this we reply, Not so. It is quite possible for a great and a good Being to bestow His love where He pleases; but it is not possible for God to try an experiment. Try and remember this.

Well, to whom is this Scripture addressed? It is to those whom the apostle described in the preceding chapter—namely, those who walk not in darkness, but in the light (chap. 1: 6, 7). In short, those who have been called out of nature's darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel—those who believe themselves to be sinners, and that Christ's blood cleanseth from all sin.

Mark you that word "*we*." It doesn't mean merely we apostles, but we believers—we who have fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. It is the greatest mistake in the world to suppose that this or any other gracious declaration in the Scriptures is intended for everybody. Men must be believers before they can hope that Christ is their Advocate. Doubtless, Christ has pleaded, and is pleading, the cause of many a man dead in trespasses and sins; but what I mean is, that no unbeliever has any warrant to assume that Christ is his Advocate with the Father.

Observe, too, poor sensible sinners, the words "*we have*." It is not "*we had*," or "*we shall have*," but "*we have*." This denotes continual advocacy and may well encourage us to look up. He is always at His post.

Observe, too, His title, "*Advocate*." You know an advocate is one who pleads a cause—one who stands in opposition to an accuser. Satan is our accuser, sin the charge. Christ stands by to answer the accusation and wipe off the charge. Mark you, too, this word is in the singular number. It is not "*advocates*." So this is a Scripture against the Romish folly of blasphemy of having many advocates, such as the Virgin Mary and the saints. There is but *one* Advocate.

"*With the Father*." There is something peculiarly comforting in this. It is not with enemy, or with the Judge, or with my Father, or with your Father, but with "*the Father*," i.e., Father both to the Advocate and client!

Note, too, the words, "*Jesus Christ the righteous*." The word "*righteous*" here, means "*just*," and intimates for our comfort,

that there can be no exception made, either against His Person, or His carriage to weaken any motion He may make.

Now, if I were to stop here, and not utter another word in exposition of my text, surely you would have abundance to feed upon, and to encourage you—not to sin, God forbid, but to keep you from dejection when you do sin. But I have much more to say to you upon the point.

II.—THE SUBJECT OF HIS ADVOCACY

II.—What are the subjects of His advocacy?—They are as many as His people are perplexed with, and as many as concern their privileges—so we may be sure they are not a few.

First. *He advocates for our daily pardon*; you know, my brethren, that we contact daily debts by committing daily sins. You know there is not a day we live, but we deserve the total removal of justifying grace. But Christ our Advocate pleads His precious blood on our behalf. Oh, who can tell how oft he offends? None but God—none but Christ! What folly is it to talk about living without sin for a single day! The best of all saints sins continually; and the reason men do not believe this is they do not understand what sin is. Thousands of times have we sinned even since our justification, and as many times have we been pardoned by virtue of Christ's advocacy.

Secondly. *Christ advocates for our daily protection against temptation*. It is to this advocacy that we are to attribute our not being swallowed up by Satan's accursed devices; "Keep them from the evil," is still the plea in heaven. "Ah, then," says someone, "Christ has not pleaded for me; for I have been overcome by Satan!" But I answer, So might poor Peter have said when he fell. But, remember, what Christ means when He prays, "Keep them from the evil." It is not that the evil should not touch them, or even temporarily prevail over them, but that their faith should not fail through it. Does your faith yet stand, my brother? Then, depend upon it, you are an object of Christ's love, and your faith a subject of Christ's advocacy! Christ's advocacy is not always for keeping us from temptation, but it is always for keeping us against the ruinous results.

Thirdly. *Christ's advocacy is for our perseverance in grace*. Oh, how often should we have made shipwreck of our faith if Christ's advocacy had not been at our back! The instability of our minds, and the remnants of corruption, would long ago have extinguished it, if Christ had not pleaded our cause before the Father. Brethren, grace, though a spark of the divine nature, and though it cannot be corrupted, yet would quickly be ejected by our abominable corruptions, if Christ did not advocate our cause. I can well fancy grace soliciting God to take it away from such a den of iniquity as we are—and imploring to be loosed from such a cage of unclean birds

as the best of fallen men is. But there is Christ's advocacy to keep it there. Oh, blessed be Christ!

Fourthly. *Christ's advocacy is for the acceptance of our services.*

Our very prayers are so imbued with sin, that they must needs be rejected, if Christ did not plead our cause before the Father. Our best works are so soiled with the slime of human depravity and conceit, that they could not be accepted by God, were it not for the advocacy of Christ! It is the incense ascending from His holy censer that purifies our prayers and our works, and causes them to have a sweet savour before God! Do you now see where you stand and how you stand before the Lord? Out of Christ we are worse than nothing. In Christ, though worthless ourselves, we are kings and priests before God!

III.—THE KIND OF ADVOCATE

III.—What kind of an Advocate is Christ?—Is He an Advocate that may plead with all His might and energy and influence, and be defeated? You know there are many such advocates. The mightiest and most eloquent of human advocates, with even a good cause, have been unsuccessful. Is Christ such as these? Nay, nay! The idea is preposterous, for Christ is God and must have all power with God.

First. He is *an authoritative Advocate*. All power in heaven and earth is in His hands. "Ask of me," says God the Father to Christ, "Ask of me and I will give Thee."

Secondly. He is *a wise and skilful Advocate*. He completely understands His business. He knows God intimately, and knows man as intimately. He knows the sincerity of His clients' hearts; He knows all about their groans, their breathings, their sighs and tears, their trials and temptations; and He pleads their cause accordingly.

Thirdly. He is *a compassionate Advocate*, and a sympathetic Advocate. "Brethren," says the apostle, "we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Oh, my hearers, Christ knows what sore temptations mean, and is ever ready with His tender compassion towards His dear clients!

Fourthly. He is *an earnest and pressing Advocate*. He is never weary; we can never come at a wrong time to Him.

Fifthly. He is *a joyful and cheerful Advocate*. He does not undertake His business with a bad grace; but at once enters into it with all His heart and soul.

Lastly. He is *an acceptable Advocate*. The Father delights to hear Him: "Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth," say God of Christ (Isa. 42: 1).

What need for dejection, then, my brethren? Surely with such an Advocate as this to plead our cause, we may rejoice before God.

Pilgrim Papers

LETTERS TO YOUNG CHRISTIANS

JOSEPH IRONS ON "ELECTION"

THE important subject upon which I addressed you—Divine Sovereignty—involves the topic on which I shall write to you, praying, that the Holy Ghost may render it as consoling and profitable to you as He has to me.

The election of grace must necessarily follow upon the admission of the absolute Sovereignty of God : but as this doctrine has always been, and still is, so offensive to those who have only a name to live, but are spiritually dead; and as your comfort and peace so much depend on your "*knowing your election of God,*" I will endeavour to present you with a concise view of it and to assist you in coming to some decision concerning it.

