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The **Gospel Magazine**

And Protestant Beacon:

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

The British Protestant

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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 TODAY, AND FOR EVER"

No. 1127
New Series

JUNE, 1962

No. 2327
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 CORINTHIANS i. 4.

CHRIST'S SHEEP

*"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.
And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish,
neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."*

—John 10: 27, 28.

WE generally read the whole of the tenth chapter of the Gospel of John without a break, and we tend to regard it as recording one occasion of discourse by the Lord Jesus. But, if we look at verses 22 and 23—"And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter, and Jesus walked in the Temple in Solomon's porch,"—we see that this was quite *a separate occasion*. There was a gap of two months' time; for the Feast of Tabernacles (John, chapters 7 to 10, 10: 21) was in October, while the Feast of the Dedication was in the later part of December.

Further, we read that "*it was winter*"—possibly indicating that it was wintry weather, such as we have had so exceptionally in England during the months of April and May. Also, we do not always realise that Jerusalem was high up on a hill—some 2,600 feet high.

The occasion was one on which the Lord Jesus was teaching under cover, in a cloister or colonnade in the Temple courts. It was a place where the Christian disciples in Jerusalem at first gathered for worship and witness (Acts 3: 12 and 5: 12). The Jews

came around Jesus, encircling Him in a determined manner and intent on getting from Him an answer to the question they wished to put to Him. They felt that it was a good opportunity, and they had Him within their grasp. "How long dost Thou make us to doubt? If *Thou* be the Christ (the Messiah), tell us plainly," they said.

These Jews were hostile to Him. After He had given them His answer, they took up stones again to stone Him (verse 31)—they picked up stones or they possibly had "carried" the stones with them from a distance. A more determined effort is indicated by the Greek word in this passage. Some of them wanted a plain statement from Jesus. They wished to get Him to commit Himself openly that He was the Messiah, so that they could have an accusation to bring against Him. Others of them may have asked out of curiosity or because they wanted to know.

We have dwelt more fully on the circumstances of this occasion, because today there is so much criticism of the Fourth Gospel and so much unwarranted instilling of doubts about the record, when all the time there are so many indications of an *eyewitness* of the events related and so many marks of accuracy and historicity.

To the point-blank question of the Jews Jesus answered that He had told them and that they still did not believe. He said: "The works which *I* (emphatic) do in my Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep."

Then Jesus gave the marks of those who were His sheep and their privileges (verses 27 and 28). To these verses we invite the special attention of our readers.

They seem to us to be put in *triplet* form, with a climax in each. Jesus said: "The sheep that are Mine (a) hear My voice, (b) and *I* know them, (c) and they follow Me." The second triplet is: (a) "And *I* give unto them eternal life, (b) and they shall never perish, (c) neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."

We may also note another point in the form of the Lord's words. The statements are connected by five "*and*"s (in the Greek), which Dr. Plummer described as "simple but very impressive." But the translation in the "New English Bible (New Testament)" has nothing of this: it omits three out of the five "*and*"s, and in verse twenty-two it unwarrantably changes the order of the sentence, putting first "It was winter." These matters of translation may seem small; but they seem to indicate what I feel to be a general desire to "improve" on the presentation. If the translator has a

desire to put things in what he feels to be a better way, confidence in the accuracy of the translation is diminished.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRIST'S SHEEP

Three characteristics are given of the sheep of Christ.

(1) *"They hear My voice."* In the East sheep knew the voice of their shepherd. Stories are recorded of strangers putting on the shepherd's garments, but obtaining no attention when they imitated the shepherd's voice. "They know not the voice of strangers" (verse 5).

The child of God first hears the Shepherd's voice in effectual calling. Zacchaeus out of curiosity "sought to see Jesus who he was" and climbed a tree for the purpose; but when he heard the voice of Jesus calling him by name—"Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must abide at thy house," he "made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully" (Luke 19:6). Similarly when Lydia by the riverside at Philippi heard Paul and Silas, "the Lord opened her heart," so that she "attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul" (Acts 16: 14).

The voice of Jesus is heard through the Word—"Mary sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word" (Luke 10: 39), and Jesus said that Mary had chosen "that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Christ's sheep hear His voice directing and leading them ("This is the way, walk ye in it"—Isaiah 30: 21). To them there comes home the gracious invitation of the Lord Jesus, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11: 28). They are privileged to hear His loving voice in afflictions (as Paul in 2 Corinthians 12: 9: "My grace is sufficient for thee") and when the call comes to go to His immediate presence.

(2) *"And I know them."* The eastern shepherd knew his sheep by name. As the sheep knew his voice and delighted to be with him, so the shepherd knew his flock intimately and cared for the wants of each one of them.

So "the Lord knows them that are His" (2 Timothy 2: 19). Christ knew His sheep from all eternity—they were "given" to Him. He knows them in time, and has communion with them. The world may not know them; but the Saviour does.

(3) *"And they follow Me."* In the east the sheep follow the shepherd, who goes before them. The sheep know their shepherd, and they follow him. They know that he is their shepherd, that He will lead them to green pastures and still waters, that he will defend

them against enemies, that at the end of the day he will anoint their head with oil, and refresh them with an overflowing cup.