That the Lord has a chosen people, peculiarly His own, cannot be denied by a spiritual Bible reader; but the grossest misapprehensions of the act of choosing them have warped the judgments, and harassed the minds of young disciples; while many have been afraid to read, hear, or speak of it, lest the enemies of the Lord should be hardened in sin, and lest awakened sinners be discouraged and distressed, forgetting that the only firm ground of consolation is ELECTING LOVE.

The Holy Spirit has directed the apostle Peter to address the household of faith, with the sacred appellation of "*elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father.*" Now, we must either deny the fore-knowledge of God, or admit His choice of His people; "*for whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of His Son.*" When He foreknew that you would repent, and pray, and believe in Christ, He also foreknew that He should give you the grace by which you repent, pray, and believe, which was, in the strictest sense of the phrase, electing you to be a subject of His grace; and, if a subject of His grace, then an heir of His glory.

Therefore, beloved, "*I am bound to give thanks always to God for you, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*" (2 Thess. 2 : 13).

It is therefore, very absurd to suppose, that God elected you because he foreknew you would repent, when even that fore-

knowledge was no less than an absolute decree to give you repentance unto life.

I feel persuaded you are convinced that, had repentance, prayer, and believing, been the *cause* of election, you would never have been elected; each of these exercises you feel yourself to have performed so imperfectly, and with such a mixture of sin, that they appear to you more likely to incur divine displeasure, than to secure electing love; but when you find, upon the authority of God's word, that the first cause of election is sovereign love, and that repentance, prayer, and believing, are *its fruits and effects*, you take encouragement to trace your broken petitions, and your godly sorrow up to the electing love of God: and this is as warrantable, as from the eating of fruit, to enquire after the tree on which it grew, and from the sight of the tree, to acknowledge its root, though unseen.

The sweet declaration, "*My people*," which so often occurs throughout the sacred volume, is a striking testimony of electing love; but the personal comfort of this testimony was not enjoyed by you till the Holy Spirit distinguished you from the world, brought you to an acquaintance with the experience of the Lord's people, and gave you a capacity to enjoy God Himself, in all His covenant relations.

Having done all this for you, it would be ungrateful in the highest degree to deny, or neglect *the source* from whence such precious streams flow; nor would it be less baneful to your peace of mind; for when the streams of sensible enjoyment cease to flow for a while, the keenest distress of soul will be felt, unless the spring of electing love is explored, and the thirsty pilgrim enabled to drink there: and even while they are flowing, the nearer we can get to their source, the more pure and salubrious will be the streams of which we partake.

It was the act of God the Father, to choose His people from among the ruined posterity of Adam, in which He consulted nothing but His own will; and who shall dare dispute His prerogative to choose? May not the architect choose the stones of which he will erect his own residence? May not the husbandman choose the plants which he will introduce to his own vineyard? And shall not God be allowed, in building His church, and planting his vineyard, to elect whom He pleases, and pass by whom He pleases? Rom. 9: 18, 24).

How delightful is it for the trees of righteousness to grow up into Christ Jesus, under the sweet consciousness of being chosen in Him, to bring forth fruit to the glory of God; and how blessed is the assurance that you stand in the garden of the Lord, as the object of

His irrevocable choice; yea, "*the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified*" (Isa. 61:3). The first cause of all is electing love; the last end of all is the glory of God.

Read, my dear young friend, that soul-animating description of the economy of grace, which the Holy Spirit has given, in the commencement of the Epistle to the Ephesians; in which, after recording the believer's portion, viz., "*all spiritual blessings in heavenly places,*" he points out the grand depository of them, "*in Christ Jesus,*" and then traces them up to electing love, "*according as He hath chosen us in Him, before the foundation of the world.*"

See here, my brother, how the reception of spiritual blessings proves your interest in Christ, and how your interest in Christ leads you up to the Father's electing love, as the source when all spiritual blessings come. And shall this be considered a dangerous doctrine? Yet, it is dangerous to the existence of pharisaical pride, and the interest of the Prince of darkness! Shall this be called high doctrine? Yes, it is highly honourable to God—highly characteristic of His word—and highly encouraging to every awakened sinner!

There is something striking in the expression just cited, "*chosen in Him before the foundation of the world*"; do you not perceive in this expression, both the *order* and the *antiquity* of election? Its *order* is "*in Christ*"; so the choice of Christ, as the covenant head of the church included the choice of all that shall be saved as the members of His mystical body; every one of whom were as truly and essentially beloved, and chosen of the Father, as Christ Himself was in His mediatorial character: this fact is clearly demonstrated by the prayer of our Lord, "*that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me, may be in them.*"

The choice of your soul to eternal life was, therefore, an act of the same love, which chose Christ Himself to be the surety of His people, and head of His Church; yea, in a sense, the choice of Christ as His people's portion, and His people as His portion—the gift of Christ to His Church, and the gift of the Church to Christ, may be considered as one grand transaction of electing love, fixing upon the head and its members—the vine and its branches—the foundation, and all the polished stones of the building at once.

Cherish the sweet thought, my brother; chosen in the person and righteousness of Jehovah Jesus, to be atoned for by Him—to be pardoned through Him—to be vitally united to Him, and everlastingly saved in Him.

See, also, the *antiquity* of electing love, "*before the foundation of the world*"; the thought of thy eternal salvation engaged the attention of Jehovah from the creation of the world, yea, from

everlasting; and He has never lost sight of it through the ages of time which have rolled away; He has connected the glory of His own perfections with it, and you may rest assured He will never abandon it. You may learn His mind from His own word, "*I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.*"

Should the Tempter insinuate that this is not *personal* but *general* election, allow him not to rob you of your comfort by listening to him; but, remember every thing that pertains to salvation is personal.

Was not your effectual calling personal? Are not your justification and sanctification personal? And will not your glorification be personal? Yes, and so was your election, or how could your name be written in the book of life, and your person given into the hands of Christ?

Let me now attempt to assist you in appropriating the personal comfort of this precious truth, by pointing you to the *fruits and effects* of electing love in your own experience. Have you not chosen Christ as your portion? Then you have evidence that the Father chose you in Him. Do you not love God, or at least desire to love Him? Then it is, "*because he first loved you,*" for, "*the carnal mind is enmity against God,*" and no man can love God until divine love is shed abroad in his heart.

The apostle was directed by the Holy Spirit to remind the Thessalonians of their experimental evidence that they were the elect of God; and I trust it will not be difficult for you to recognise the very same evidences in your own heart. "*Knowing brethren, beloved, your election of God: for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance*" (1 Thess. 1 : 4 and 5). Now you have only to review those precious seasons, in which the gospel has come to your soul, in such convincing, melting, transforming, and constraining power, has proved it to be by the Holy Ghost, and contrast them with the seasons in which it has come in word only, to obtain positive evidence of your election of God. For, if the Holy Spirit has communicated spiritual life to your soul, it is in consequence of Christ's obedience and death for you; and, Christ's obedience and death for you were in pursuance of the Father's electing love for you.

Thus, tracing effects up to their cause, you will be able to make your calling and election sure, and then your peace of mind will be permanent—your joy in the Holy Ghost will abound—and your unfeigned gratitude will excite to extensive and zealous obedience to the divine will.

Beloved, my heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be able to maintain your hold of the middle of the chain of

redemption, viz., divine calling, go back in holy contemplation from this to electing love, and look forward with sweet assurance to eternal glorification, satisfied that what God has joined together neither sin, death, nor hell can put asunder.

I am, with much affection,

Yours, for Christ's sake,

J.I.

Electing love, the great first cause of all
 The grand displays of saving grace; the Sun
 In Zion's firmament! illuminates, and warms
 The hearts of all the ransomed Sons of God.
 Its bright and cheering rays dispel the mists
 Of unbelief—create celestial day—
 And manifest the glory of our God.

[Joseph Irons, Letter III, in "Jazer," Assistance for the weak in faith, containing Twenty Letters on Gospel Doctrines addressed to young Christians, 1821.]

"MAKE THY CHOSEN PEOPLE JOYFUL"

"I REMEMBER one evening hearing him (the Rev. James Bardsley, Rector of St. Philip's, Bradford Road, Manchester) preach from the words, 'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.' During the sermon, in which he enforced the doctrine of God's election of His people in Christ Jesus, he said, 'I know well that many of you will object to the truth I am stating, and to such I would give a word of caution. I heard you tonight address God in the Scriptural language of our liturgy, "*And to make Thy chosen people joyful!*"! What do you mean in asking God to make joyful a people whose existence you deny?' From that moment my objection to God's sovereign, eternal, unconditional election of His people was dead, and has never revived."—*The late Rev. Thomas Bradbury, of Grove Chapel, Camberwell.*

THOMAS BILNEY'S TEXT

FROM Erasmus's translation of the New Testament this word fell into his heart: "*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief*" (1 Tim. 1: 15). "This one sentence," he says, "through God's instruction and inward working, did so exhilarate my heart, which before was wounded with the guilt of my sins and almost in despair, that immediately I found wonderful comfort and quietness in my soul, so that my bruised bones leaped for joy."

Obituary

MISS H. ORMISTON

Miss Helen Ormiston, second daughter of the late Rev. James Ormiston, passed forward on April 29th, at Bristol, after much suffering. The funeral service was held at St. Mary-le-Port Church, Bristol, on May 4th, when the hymns were sung :

“ Break, thou day of Advent glory ” (*James Ormiston*)
and

“ Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are my glorious dress.”

We express our sincere Christian sympathy with her sisters, Miss Lily Ormiston and Miss Mary Ormiston, and with her brothers and with all who mourn her loss.

MRS. E. M. WARDE (Bournemouth).

Mrs. Esther Matilda Warde, of Bournemouth, passed away on April 22nd after a long and painful illness.

An ardent, devoted worker for the Aged Pilgrims’ Friend Society for twenty-three years, she was the means of commencing Sales of Work on the Society’s behalf, and these continued until 1954. In 1932 she began with one of these functions in her own garden where, until 1944, a small marquee was erected, and often these pleasant occasions were followed by an informal meeting when such well-known supporters as the Rev. Thos. Houghton, Miss Ruth Cowell, and others, would discourse on matters of a spiritually profitable nature. In 1944, when it was felt that local interest had grown, a larger Committee was formed, and the Sales were held in St. Paul’s Church Hall. In this way, with the help of a loyal band of helpers whom she gathered round her, nearly £3,000 was obtained for the support of the Society.

She was well known at the Hornsey Rise Home, and also at the Winchester Home, where she encouraged the local friends to commence a Sale of Work, which she herself opened in 1951.

Along with the friends mentioned above, the late Mr. John Raven and the late Secretary, Mr. Frederick Naylor, pre-deceased her.

Thus passes from our midst one whose enthusiasm for the worthy cause of the needs of the Lord’s poor was communicated to all who worked with her.

She was a constant reader of *The Gospel Magazine*, and loved the distinctive truths for which it has always contended.

Our Young Folks' Page.

"WHAT SHALL I DO TO BE SAVED?"

DURING a time of much spiritual blessing in Sydney about seventy years ago, a young farmer attended a service on a Sunday evening. Some word spoken that night was used by the Holy Ghost to convince Roger of his state as a sinner before God. His life had been perfectly respectable; in the sight of the world he had never done anything wrong. But the Lord knows the inmost thoughts of our hearts; He knew that Roger was one of those "who forget God," and are classed in the Psalm with "the wicked who shall be cast into hell." Roger saw that in every way he had fallen short of the glory of God; he felt that his sins would cut him off for ever from being reconciled to God. Despairing for some time, Roger was led step by step into the full light of salvation, until his whole spirit rejoiced in God his Saviour.

The Christian workers in the Mission where Roger's conversion took place, were greatly cheered and encouraged by this instance of the power of the Lord being present in their midst to heal. They did all they could to help the new believer, and the change in his life was plain to all. He constantly attended the Mission services, and became well-known to all the helpers.

This happy state of things went on for some weeks. Then suddenly it ceased! Roger's place was empty. Nobody knew anything about him, nor did any news come of him. Without a word to anybody, Roger had disappeared. This was a blow to the good men in charge of the Mission Hall, and they were greatly perplexed and disappointed. They were later to learn that all was well; but for many weeks they knew nothing.

Roger was in fact engaged to a girl in New Zealand; the wonderful change in his life had come to him in Australian Sydney, more than a thousand miles away. After his conversion, Roger began to long and pray that Jessie might be born again too. He suddenly decided that he must see her. Without stopping to tell anybody what he was doing, Roger sailed off to Auckland, and lost no time in finding Jessie. At once she saw that something had happened, and when Roger told her of his experience she became deeply interested. Before long she began to feel the burden of her sin and her need of a Saviour.

But here difficulties arose. Jessie was a Roman Catholic, and try as she would, she could not understand what had happened to Roger. Young in the faith, he did not know how to meet her

doubts and fears. "What shall I do?" cried the poor girl in despair. Roger, quite ignorant of what her religion taught, suggested that perhaps her priest would know!

So Jessie went to Father Dolan, and tearfully told him her story. "What shall I do, Father?" she ended pitifully; "whatever shall I do?"

Father Dolan was sorry for the girl, and tried to be kind. He had no idea what was wrong with her, and this was his answer:

"Och sure, my girl, you're a bit off. Your nerves are surely queer. You must steady yourself now; you must steady yourself. Look you here, my girl, you just go home and take a drop o' whisky. It will help to put you right, sure it will."

Poor Jessie turned away despairing. Her parents were greatly puzzled when she tried to tell them of her soul's anxiety, but they could not give her any help or comfort.

Of course Roger was much distressed that he could not lead Jessie as he had been led. One day the girl suddenly suggested that they should go off at once to Sydney! "I seem to feel that I might find the Saviour where you found Him," said poor Jessie.

How Roger and Jessie were able to manage their affairs so easily I cannot tell; but together they took passages and set out for the four days' voyage to Sydney.

The next Sunday evening the two made their way to the Mission Hall, and sat together in the gallery. The preacher recognised Roger at once, and saw with what intense earnestness the two were listening to his message. But as yet he did not know anything of what had been happening.