The sheep of Christ follow their Good Shepherd. He gave His life for them. He has brought pardon, peace, reconciliation, justification, glorification. They look to Him for living bread and living water. They know His love, and they rejoice to follow Him. How can they really be ashamed of Christ? How can they "go away" from Him? He has the words of eternal life. They are ready to go out to Him without the camp.

THE PRIVILEGES OF CHRIST'S SHEEP

These are given again in triplet form.

(1) "*And I give unto them eternal life.*" It is a present gift—"I give," not "I will give." This is their wonderful portion—life for ever with Him. The well of water within them shall be a well of water springing up into eternal life (John 4: 14).

(2) "*And they shall never perish.*" The eastern shepherd might lose some of his sheep through poisonous plants, wild animals, and other causes.

The Lord Jesus never loses any of His sheep. He keeps them amid all the attacks of the Devil, the world, the flesh. It is true that they may at times wander and backslide; but "for His Name's sake" He in mercy and grace brings them back and restores them. He heals their backsliding, He loves them freely (Hosea 14: 4). He will not let them perish.

(3) "*Neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.*" In the east the wolf would come and snatch the sheep and scatter them (John 10: 12).

But no power whatever can snatch the Lord's sheep out of His hand. Some may say, "But can't they snatch themselves out of His hand"? This may be the fear—indeed, it is often a very deep fear—but it is a fear that the Lord has provided against.

See how graciously the Lord dealt with Peter (Luke 22: 31, 32). "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; *but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not*: and when thou art converted (restored), strengthen thy brethren." Peter did indeed deny the Lord; but, when the Lord looked on him, he went out and wept bitterly. And, at his resurrection, the angel's first message was, "Go tell His disciples . . . and Peter" (Mark 16: 7).

The Lord Jesus, to give complete assurance, emphasised His

statement with the words: "My Father, which gave them Me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one" (John 10: 29, 30).

So we sing, with Joseph Hart:

If ever it should come to pass
That sheep of Christ might fall away,
My fickle, feeble soul, alas!
Would fall a thousand times a day;
Were not Thy love as firm as free,
Thou soon wouldst take it, Lord, from me.

I on Thy promises depend
(Of at least to depend desire)
That Thou wilt love me to the end,
Be with me in temptation's fire,
Wilt for me work, and in me too,
And guide me right, and bring me through.

Joseph Hart, 1759.

And with Canon Hugh Stowell, of Christ Church, Salford:

Jesus is our Shepherd; for the sheep He bled;
Every lamb is sprinkled with the blood He shed;
Then on each He setteth His own secret sign,—
"They that have My Spirit, these," saith He, "are mine."

Jesus is our Shepherd; guarded by His arm,
Though the wolves may ravin, none can do us harm;
When we tread death's valley, dark with fearful gloom,
We will fear no evil, victors o'er the tomb.

Jesus is our Shepherd; with His goodness now,
And His tender mercy, He doth us endow;
Let us sing His praises, with a gladsome heart,
Till in heaven we meet Him, never more to part.

Canon Hugh Stowell, D.D., 1831

W.D.S.

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SPECIAL ARTICLE

A GREAT HYMN BOOK

"SONGS OF GRACE AND GLORY," 1871

Edited by the Rev. Charles B. Snepp, LL.M.,

Vicar of Perry Barr, near Birmingham

"SONGS OF GRACE AND GLORY" was Mr. Snepp's great legacy to the Church of God. In his preface to this hymn book he wrote:

"The great object of this Hymnal is to spread the glorious gospel of the grace of God, by representing, in sacred verse, all the doctrines of Holy Scripture, including the deeper mysteries of the everlasting Covenant, and the glorious Second Advent of the Messiah. By thus aiding the memory, it may become, through God's blessing, a channel of holy influences on the heart and life."

It was first published in November, 1871. It contained 1,025 hymns, all of them carefully compared with the originals and well arranged under classified subjects. It was the result of thirty years' collection. As Mr. Snepp died at the age of fifty-seven, he must have begun the work in the early days of his ministry.

A tribute to the accuracy and excellence of Mr. Snepp's work was paid by Dr. John Julian in his *Dictionary of Hymnology*. In this he wrote in his comprehensive article, "Church of England Hymnody":

"Of the oldest type of book, that of Madan and Toplady, there are three at the most, and of these the best in every way is Snepp's *Songs of Grace and Glory*, 1872. It is a large book, and, from its standpoint, of exceptional merit" (*Dictionary of Hymnology*, p. 341).

In his characterisation of the book he wrote:

"This collection is strongly Calvinistic in doctrine. It is very rich in hymns of high merit, and not usually met with in modern hymn-books. Miss F. R. Havergal wrote for it, and assisted in its compilation. It has a separate *Appendix*, which brings the number of hymns to 1,094. The Indices are very full, and the ascriptions of Authors and dates are very accurate" (p. 340-341).

The work was described as "Hymnal Treasures of the Church of Christ from the Sixth to the Nineteenth Century."

It is not always realised that "Songs of Grace and Glory" was not designed simply as a book for Public Worship. It was specific-

ally stated that it had a *threefold* use—"For Private, Family, and Public Worship."

In its Preface it was stated:

"No labour or expense has been spared to render this Hymnal useful and comprehensive, both as a work of reference, instruction, and refreshment for individuals and families, and as a practical and complete supply of the requirements of Divine Worship. Every doctrine of Scripture, all the seasons of our ecclesiastical year, and all the hopes and conflicts of the individual believer have been carefully represented."

His longing desire was that this book should carry, by its hymns, the Gospel of God's grace where his voice would never be heard, and that it would still speak when his voice was silent in the grave (*Gospel Magazine*). A further edition appeared in March, 1873. A Musical Edition was also prepared by Miss Havergal, and issued.

After Snapp's death (1880) a special edition was compiled (1888) for the use of a congregation at Handsworth, near Birmingham. This extended the collection to 1,624 hymns. It revised the earlier collection, and its work was considerably inferior to the original of Snapp's book.

MR. SNEPP

CHARLES BUSBRIDGE SNEPP was Vicar of Perry Barr, near Birmingham, for nearly twenty-nine years (1851-1880). Some account of his life and work was given in *The Gospel Magazine*, 1880, pp. 510-512 and 564-567. Recently we have received from a friend a copy of "SCRIPTURAL REMEMBRANCES OF A FAITHFUL PASTOR," Nisbet, London, 1880, which has in Mrs. Snapp's writing, "From Julia A. Snapp, in affectionate remembrance of my devoted husband, October 28, 1882. Phil. 1: 20, 21; Psalm 21: 6; Hebrews 13: 7-8."

Mr. Snapp was born in 1823, being the second son of Mr. Thomas Snapp of Henly-in-Arden. His mother was the daughter of Sir Henry Wakeman, Bart. He took his degree at Cambridge, and was ordained in 1846 as curate to the Rev. George Lea, incumbent of Christ Church, Birmingham.

In 1851, after five years with Mr. Lea, he was appointed to the sole charge of PERRY BARR. In 1852 he married Miss Julia Anne Winfield, of Birmingham; they had one daughter.

For over twenty-eight years he was indefatigable in the work of his parish, and his labours were blessed of God. After death he left the parish with a beautiful church, three times enlarged. He

built schools for boys and infants. He provided a Coffee House, where many, once drunkards or godless, were born again and made new men by God.

It seems that the institution of "HOSPITAL SUNDAY" began originally in Mr. Snapp's parish. Mr. Snapp and his churchwarden, Mr. Thomas Barber Wright, editor of the *Midland Counties Herald*, proposed a plan of sermons and collections in the parish and in Birmingham on behalf of Hospitals. This was taken up, and it spread to London, Liverpool, Manchester, and all parts of England.

Mr. Snapp's chief work was his "SONGS OF GRACE AND GLORY" (1871), his great legacy to the Church of God. He often expressed, while preparing the book, his great desire to leave behind a testimony to those distinctive truths which he delighted to proclaim in life. The book spread widely, and it passed through many editions.

TRIBUTES IN SERMONS

At his death, by his side, were two well read books, which were precious to him—his Bible and his Hymn-book. That Bible had been given to him by the Sunday School teachers thirty-four years before in his first curacy. The Hymn-book was his own specially marked copy of "*Songs of Grace and Glory*." For years these had been his delight, and in his last sickness he drew support from them.

"He exalted God's Word. He was pre-eminently a lover of his Bible" (Rev. Philip Browne).

"His one book was the Bible. . . . Why did he speak so much in the very language of God's Word? Was it not because that word was sweet to his taste, his constant delight and meditation; and after deep-felt and hearty supplications for blessing he came forth to preach and teaching" (Rev. J. T. Meek).

Of his preaching we read that he always preached "Christ and Him crucified."

"It was his delight to tell forth, on all occasions, the amazing love of the Father in sending His own Son to die, 'the Just for the unjust.' Without fear of man or love of praise he ever 'declared the whole counsel of God.' He taught that as all had sinned, and inherited a vile and depraved nature, all needed the renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Rev. E. Roberts, Vicar of Harborne).

Another said:

"He delighted to unfold from God's word the whole plan of salvation, embracing the electing love of the Father in the choice of His people; the effectual work of Christ, past, present, and

future, on behalf of His people; the sovereign grace of the Holy Ghost in vocation, beginning, maintaining, carrying on, perfecting, the work of grace in this people. He spoke, moreover, from the word of God, of the everlasting covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure; the deep things of God; the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ; the rich privileges; the exceeding great and precious promises; the high and holy vocation; the sure preservation; the certain victory in death, and over death; the final glorification: of the saints of the Most High" (Rev. Philip Browne, M.A., Incumbent of St. James, Edgbaston).

HIS DEATH

Mr. Snapp, who had been for five weeks taking a needed rest, had returned home from Ryde on Saturday, June 12. He preached on Sunday morning, June 13, on "He will keep the feet of His saints" (1 Samuel 2: 9). In the evening he preached on the last part of the verse "The wicked shall be silent in darkness"—a sermon of deep solemnity. On the Monday and Tuesday he was active, visiting the Schools and making plans for the celebration of the School Centenary.

But on the Wednesday he felt a severe chill, and could not preach. The illness came upon him very suddenly, with a night of ceaseless pain. In his hours of suffering he prayed for patience and submission to God's will. The next Sunday night, June 20, 1880, was one of intense agony. He wrote on Monday, June 21:

"Head and foot texts as I lay on my bed:

Foot: 'He hath said, I will never leave thee.'