At ten o'clock on Monday morning, the young couple came to the Missioner's house, and asked to see him. Soon the whole story was told. The way of salvation was explained, how that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, how He accomplished this by dying in their stead, bearing away their sins, and covering them with His glorious righteousness. Then the minister knelt with Roger and Jessie, to pray that Jessie too might know that Christ was her salvation. Trembling and sobbing, Jessie began to pray herself: "O Lord, I am a sinner; Lord, I am a sinner. Tell me, what must I do? . . . Thou art a Saviour. . . . Oh yes, Lord, Thou art a Saviour." The minister said quietly, "Can you say He is *your* Saviour?" Jessie hesitated, trembling and sobbing; then she suddenly burst out, "Oh yes, Lord, *my* Saviour! Thou art my Saviour . . . mine!"

And so the Good Shepherd brought home yet another of His lost sheep to the fold.

DAMARIS.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA No. 17.

The whole : Paul said it was "profitable unto all things."

1. An Arab leagued against Nehemiah.
2. Mary took a pound of this.
3. How things should be done in the churches.
4. Isaac asked where it was.
5. Nothing is this with God.
6. The way that leads to life.
7. A wise man in the time of Solomon.
8. Our sins are as deeply dyed as this.
9. How a wealthy young man went away.

SOLUTION TO NO. 16.

The whole is : Bethsaida (John 1 : 44).

1. Bethlehem (Ruth 1 : 19).
2. Ephesus (Acts 19 : 35).
3. Three Taverns (Acts 28 : 15).
4. Hebron (Genesis 23 : 2).
5. Samaria (1 Kings 16 : 23, 24).
6. Ashdod (1 Samuel 5 : 1, 2).
7. India (Esther 1 : 1).
8. Dothan (Genesis 37 : 17, 24).
9. Arimathaea (John 19 : 38).

THE first warrant of our hope is the Word of God, whereof now we will touch only these two comfortable places.

The Apostle (Peter) saith, *There is reserved for us in Heaven an immortal inheritance, unto the which we also are kept by the power of God through faith*—a word certainly full of all comfort; that inheritance which the Lord keeps for me in Heaven, who can disappoint me of it? And seeing I am kept by His power on earth for that same inheritance, who can take me out of His hand? He preserves in Heaven my portion for me, He keeps me on earth for it, what then is there that is able to disappoint me of this hope?

Again, compare me these two together, that the Father speaking from Heaven, saith of Christ : "*This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased, hear Him.*" The Son again to whom the Father hath sent you, He saith : "*Fear not, little flock, it is My Father's will to give you a kingdom*"; not for your worthiness but for the good pleasure of His own will. Oh, what a strong consolation and fortress of our hope have we here? The Father commands us to hear His Son, the Son assures us that it is His Father's will to give us a kingdom; therefore will we, casting away faithless fear, possess our souls in patience, looking by a constant hope for performance of that kingdom which He has promised us.

—Rev. W. COWPER, 1613.

Sermons and Notes of Sermons.

“ABSENT FROM THE BODY—
PRESENT WITH THE LORD”

A SERMON PREACHED (1882) BY THE REV. JAMES BATTERSBY (VICAR
ST. JAMES’, SHEFFIELD).

(This sermon has been abbreviated in parts.—Editor.)

“*We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body,
and to be present with the Lord.*”—2 Cor. 5:8.

In the concluding part of the fourth chapter, the Apostle draws a very striking contrast between the things which are *temporal* and those things which are *eternal*. The former are transient and pass away, but the latter continue and abide for ever. The superiority of the one over the other, is not only strikingly, but beautifully set forth for the comfort and encouragement of the afflicted, troubled, perplexed, persecuted and cast down children of God.

In the opening of the fifth chapter, the Apostle not only continues his contrast, but illustrates his meaning in a most interesting manner. The time state of the child of God is dwelling in an “*earthly house*” which must soon be dissolved. The future and happy state of the believer is dwelling in heaven in eternal glory, “*a building of God, a house not made with hands.*” In our earthly tabernacle we groan, being burdened, and, although we have the earnest of the Spirit dwelling in our hearts, as the pledge of a glorious future, yet, whilst we are at home in the body, we are *absent from the Lord*. We walk by faith in our time state; but, when present with the Lord, we shall walk by sight. The Apostle is not backward in expressing his confident assurance as to the future, he is of good courage, and declares his readiness rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord. The wonderful influence which these truths had upon the Apostle and others, is thus stated : “*Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him.*”

The subject is one of very great importance, and I hope that it will be, to some extent at least, interesting, useful, and profitable. Our order is as follows :—

1. *The state of the believer whilst at home in the body;*
2. *The state of the believer's soul when at home with the Lord;*
3. *The state of the believer, body, soul, and spirit, after the Resurrection.*

You will require to follow me closely in order to obtain and retain a full grasp of our subject. May the Divine Spirit guide us into all truth for Christ’s sake.

I.—IN THE BODY

Consider first, the state of the believer whilst at home in the body. Various expressions are used by the Apostle to denote the temporary and frail condition of our mortal bodies. The body is likened to an “*earthly house*,” which though beautiful and wonderful in its construction, is but dust and ashes. Out of dust was it taken, dust it is, and unto dust it shall return (Gen. 3 : 19). The body, notwithstanding, is the house which the “*living soul*” occupies for a short time, and then passes away. The soul is a tenant at will. Its Creator and Sovereign may remove it whenever He pleases from its earthly to its heavenly abode. The body is a “*tabernacle*” or a “*tent*” in which the soul sojourns for a night. This “*tabernacle*” has to be dissolved, unpinned, and taken down. The Owner thereof does it with care. He separates body and soul for awhile, but preserves both, that He may hereafter unite them in resurrection glory and beauty.

Whilst at home in the body, the believer groans, being burdened. Those saints of God, whose bodies lie in the grave, and whose souls are with the Lord, have done with all sighs and “*groans*,” for they are “*unburdened*.” The believer, as long as he remains here, is “*burdened*” with a “*body of death*”—a “*dead body*”—which is a most loathsome thing to have as a daily companion. He is “*burdened*” with the inward workings of corruption, with the fiery darts of the wicked one, with the cares of this world, with afflictions, labours, and sufferings for the truth’s sake. Well, but this is not for long, and it is “*light*” when compared with the “*eternal weight of glory*.” God has appointed a *set time* for remembering and delivering His servants. Like Job we may exclaim, “*If a man die shall he live?*” Of course he will, and no one knew this better than Job did, for he knew that his Redeemer lived, and that he should hereafter see him as his God. But Job had to bow to his Lord and to abide His time, and so have we. “*All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come*” (Job 14 : 14; 18 : 25, 26).