Head: 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love.' "

On the Tuesday morning he prayed: "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me." In the evening he asked for something to be played and sung. Hymn 725 (S.G.G.) was suggested by Mrs. Snapp:

Accepted, perfect, and complete

For God's inheritance made meet!

How true, how glorious, and how sweet!

F. R. Havergal, 1870.

Mr. Snapp emphatically repeated the words. There was also sung Hymn 120 (S.G.G.):

Hear the Father's ancient promise!

Listen, thirsty, weary one!

"I will pour My Holy Spirit

On Thy chosen seed, O Son."

Promise to the Lord's Anointed,
 Gift of God to Him for thee!
 Now, by covenant appointed,
 All thy springs in Him shall be.

F. R. Havergal, 1870.

This had been sung for him in the afternoon by his beloved daughter.

On the Wednesday morning, June 23, 1880—his last day on earth—one of his doctors called at ten o'clock. Mr. Snapp asked him, "Am I better?" He was told that he was getting weaker. "Am I likely to recover?" Given an answer in the negative, he received it with perfect calmness, saying "God's will be done." He added: "Home, going home! Home to my Saviour!"

Later on the same day, Mrs. Snapp gave him passages of Scripture which he much enjoyed, and only a few minutes before his going forward she read Hymn 1012 in "*Songs of Grace and Glory*."

I have a home above,
 From sin and sorrow free;
 A mansion which eternal love
 Designed and formed for me.

My Father's gracious hand
 Has built this sweet abode;
 From everlasting it was planned,
 My dwelling-place with God.

My Saviour's precious blood
 Has made my title sure;
 He passed through death's dark raging flood
 To make my rest secure.

The Comforter is come,
 The earnest has been given;
 He leads me onward to the home
 Reserved for me in heaven.

He passed peacefully forward with the words "Lord Jesus" on his lips. His body was laid to rest in the family vault in his own churchyard at Perry Barr.

He had spent many of his years in gathering into a great hymn-book the best hymns of the Church of God, and his "*SONGS OF GRACE AND GLORY*" has been much used and blessed of God. We wish that it could be re-printed and its use further extended.

W. DODGSON SYKES.

SERMONS & NOTES OF SERMONS

GOD'S GRACIOUS PROMISES

A SERMON BY THE REV. H. M. CARSON

(Vicar of St. Paul's, Cambridge)

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."—Ezekiel 36: 25-27).

"THEN will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you."

The prophet has been speaking to the nation, and, of course, to speak to a nation means to speak to individuals. He has been speaking of God's past dealings with this nation. He has been reminding them of the way in which they have wandered from the paths of righteousness, the way in which they have disobeyed God; and he reminds them of the way that God has dealt with them in judgment. But now he is speaking to them of *God's gracious promises*; and how full and how rich these promises are! How graciously they come; not just with grace from the lips of the prophet, but how graciously they come from God Himself. They are lit up with meaning all the more because of the blackness of that which has gone before. It is because of the dark background of God's threatenings, and God's warnings, and God's judgment, that these promises shine forth all the more powerfully and wonderfully.

It certainly is not, as the prophet reminds them, because of what they are that God thus deals with them; it is *for His own Holy Name's sake*. We must never imagine when God comes with promises that He is, in some sense, coming and attempting to bribe men and women. Sometimes people imagine that God Almighty is, as it were, seeking our approval; that somehow He is in an impoverished condition until we enrich Him with our favour, and our loyalty, and our service. The prophet would say, By no means! If God draws near to you in mercy, if God brings these gracious promises,

it is not because He, without you, is impoverished. It is rather that He in mercy chooses thus to come to you and to deal with you. It is for His name's sake. It is because of His mercy that thus He speaks. Your sins, the prophet would say, call out for judgment, and it is only because this is the God who is long-suffering and patient that He comes like this with these rich promises.

I.—A PROMISE OF CLEANSING

A word to a nation? I say it is a word to individuals! That means it is a word to you tonight; I trust it is for you individually, for each one who listens to God's word.

It begins with a promise of cleansing. "*I will pour clean water upon you and you shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.*" A simple picture and a vivid picture! Water used to wash yourself. Water used to get rid of impurity and dirt. Well, says God, when I come to you, I will come to cleanse you; I will come to wash you. Indeed, is not this the language of the ordinance of baptism? The water applied to the body, the water that washes the body clean, speaks of that which is inward and spiritual, the inner cleansing which God alone can effect. "I will sprinkle you with clean water; I will make you pure and fit for my presence." That is God's promise.

Clearly, if that promise is to come home as a word from God to our hearts, there must come first the realisation that before God we are *unclean*, that we need to be washed, that there is impurity and defilement that needs to be dealt with. If we do not see the dirt, well then we do not see that we need to wash. If we do not see the spiritual defilement and impurity, we will not cry out from our heart for that cleansing which the Lord Jesus Christ brings to the sinner.

"Unclean"—you know how you feel when you have been doing some particularly dirty job; and you feel thoroughly grimy, so that you feel you just want a wash. There are smudges on the soul. There are defilements of spirit. There are indeed inner taints which God sees and of which we are not aware. To become aware of sin is to have this sense of being grimy within; this feeling of being unclean, of being defiled—a feeling simply of the need to be purified and to have this defilement removed. Unclean, and because unclean, unfit for God! How can I go into His presence knowing something of the impurity of my thoughts and my words and my actions? How can I approach One who is absolute righteousness, knowing how unrighteous I am?