The believer whilst at home in the body has received a pledge that, when he leaves it, he shall be present with the Lord. “*God has given us the earnest of His Spirit.*” This is something in hand as a “*pledge*” or “*surety*,” that He will give us all that He has promised us. “*We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance*” (Eph. 1 : 14). This sealing pledge is put into our hearts. God graciously anoints us and consecrates us to His service. He seals us and makes us *feel sure* of our salvation. And this He does by giving us the *earnest* of the Spirit in our hearts (2 Cor. 1 : 21, 22). The sinner saved is a *very sacred* thing, for the Holy Ghost has made him so. The Spirit of God

quickened him when he was dead in trespasses and sins. He led him to Christ for cleansing and salvation. He now dwells in him as his Guide, Sanctifier, and Comforter. “*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*” “*Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?*” The Holy Ghost has vitally joined you to the Lord. Your bodies are not to be used for common or unholy purposes. “*What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's*” (1 Cor. 3 : 16; 6 : 9, 20). We need be careful of our bodies in our time state, and in no sense abuse them. They are God's, and are to be devoted entirely to His service. What other meaning can the words of St. Paul have? “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your *bodies* a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Rom. 12 : 1).

The believer whilst at home in the body walks by faith. “We walk by faith, not by sight.” I would impress upon you that, where there is real faith, there you have real spiritual life. The Spirit of Christ is the principle of eternal life in the believer. This Spirit flows as freely and as effectually through every faculty of the soul, as the blood of a healthy person circulates through every vein of his body. Christ lives in him, and he lives by the faith of the Son of God (Gal. 2 : 20). Christ is the bread of his life, the joy of his life, the hope of his life, and the end of his life. If he walks, it is by faith; if he runs, it is by faith; if he flies, it is by faith—“*looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of his faith.*”

The believer though at home in the body and absent from the Lord, has certain marks by which he may be known. He has the knowledge of assurance. “We know that if our earthly house,” i.e. our bodily frame be dissolved, we have a better house, one which can never be taken down, eternal in the heavens. St. John could say, “And we know.” And it is the privilege of every child of God to be able to say, “And I know.” The Apostle “earnestly desired” to be at home with the Lord, clothed upon with glory and immortality. He was “confident” that He Who had begun the good work in him would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. He laboured always, as a man who believed what he preached, to be accepted of God. Shew us these marks, and we will shew you persons, who, when “absent from the body will be present with the Lord.”

II.—AT HOME WITH THE LORD

Secondly, the state of the believer's soul when at home with the Lord. “Absent from the body, present with the Lord.”

Well, but where is the soul of the believer when it has departed out of its "earthly house"? Our text answers this question plainly and sufficiently—"Absent from the body, present with the Lord." But here, an interesting question may be raised. Is the soul of the believer present with the Lord from the time of its departure out of the body until the resurrection morning?

Some distinguished writers have spoken of the soul as if it were *unconscious, insensible, and asleep* between death and the resurrection. I shall have to shew you what Scriptures are quoted by them in favour of their theory. The following are specimens: "David shall sleep with his fathers." "And he slept with his fathers, and was buried" (2 Sam. 7: 12; 1 Kings 1: 21; 2: 10). "For now shall I sleep in dust" (Job 7: 21). "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (Dan. 12: 2). "They that are fallen asleep." "We shall not all sleep" (1 Cor. 15). "Them which sleep in Jesus" (1 Thess. 4). Those who rely upon these expressions in proof of their opinion that the soul *sleeps* between death and the resurrection, seem not to have sufficiently considered the context in which these passages occur, for without exception each and all refer to the death of the *body* and not to the soul. "To fall asleep" is to die (Acts 7: 60). And to be asleep is to be in a state of death, as regards the body. That it is the body which sleeps, is evident from the following passages: "Many bodies of the saints which slept arose" (Mat. 27: 52). "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," i.e. Lazarus is dead (John 11). "David fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption" (Acts 13: 36). If David in this verse includes both body and soul, then his soul died and saw corruption. I have not met with anyone rash enough to assert that this is the meaning of the Apostle.

Again, passages which speak of the dead as being unable to praise God, are urged in support of the view, that the soul is unconscious, insensible, and asleep after death. "Shall the dust praise Thee?" (Ps. 30: 9). "Shall the dead arise and praise Thee?" (Ps. 80: 10). "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Ps. 115: 17). "The grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee" (Isaiah 38: 18). It will be seen by a very cursory glance, at the context of these passages, that they are either *figurative*, or refer to the death of the body, and not the soul after death, unless it should be contended that body and soul after death are buried and mingle together with the dust of the earth. It would be difficult to deal with a theory of this sort.

Again, it is said, that in the day of death, "the thoughts of man perish," and that afterwards, "the dead know not anything" (Ps. 146: 4; Eccles. 9: 5). If we read and examine these verses, we shall find that the former verse is speaking of the *plans, purposes and designs* of the great in this life, which come to an end in the day of

death. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth : in that very day his *thoughts*" (*plans*) "perish." And as to the latter verse, the dead "know not anything" stands in contrast with "the living who know that they shall die." The most that these verses prove is this, that death is the lot of all.

Again, in the 12th of Ecclesiastes there is a verse which I shall read and note : "Then shall the dust return to the earth, as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it." There is a reference in this verse to the original creation of man. The body of man was formed of the dust of the ground, and the living soul was the breath of life, which God breathed into it. Solomon saw that in death, the body returns to dust, and the soul returns to Him Who gave it. And for what purpose? Surely, not to be absorbed into the God-head, for such an idea would be derogatory to the perfection of Deity. The soul returns to its Creator, Who is the Sovereign Lord of all, and Who will dispose of and assign the soul to its rightful place in happiness, heaven and glory, or otherwise, according to its deserts. The Judge of all the earth will do right.

Again, it has been contended, that because the REWARD of the righteous and the PUNISHMENT of the wicked do not take place until after the resurrection and the day of judgment, therefore the soul is inactive and in abeyance, and that its faculties are suspended after death until the resurrection. The passages generally quoted in support of this opinion, are the following: "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14: 14). "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Mat. 25: 46). They shall be judged out of the books according to their works (Rev. 20). I fail, myself, to see anything in these and such passages to disprove the conscious, sensible, separate and distinct existence of the soul between death and the resurrection. Nor do they disprove the immediate happiness or misery of the soul after its departure from the body.

SCRIPTURE TEXTS

I will not, however, linger longer on this aspect of my subject, but proceed to examine the Scriptures, which give us *definite* views respecting the state of the soul after its absence from the body. The righteous enter into peace and rest.

(1) "*Present with the Lord.*" These are the words of our text. What is it that is present with the Lord? It is not the body, but something which has left it; and this something is called the soul, or that which constitutes the spiritual part of the believer. I use these terms to describe that part of man which is dislodged from its "earthly house" in the day of death. The great Head of the Church taught that the soul survives the body. He said to His Apostles: "Be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not

able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell" (Matt. 10 : 28). Here we have a contrast between the mortal life of the body and the immortal life of the soul. The former may be taken away by man, but not the latter. That the soul survives the death of the body, is the teaching of our Lord.