Have you ever been thinking about some of your close friends, thinking perhaps of someone for whom you have a great deal of

admiration, someone whose godliness impresses you; and there has come the feeling—if that person really knew what I was like, if that person could really read my thoughts sometimes, they would be shocked? Yet God is not someone who is an absentee. He is ever present with His creatures. He does read your mind and mine. *He knows all about us.* Indeed, He knows us even more thoroughly than we know ourselves. To come to the realisation that God knows me, that God sees the very depths of my heart, is to realise all the more that I am unclean, that I am not fit to enter His presence. How can I possibly approach Him like this, in this condition? How dare I even take His name upon my lips? People so often say that it is easy to pray, and that you can turn to God so quickly. There is a truth about that; but at the same time it is also true that you cannot turn quite so easily because the moment that you begin to turn, you realise that you are not even fit to come. How dare I even speak to Him? How dare I ask Him for anything, knowing the state of my heart before Him?

And I am not able to do anything about it. It is true that the optimist imagines that he can. He is always thinking of patching up his life, and turning over a new leaf, and correcting this and that defect. But when a man really comes into the presence of God, when he really sees the Lord Jesus Christ in all His purity, all his old ideas about reform and re-making his life, go to one side. He knows that not only is he unclean in God's presence, and not only is he not fit to stand before Him, but he is utterly unable to deal with this sin. Once a man becomes aware of his sin and how real it is, he acknowledges that nothing can cleanse it, that the stain is there to all eternity.

It is at that point that this quiet, gracious promise of God comes, "*I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean.*" I know what it means. I know your sin; I know your struggle with the sin and I know your utter inability to deal with it, but *I will sprinkle clean water and you shall be clean.*" Is it not the same word that the apostle John speaks, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin"? "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves (we make fools of ourselves) and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So that the defilement is removed, the taint is gone, and we stand before our God pure and clean. "I will sprinkle clean water upon you," says God, "and you shall be clean." And that water speaks of the fountain that was opened at Calvary for sin and for un-

cleanness, when the Lord Jesus Christ hung on the cross and His blood was shed that sinners might be cleansed.

II.—A RE-MAKING

But there is a further word here: God is not talking simply about the guilt which is ours because of our sin, He is talking about *our very nature*. It is not only that our past needs to be dealt with, that we need forgiveness, but we need to be *re-made*. It is the very same thought, surely, as the Lord Jesus had Himself when He spoke to Nicodemus. He said, "Ye must be born again." There must be this radical transformation, this new beginning which God alone can effect. God says, "A new heart also will I give you; I will take this stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh."

THE STONY HEART

"*I will take away the stony heart*"—what a vivid picture again it is. A heart that is just like *flint*! You do not make any impression upon it. Take a piece of wax, or a piece of clay. You can make an impression upon it; you can mould it. The potter can take the clay and fashion it according to his purposes. But flint is hard. There is no impression made upon it. That is the condition of our heart until God takes away the stony heart and gives us a heart of flesh. There is no impression made upon it. It is rather like the pathway which the Lord described in His parable of the sower. The sower went forth to sow his seed and as he sowed some fell by the wayside, and the pathway beaten hard by the tread of the passer-by, did not receive the seed; and the fowls of the air quickly devoured it. The heart of man, that means your heart and mine, apart from the renewing grace of God, is incapable of receiving the good seed because it is hardened by sin, that sin which is *part of our very nature*. That is why the gospel does not penetrate until God awakens us from our slumbers and really brings the word home to our hearts.

There is *no response from a stony heart*; how can there be? It is only when the word of God comes home to a man that a response is evoked from him. But if the heart is still flinty and stony, there will be no trust in Christ. He may hear his friends talking about this, and he may hear Christians talking about what it means to rely on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, but to him it sounds, well to say the least, unreal. It has not got much meaning, because never having been stirred, he does not see what it means to trust in Christ for salvation. Never having been moved so that he grieves over his sin, he cannot see the point of this necessity to trust in

someone to save him. There is no love for God—he may profess to love God, and yet when he is by himself and really thinks over matters, he knows very well that as far as God is concerned, his heart is cold and dead and lifeless. He believes in God, and yet he has to acknowledge that God is for him a far and remote being; there is no reality there, and as a result there is no response from his heart.

A MIRACLE OF THE GRACE OF GOD

A stony heart? God says, "I will take the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh." I will deal with you in such a way that I shall re-make you. I shall do nothing less than give you a new nature. You see, Christian experience is ultimately something miraculous. It is poles apart from the idea of re-fashioning and re-making ourselves. This is the fatal mistake that so many people make. They imagine that Christianity is good advice on how you should organise and run your life; how you should re-fashion it. And the answer consistently again and again from the Bible is simply this: Spiritual experience, Christian experience, is *a miracle of the grace of God*. God must do something and this is what He does: He takes away the stony heart and He gives a heart of flesh. Well, if the stony heart is that nature which is dead as far as God is concerned, not impressed by the Word and not responding to the love of Christ, then quite clearly, *a heart of flesh*, the new nature which God imparts, is one which is stirred by the gospel. It is the good soil of the parable, the soil where the seed enters and takes deep root, and the heart of flesh is one where God is at work, so that that heart receives the Word.

EARNEST DESIRE FOR GOD

What is the first result of that? Well, very often the first result, the first consequence of a heart receiving the Word, is heartache, a concern, a grief, a realisation that all is not well. But because it is the Word which is doing this, it is not a grief which ends in depression. It is a grief which moves on towards an earnest desire for God. When God is at work giving a man a heart of flesh, when God is doing this work of renewal, the man becomes concerned, deeply concerned. He may indeed weep over his sin, but he does not end in black despair. He moves on through it to an earnest longing after God. The heart of flesh is one that is beginning to respond to the Word of God, to the Word of the gospel. And that response becomes, not just an aspiration after something which seems impossible of attainment; that response becomes a reaching out towards that which is declared in the Word. And what is

declared in the Word?—or rather it would be more correct to put it, *who* is declared in the Word? It is the Lord Jesus Christ.

DRAWN TO CHRIST

When a man is given this heart of flesh, this warm-hearted response, he finds not only a grief over his sin and a longing for God and for holiness, he finds himself *being drawn out towards Christ*.

He begins to see the Cross in a new way. He sees what it means that Christ died for sinners; died for men who were unclean; died for those who were unfit to stand before God; died for those who were unable to meet their own awful need. He died that He might cleanse them, that He might sprinkle the clean water of His own cleansing blood upon them that they might be fit for God. And as a man receives this heart of flesh, he finds his heart going out towards Christ. Now, no longer is it a figure of history; no longer is it someone rather unreal. It is Christ, the One who died for him, the One who bore his sins in His own body on the tree; and his heart goes out in trust until he reaches the point where he can say, "He is mine. He is my Saviour. He has met my need. He has stooped to the depths for me. I trust in Him."

When a man reaches that point, this heart of flesh, where once there was a heart of stone, begins to be kindled with love for God. Before, he read his Bible perhaps; and he read there about men who loved their God, but it did not really come home to him. When he was honest with himself, he knew that he did not love God at all. He said he did, but deep down he knew that it just was not so. It was so many words. There was no warmth there. There was no answering response when God spoke to him. But now that God has been at work in him, now that there has come this heart of flesh, we find that as he lays hold upon Christ, so this cold heart is kindled into a flame of love for God. It is an answering response. Now he begins to understand what the love of God means because he has seen it manifest in Christ; and he realises with wonder that that love is directed to him. "The Son of God," says Paul, "who loved me and gave Himself for me." And he finds now that his love is simply the answering response to that which God did in giving His Son to die for sinners.

III.—THE GIFT OF HIS SPIRIT

"I will take away this stony heart out of your flesh," says God, "and I will give you a heart of flesh." But there is a further word: "*I will put my Spirit within you.*" Indeed, surely this is the secret of this work of God? How is it that He does this thing? How is it that He gives us this new nature? How is it that He takes away the

stony heart and gives this heart of flesh? Surely, He does it by giving His Holy Spirit. Do you remember when Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus about being born again. He says "You have got to be born from above." He says the Spirit of God comes upon you and effects this miracle within, so that you are born again. So God says here, "I will cleanse you, I will give you a new heart, and the means whereby it will be accomplished, is that *I will put my Spirit within you.*"

What a gracious word this is, for this is God speaking. It certainly was a gracious word on that occasion. Ezekiel was speaking to a nation which had grievously sinned. They had set up their idols; they had turned aside from God; they had gone their own way, and yet God comes to men like that and He says, "*I will put my Spirit within you.*" And God comes to us as our Creator; He comes to us as creatures of the dust and He says, "*I will put my Spirit within you.*" He comes to us as sinners, those who have rebelled against their sovereign Lord, and He says, "*I will put my Spirit within you.*" What gracious condescension there is, that God Almighty should put His Spirit within the hearts of sinful men and women. These bodies of ours, bodies which have been defiled by sin, are to become nothing less than the temples of the Holy Ghost. In Jerusalem, in the days of its full glory, the temple, that magnificent building, spoke to men and women of the presence of God. This is where God manifested His presence to His people. God does not dwell now in temples made with hands, says Paul; He does not dwell in buildings; He dwells in human hearts. God says to men and women, people like you and me, "*I will put my Spirit within you*, so that your body, that body tainted by sin, will become the dwelling place of the Spirit of God."

PURPOSE OF HIS GIFT

What is the purpose of this imparting of the Spirit? It is, surely, in order that God might reverse what happened in the garden of Eden. What happened then? Well, one word is written right across it, and it is written right across our lives—it is that word, *disobedience*. God said to Adam, "This is the way," and Adam said "No," and in that "No" he involved all his posterity. In that "No," that refusal, that disobedience, he brought humanity down in ruin. The consequence of that disobedience was spiritual death, exclusion from God's presence. He was driven out from the garden; and the nature which God had given was corrupted. Now God purposes a new thing, such a new thing that Paul can speak of it as nothing less than a new creation, a completely new beginning.