(2) *Again, Jesus proved the resurrection of the body from the surviving life of the soul after death.* He quotes Moses, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the dead but of the living." "For all live unto Him" (Matt. 22 : 32; Luke 20 : 38). Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had been long dead in the time of Moses. And hence that which survived and was alive, must have been the soul. These worthies were living somewhere, though not in their bodies. They had a distinct existence and were not annihilated, for how could God be the God of that which had no existence? The Sadducees said there was neither resurrection, nor angel, nor spirits (Acts 23 : 8). But our Lord proved the existence of the spirit after death, and by inference the resurrection of the body. Moses had shewn at the bush, that the dead are raised, because Abraham's God is the God of the *living*.

(3) *Let us notice our Lord's words to the penitent thief on the cross.* The thief cried: "Lord remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Jesus said unto him, "Verily, I say unto thee." This is the language of certainty—the promise which I am about to make to thee will be most assuredly fulfilled. "*Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise*" (Luke 23 : 42, 43). The time is fixed. "*Today.*" Sudden and great is to be the change—from a cross to a crown. "*Thou shalt be with Me*"—absent from the body, present with the Lord.

The *place* is named, which is *Paradise*. St. Paul calls this Paradise the third heaven (2 Cor. 12 : 2-4). The word for Paradise is rendered in the Old Testament "forest" and "orchard" (Neh. 2 : 8; Eccles. 2 : 5; Song 4 : 13). Paradise is a word of Eastern origin and denotes a park, or garden ground, or other valuable enclosure in which are precious objects to regale the senses. When the word refers to the heavenly Paradise of God, then it denotes a place of inexpressible pleasure, happiness, and delight. Paradise is the palace grounds of the King of saints. In this heavenly land the saints have freedom, they breathe a pure atmosphere, live on precious fruits, and drink at the fountain of God's pleasures for evermore.

Some say that our Lord only declared a truth unto the thief, but did not fix the time of his being with Him in Paradise. They read the words thus: "Verily, I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with

Me in Paradise." This reading is considered by critics weak and contemptible. I think that our Lord's words establish these facts, that both His Own soul and the soul of the thief, were *immediately* after death in the Paradise of bliss and glory.

(4) Again, "*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours: and their works do follow them* (Rev. 14: 13). This verse contains many precious truths. Those who die in the Lord are blessed with the rich enjoyment of every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. But how could this be, if their souls were *unconscious, insensible, and asleep* after death? The happiness of the soul is *immediate*. "From henceforth." From the *moment of departure* the souls of the saints abound in joy and pleasure. "They rest from their labours," their sorrows, their griefs, and their vexatious troubles, in a holy, sensible, and peaceable habitation of delight and glory. "And their works do follow them" testimonially, like Abel's, Noah's, Abraham's, and others.

(5) Again, *Parable as proof*. If Parable can be taken as proof, and I am prepared to do so myself, of the soul's *consciousness, sensibility, and activity* after death, then the whole subject is not only fully proved, but illustrated by the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The condition of each is described both before and after death. We have only to do with the state of each after death. The beggar dies and is escorted by angels into "Abraham's bosom," where he enjoys rest and comfort in peace and security. What a change from poverty to riches, from misery to happiness. Lazarus in his lifetime had his evil things, but in heaven, he receives his good things. The rich man also dies and is buried, and in hell he lifts up his eyes being in torments. He can see, pray, remember, reflect, and feel—he is tormented. A great gulf is fixed between the two which can never be passed. It is God's irrevocable decree. Once accept this Parable as proof, and the whole question of the soul's *separate and distinct existence* after death is settled for ever. And not only so, but the soul's *consciousness, sensibility, and activity immediately* after death are settled also.

(6) Again, *before the Lord left His disciples, He inspired them with the hope of being with Him and beholding His glory*. Hear His own words: "Where I am there shall also My servant be" (John 12: 26). "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me" (John 17: 24).

When the Saviour spoke of going away to His Father, sorrow filled the hearts of His disciples. Nevertheless, it was expedient that He should go away for the reasons which He assigned (John 16: 6, 7). But what a change took place in the minds of the disciples when

the Lord had actually gone away from them to His Father. "And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God" (Luke 24: 51-53). The same Lord who accompanied with His disciples in Jerusalem changed their sorrow into joy. They were to be with Tim, and with Him in glory. "He ascended up far above all heavens" (Eph. 4. 10). Christ's bodily presence is there. Stephen saw heaven opened and Jesus standing at God's right hand ready to receive his spirit. "Lord Jesus receive my spirit" (Acts 7: 59).

(7) Now we can understand the words of St. Paul: "*For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*" He had "*a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better*" (Phil. 1: 21-23). The Apostle had a desire that Christ should be magnified both in life and death. It might be better for the Philippians that he should be spared to preach the Gospel of Christ to them and to spread the savour of His precious Name, but he knew that to die and to be with Christ in heaven and glory was "*gain.*" He knew that he should be delivered from a body of sin, from doubts and fears, from troubles and trials, from diseases and deaths, from persecutions, and perplexities, and that he should gain an entrance into the presence of Christ, to partake of His joys and pleasures, and to appear in His beauty and glory.

It is "*very far better*" to depart and to be with Christ. Death is only a departing, a removing from a lower to an upper room, a gentle drawing aside of the curtain that the soul may enter in. "It is *very far better*" to be with Christ joying and rejoicing with Him, than to be here sorrowing, weeping, and groaning.

The saints love Christ now but, when they are in His presence, they will dwell in constant admiration of Him. They will see Him face to face. They will no longer look through a glass darkly, but behold Him as He is in majesty, honour, and glory. The saints in heaven are Christ's friends, brethren, and companions. They are freemen of the heavenly city, and walk in the palace grounds of the great King. They bear His Name and share His honours and privileges. They hold sweet and blessed intercourse with Him. They glory in the success of His kingdom, and rejoice when an heir of glory is born of God. They are filled with the fulness of joy and pleasure. They can bear no more, for a burden of glory is upon them. *There* all the graces of the saints are in full exercise. They are waiting for their glorified bodies, and in the meanwhile, they share and enjoy the grace, the goodness, the righteousness, the holiness, the honour, the glory, and the dominion of Jehovah Jesus.

It is "*very far better*" to be with Christ than to be imprisoned in this earthly tenement of clay, sorrow, burden, decay, death and corruption. Throw open the prison gate and the captive soul will delight in its release and liberty. Throw open the door, and the heavenly bird will depart from its cage, rising and soaring on "*joyful wing*," and singing as it soars "*to claim its mansion in the skies*," that "*It is very far better to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord*."

And now what is the teaching of the Church of England about the state of the believer's soul after its departure out of this life? Does she give any uncertain sound? Does she say that it goes to Purgatory to be cleansed from guilt to fit it for happiness? No, indeed! Such teaching would be an insult to Him *Whose blood cleanses from all sin*. Both in her public services and in her occasional prayers, both in her Articles and in her Homilies, she sets forth as the hope of the child of God, *immediately* after death the attainment of "*everlasting joy and felicity*." She prays for a sick brother:—

" forasmuch as in all appearance the time of *his* dissolution draweth near, so fit and prepare *him*, we beseech Thee, against the hour of death, that after *his* departure hence in peace, and in Thy favour, *his soul* may be received into Thine everlasting kingdom, through the merits and meditation of Jesus Christ Thine only Son, our Lord and Saviour."