Just as God made Adam at the very beginning, so, says Paul, God re-makes men and women by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And what is the purpose of this re-making? It is that that which is written across Eden may be effaced and a new word may be written, the word *obedience*. Adam sinned, and we sinned in Adam, and ever since, men have been following in that pathway of disobedience to God. God gives His Spirit to men that He might re-make them; that He might re-fashion them; that they might become such new creatures; that they might learn what it means to obey God, and that they might delight to obey Him, no longer seeing His commands as something which they reluctantly accept and grudgingly obey, but something now which they delight to obey. Why? Because His Spirit is within; because the stony heart has been removed; because now they have a heart of flesh, and because now there is an answering response to God's Word.

NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST

How often the gospel call goes out, the call to come to Christ, the call to seek His face, the call to trust in the Saviour, the call to turn from sin. Why is it that men do not receive that Word? Why is it that this gospel does not thrill men's hearts? Is it not just for this reason, that where there is a stony heart, be it covered with ever such a religious exterior, there will be no response, and there *can* be no response. There may be a flurry of the emotions for a few minutes. There may be a momentary stirring; but until this deep thing happens, until this deep working takes place, how can there be any response from a heart of stone? And that heart of stone, that nature which is dead, is your condition and mine, apart from the renewing grace of God.

But God comes graciously and He says, "I will take away that nature; I will take away that stony heart; I will give you a new nature." If we are not aware of having this experience, if we are not aware of being new creatures in Christ, if we are not aware of having experienced this mighty transformation of the new birth, should we not be on our faces before God, crying to Him that in mercy He will take away the stony heart, that He will give us a heart in which we shall hear the Word of God, in which our hearts shall thrill to hear the gospel, in which our hearts shall go out in trust to Christ and in love to our Redeemer?

"I will sprinkle clean water upon you; I will cleanse you." This, if you like, is the basic promise of the gospel. This is what the Lord Jesus Christ promises to sinners, to cleanse them from their sin, to make them fit for God and fit for heaven. How are we

to be thrilled with this gospel? How are we to realise that this is a word that can make all the difference to our hearts? I would say that it is only when God gives us a new heart, when God puts His Spirit within. So He comes here, graciously promising that if we turn—not trying to improve ourselves, not trying to re-make and re-fashion and fit ourselves for His presence—but if we come just as we are, sinners acknowledging that we are such, and pray from our hearts that He will re-make us, then *He will; in mercy, He will.* Then we will be enabled to turn to Christ; and when we turn to Christ, the stony heart removed, and the heart of flesh, this new nature, reaching out in faith to Him, we will find that the other promise is abundantly true, “The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Cambridge, 1962.

H. M. CARSON.

Obituary

THE LATE MR. W. MARK PITMAN (Bristol)

A life-long member of St. Mary-le-Port Church, Mr. Pitman was called to rest suddenly on April 10 at an advanced age. To those of us acquainted with him and his family it has been a joy to watch the hand of the Lord upon a family whose God is the Lord and to whom were committed all their ways. One can recall an instance of Divine Providence in preserving in health a family thus committed to Him. Mr. Pitman in his early days was taken with an illness which gave his parents great anxiety. The father committed his son to the Lord, and one one occasion during this illness he said to the writer: “A beautiful Word has been given to me about Mark. I have been assured by the Word that ‘this sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God.’” Time proved that this Word was a God-given assurance to the tried parents. May not those who are parents take courage from this godly example to commit the keeping of their families, especially the salvation of their souls, to the Lord, whose ear is ever open to the prayers of His people.

Mr. Pitman will be greatly missed by those among whom he moved. His gracious character, his love for the doctrines of grace, and his interest in the Lord’s work endeared him to the hearts of all who knew him.

Bristol.

H. F. STEVENS.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS' PAGE

A VERY PRESENT HELP

(A Re-print)

MANY years ago, in the wilds of one of the vast countries of the New World, there stood a lonely cottage in the midst of a small farm. Here lived an honest man with his wife, their little children, and Ellen, a young woman who helped with the little ones and in the farm-work. The Fentons (as I will call them) were Christian people, and when illness brought Mr. Fenton to his death-bed, they met the blow with courage and submission to the will of God. The farmer, who was anxious to make all arrangements for his family, felt that the great drawback of their lonely situation had been the want of a place of worship and of fellowship with other believers; so he advised his wife at his death to sell up the farm and stock, and set up house in a town where he knew these needs would be met.

The good man died; his poor widow, though stricken with grief, hastened to carry out his wishes; and one day a sale was held at the farm. People came from long distances, and everything was sold—house and barns and stock and all that there was. As the farmer had expected, a considerable sum was realised, and the whole of it handed over to Mrs. Fenton.

The sale was over, and the farm deserted. Friends and neighbours said a kind farewell, and left the widow and her little family to spend the last night in their old home. "Are you sure it is wise to keep all that money in the house," said one kind friend, "now that you haven't anyone to protect you?" "I have lost my husband, it is true," replied Mrs. Fenton, "but I still have a Protector; God Himself will be my defence, and I am not afraid."