And how does she comfort the sorrowful at the open grave of the departed?

" Almighty God, with Whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with Whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh are *in joy and felicity*; we give Thee hearty thanks, for that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our *brother or sister* out of the miseries of this sinful world; beseeching Thee, that it may please Thee of Thy gracious goodness, shortly to hasten Thy kingdom; that we, with all those that are departed this life in the true faith of Thy holy Name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Are not these words explicit? The soul of the believer when absent from the body is present with the Lord, sharing His joys and His happiness, and yet waiting "*in sure and certain hope of the resurrection of the body to eternal life, through out Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto His glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself*."

III.—AFTER THE RESURRECTION

Thirdly, the state of the believer, body, soul and spirit after the resurrection. Here I shall be very brief, for I hope to enlarge upon this part of my subject on some future occasion. The Scriptures declare that “*there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.*” The Lord Jesus Christ shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory.” We do not read of any change in the soul at the resurrection, but the body shall then receive its *new qualities*. It shall be an “*incorruptible*” body, a “*glorious*” body, a “*powerful*” body, a “*spiritual*” body, and an “*immortal*” body. These will be some of its properties in that day of glory. Then shall the Lord Jesus deliver up the Kingdom—the Church in her risen glory—to God, the Father, that He may be all in all (1 Cor. 15).

The believer shall then be like Christ, and see Him as He is. David rejoiced in hope, saying, “As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: *I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness*” (Ps. 17 : 15). It is as if he had said, “I shall see the face of my God in the Righteous One, Jehovah Jesus; and when I appear with Him in glory, and I am *like* Him in body, soul and spirit, then I shall be perfectly satisfied. Then shall I be a king, crowned with the crown of righteousness—crowned with the crown of eternal life—and crowned with the incorruptible crown of glory which fadeth not away.”

And now for a few practical words. There are only *two estates* of persons now: Those who are IN Christ, and those who are OUT of Christ. There will be only *two estates* when the soul leaves the body: it will be heaven or hell, happiness or misery. There will be only *two estates* after the resurrection of the body and the day of judgment: on the right hand, exaltation, dignity, honour, and glory; and on the left hand, humiliation, degradation, shame, and contempt. The lines are distinctive, “Come, ye blessed of My Father,” or “Depart from Me, ye cursed!” Which is it *now?* And which will it be *hereafter?*

MINISTER OF GROVE CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL

ON Saturday, June 4th, the Rev. A. A. Campbell, of Ribchester, will, d.v., be inducted as Minister of Grove Chapel, Camberwell. He will preach at 3 p.m., and there will be a public meeting at 5.45 p.m.

“THROUGH FIERY TRIALS.”—A readable account of the outstanding events of our Protestant history, from John Wickliffe (1324-1384) to the Marian martyrs. Pp. 62; eight art plates; price 2s. 6d., postage 3d. (Protestant Truth Society, 184 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.).

Protestant Beacon.

A ST. ALBANS MARTYR

GEORGE TANKERVIL (OR TANKERFIELD), (August 26th, 1555)

GEORGE Tankervil (or Tankerfield), of London, was born in the city of York.

This martyr was an instance of the sovereignty and power of divine grace in its most distinguishing nature and efficacious tendency. It gave proof of the wisdom and goodness of our God, in counteracting the desires of enemies to His church, and in causing the means employed of Antichrist for the destruction of Christianity, to become subservient to the increase of His people.

During the reign of good King Edward VI Mr. Tankerfield was an advocate for Popery, and gave no attention to the zealous arguments and solid reasoning used at that time to expose papal errors and to confirm the doctrines of grace. He remained under the dark cloud of superstitious ignorance, which Popery spreads over the understanding.

Though he was then deaf to the advantages of the preached gospel, the Lord was graciously pleased to open his eyes by the cruel persecution under Mary, which led him to doubt the veracity of a system countenancing such barbarities and induced him to detest their proceedings. His mind being thus open to conviction, he desired information of what was truth, and sought instruction by earnest prayer to God, which was accompanied by an inclination to peruse the Scriptures.

I.—READING THE NEW TESTAMENT

In reading the New Testament, God was pleased to work by His own Spirit in his heart, enabling him to believe the report and to receive the tidings of joy contained therein; which had such an impression upon his conduct that, having found satisfaction, he was desirous of inviting others to seek for the same happiness. The illuminations of the Divine Spirit not only informed his understanding, but shone in his actions; for he openly confessed his former impiety, and warned others against the delusions of Popery, exhorting them to true Christianity. This conduct was sufficient to raise the enmity of the Papists against him, who sought his life and by treachery obtained their ends; for this servant of God having had a very severe illness, was one day walking out, for the benefit of the air, in the Temple Fields, London, when there came to his house a gentleman, under pretence of wanting him to prepare an entertainment for the Lord Paget—Mr. Tankerfield being by profession a cook. His wife eagerly swallowed the bait, hoping to be benefited

thereby (her husband's illness having impoverished their circumstances) and, little suspecting the design, requested the messenger to wait until she should fetch her husband, who, receiving the message from her, was well apprised of the situation he was in, by his reply to her, saying, "An entertainment, woman! indeed it is such an one as will not be very pleasant to the flesh; but God's will be done." In such circumstances, one might suppose he would have fled; but it is the principle of grace to abide the trial, trusting in the Lord.

II.—BROUGHT BEFORE BONNER

When he came home, he accosted the messenger by his name, and by him (though not without much resistance on the part of his wife) was delivered into the hands of a constable ready for the purpose, who imprisoned him in Newgate. Being brought before Bonner, his answers were brief, ingenuous, and explicit. Tankerfield answered unhesitatingly, constantly declaring his mind, both touching auricular confession and also the sacrament of the Popish altar and likewise of the Mass. Concerning the sacrament of the Popish altar, he confessed that he neither had, nor did believe, that in the said sacrament there is the real body and blood of Christ, because that body is ascended into heaven, and there doth sit at the right hand of God the Father. And, moreover, he said that the Mass now used in the Church of England was naught, and full of idolatry and abomination, and against the Word of God; affirming, also, that there are but two sacraments in the church of Christ—baptism and the supper of the Lord. And to these assertions he said he would stand; and so he did, to the end.

And when at last the bishop began to read the sentence, first exhorting him with many words to revoke his professed opinion, which he called damnable and heretical, he resisted all persuasions, answering the bishop again in this form: "I will not," said he, "forsake mine opinions, except you, my lord, can refute them by the Scriptures; and I care not for your divinity, for you condemn all men, and prove nothing against them." And after many fair words of exhortation, which Bonner used in an attempt to pervert him, he answered boldly again: "That the church, whereof the Pope is supreme head, is no part of Christ's catholic church"; and, pointing to the bishop, he spake to the people, saying: "Good people, beware of him and such as he is, for these are the people that deceive you."

When the bishop, at his last appearance, endeavoured to prevail upon him to recant, his courage was not in the least abated, but Tankerfield stood steadfastly in the faith of God's elect. Receiving his condemnation, he was delivered to the civil power to be martyred.

III.—TAKEN TO ST. ALBANS

Tankerfield was taken to St. Albans, and, remaining at the Cross Keys Inn, several resorted to him. Some mocked, some pitied, and others attempted to persuade him to recant; but he reasoned with them so forcibly out of the Scriptures that many departed with weeping eyes. As he had proved he did not fear the wrath of his enemies, so he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible; for nothing but the faith of God's elect could produce such a conduct as his, prior to his dissolution. Having requested his host to let him have a good fire, we find him representing the contest between the flesh and spirit by pulling off his hose and shoes, and putting his leg into the flame, which producing pain, caused him to withdraw it, and to enter into the following argument, an argument deduced from the treasure of wisdom and knowledge: The Flesh says, "Oh, thou fool, wilt thou burn, and need not?" But the Spirit replies, "Be not afraid; for what is it, compared with eternal fire?" Another suggestion arises, "Wilt thou leave thy friends and companions who love thee?" Grace answers, "Communion with the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, and His divine presence, will more than compensate for the loss of thy friends." Another argument with which the Flesh contended was, "Not to shorten his days, when there was a probability of his living much longer"; but the Spirit brought forward a more cogent reason, "What is this life compared with that which endureth for ever in heaven?" Thus, with the apostle, he looked not at the things seen, but at those not seen; knowing that the things seen are temporal, but those not seen are eternal. Thus Christians receive faith sufficient to give them victory over their sufferings and triumph over death. The martyrs, even in the prospect of their accumulated torments, with calmness and composure depended on God, who promised His people strength equal to their day; attending them with His presence through the journey of life, and at death translating them to the transcendent glories of heaven.

IV.—HE COMMEMORATES THE LORD'S SUPPER

Having been denied the privilege of receiving the sacrament agreeable to our Lord's institution, except in the idolatrous mode invented by the Papists, which he could not conscientiously comply with, and finding the time of his departure draw nigh, he desired to have a pint of wine and a loaf, that he might commemorate the Lord's Supper before his death. His request being granted, he prayed with his friends present; and after making his confession to the God of heaven, and reading the account of our Lord's instituting His supper, and what Paul wrote to the Corinthians on the subject, he appealed to the Lord that he did not design to invalidate the authority of the ministry; but, as he could not have the sacrament

administered according to the precepts of Jesus, he thus desired to remember the Saviour; and, with giving of thanks, he received the elements that were provided.

Early in the afternoon, he was taken to a place called Romeland, where he kneeled down and prayed; and death being disarmed of all its terrors, and his mind supported by a vigorous faith, rising from his knees, he said "he had a sharp dinner, but should have a joyful supper in heaven."

V.—TRIUMPH OVER DEATH

While they were encircling him with the fuel, a priest came to persuade him to believe in the sacrament of the altar, that he might be saved; but Tankerfield told him that he defied the whole of Babylon, and repeated his exhortations to the people not to credit the delusions of priesthood. The Mayor, being enraged at his boldness, commanded the flame to be kindled, delaring that, if he had but one load of faggots in the world he would give them for his burning. A gentleman of some distinction came to Tankerfield, exhorting him to confidence to whom he replied, he thanked God for the faith bestowed, by which he was enabled to trust in Him, and rejoice in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. In such a happy experience did this servant of the Lord embrace the trial, victoriously triumphing over death, with a bright prospect of the mansions of eternal bliss, as his promised and purchased inheritance. With composure he endured the torment, and like Stephen, calling upon Jesus, was soon delivered from pain, to the enjoyment of the tranquility of heaven; where, with unwearied diligence, he is now celebrating the riches of God's mercy in Christ.

And so this blessed servant of God, with much patience and constancy, ended his life, on the 26th August, 1555, for the defence of the gospel.

F.C.

If the Church of Rome is to be seen in her true colours she must not be looked at in a land like Britain but in a completely Papal one like Italy or Spain or Colombia where already she has the majority. Ask a member of the Reformed faith in Italy or Spain or Colombia (where they have suffered persecution and have had no redress), and in no uncertain terms they will tell you what it means to live in a Papal land.—*The Christian Irishman*, May, 1955, Rev. F. Rupert Gibson, B.A.

THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE FUND

The Trustees of "The Gospel Magazine" gratefully acknowledge the receipt of the following donations to the Fund: Mr. J. H. B. Woods 13/6; Miss J. MacBean 12/6; Miss M. White 6/6; Mrs. D. Wakeley 5/-; Mr. R. Peckham (per Mr. E. G. Eade) 10/-.

Miscellaneous Papers

"HE WAS YET THERE" (Genesis 44:14).

"*For he was yet there*" (Genesis 44:14), i.e., Joseph. He had seen his brethren go off as soon as it was light (or at least he knew they had gone). But, before they had time to get very far, he sent after them demanding the return of the divining cup. There it was without doubt, in Benjamin's sack. Full of fear, dismay, and apprehension, they turned to go back; they found that Joseph was still there (unusual perhaps), and, prostrate before him, they poured out their stricken hearts. Joseph *knew* they would return; it was not a random hope that they would. Perplexity and the burden of love wrought in their hearts and minds. They were innocent of the theft charged on them, and they felt that "the man" would not believe them. But indeed "the man" had brought them into a net, and laid affliction upon them. They were going through fire and water into a wealthy place, and we might well say that the wealth of that place is not yet spent by the seed of Jacob, the generation that call Him blessed.

Joseph was still there, waiting for the certain return of his brothers. What an immensity of thought must have crowded upon him! The day before he had sought the asylum of his own room to weep with what restraint he could command at the sight of the ten bowed figures and at what they had to say; and beyond the yesterday there was the recollection of their first coming, and all the tumult of soul that he went through then. He *had* said, when he chose the name "*Manasseh*" for his little son, that God had made him forget all his toil and all his father's house. The second son he named "*Ephraim*," because God had "made him fruitful in the land of his affliction." Were not his dreams to be fulfilled literally after all? God was His own interpreter. Joseph could not refrain himself any longer: "Come near to me, my brethren."

* * *

"*He is yet there*"—in countless places, in countless manners—at the throne of grace, at the burial of His loved friends, in the upper room, cheering His precious martyrs, receiving His redeemed and presenting them to His Father, as another of my sisters was on March 30th. She was weary and longed to be "Away," as her Scottish friends would say. "*Lord, teach us to pray*" was a usual prayer when it fell to her lot to try at our evening reading. I daresay it is eight years since "*the pins of her tabernacle*" (so to speak) began to be taken out, her "*good works*" to decline. She felt their departure, but rested in the will of God. She was fond of reading Bunyan. She loved her Scottish friends and their Rabbi Duncan. But the Bible she loved more than any other.

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