The dark night drew on; Ellen put the children to bed in the room upstairs, and talking over affairs with Mrs. Fenton for a while, she too went to bed in the same room upstairs. The widow locked the money safely away in the desk in the kitchen, and was sitting quietly pondering over the past and praying for the future, when she heard a little noise at the door. There was a scratching and a whining that showed plainly that the unexpected visitor was *a dog*! Mrs. Fenton was surprised; there was no dog on the farm, and all the stock was sold. But it was a wild stormy night, with torrents of rain pouring, no night for even a dog to be out in; so she opened

the door, hardly able to shut it again in the teeth of a blast of wind and rain. A large dog bounded into the house, shaking the wet from its coat, and almost alarming Mrs. Fenton for a moment. But the animal made straight for the inner room, and lay down quietly before the fire. Satisfied that the visitor was well-intentioned, Mrs. Fenton got together a good plate of scraps, and was pleased to see the dog eagerly fall to.

The widow now prepared to retire for the night. She locked and barred the outer door, bolted the door between the kitchen and the scullery, and made sure that all was safe. Leaving the dog sleeping quietly on the rug, she joined her little family in the upstairs room, and soon all were sound asleep.

It was about midnight when both Mrs. Fenton and Ellen were suddenly awakened by furtive noises outside, the sound of shuffling feet and of men's subdued voices. The two women sat up trembling with fear. "It's for the money, mistress!" said Ellen with bated breath. Then came louder noises; somebody was forcing his way into the scullery. It was useless at such a distance from human help to think of resistance; the two women crept out of bed, and noiselessly dragged some heavy furniture against the door. Then having barricaded themselves in, they threw themselves into the care of their Heavenly Father, and waited, breathlessly listening.

Meanwhile, a consultation seemed to be going on in the scullery below, and presently with a great crash, the door into the kitchen was smashed in, and the thieves rushed into the room. But what was that new sound? A low blood-curdling growl was heard, and Mrs. Fenton's heart leapt within her, as for the first time she remembered the strange dog! A dreadful turmoil followed; the oaths and shouts of the thieves mingled with the ferocious growling of the dog. Evidently a furious fight was going on; but the great dog was too much for the men, and a moment later there was the sound of a helter-skelter flight! The night had cleared, and by the light of the risen moon, she saw the figures of two men running hard, with the great dog at their heels, leaping and snapping! How thankfully the lonely widow and the faithful Ellen knelt to give thanks to the gracious God who had so wonderfully preserved and protected them!

When the morning came, it was found that an entrance had first been forced through a window in the scullery. Everything was in confusion, but nothing was taken, and the desk remained untouched. Mrs. Fenton looked all day for the dog to come back; but it never came. Nor indeed did anybody find out to whom it belonged.

Someone suggested that it might have come with its master to the sale, and then having strayed, returned to the farm expecting to find him there. But the mystery was never explained; and it seems to me not unlikely that He who prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah may have now prepared the dog to protect the poor widow. In any case, the story is one more encouraging illustration of how our God can give His angels charge over His children, to keep them in all their ways. "He that spared not His own Son, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?" The children of the heavenly King, adopted into His family by the blood of Jesus, have a rich heritage; no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper.

DAMARIS.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA No. 100

The whole: Shem's age when his first son was born.

1. Paul told the Colossians to sing these with grace in their hearts.
2. Daniel had this in all visions and dreams.
3. The number of sheep left behind whilst the Shepherd sought the lost one.
4. Hagar gave the lad this from her bottle.
5. The treasurer in his chariot this Esaias the prophet.
6. Moses told the Lord as an excuse that he was not this.
7. She was one of the few at Athens who believed.

SOLUTION OF No. 99

The whole: SHIPMASTER (Jonah 1:6).

1. Ship (Matt. 13:2).
2. Hand (Exod. 14:16).
3. Isles (Isaiah 40:15).
4. Peacocks (1 Kings 10:22).
5. Multitude of fishes (John 21:6).
6. Asses (Acts 21:3).
7. Shore (Acts 21:5).
8. Timber (1 Kings 5:8, 9).
9. Euroclydon (Acts 27:14).
10. Red Sea (Exod. 15:4).

WELLSPRINGS

HIS GREAT GOODNESS

"Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men."—Psalm 31: 19.

"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."
—Psalm 126: 3.

In the Word of God we find many things spoken of as great. "So great is His mercy toward them that fear Him" (Psalm 103: 11). "His great love wherewith He loved us" (Ephesians 2: 4). "Great is Thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3: 23). "The Lord great in power" (Nahum 1: 3). "Great and precious promises" (2 Peter 1: 4). "So great salvation" (Hebrews 2: 3).

Are not our hearts drawn to praise Him for His goodness? "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits" (Psalm 103: 2).

ALL HIS BENEFITS

How can we count all His benefits? They are summed up in "His goodness," but are countless. "Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered" (Psalm 40: 5).

Just a few of these wonderful benefits to His children are enumerated in Psalm 103: "He forgiveth all thine iniquities." "He healeth all thy diseases." "He redeemeth thy life from destruction." "He crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." "He satisfieth thy mouth with good things."

All is God's doing. It is His goodness. He has laid it up, collected it, gathered it together as a treasure for them that fear Him. It is all His own work, they have had no hand in it. His goodness is freely bestowed upon those who have the God-given faith to trust Him.

REVEALED IN CHRIST

This precious treasure is revealed in Christ. Only through the Lord Jesus Christ can the sinner know the mercy of God in the forgiveness of sins, and the love of God in sending His only begotten Son into the world. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that

while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). "To you therefore which believe He (the Lord) is precious" (1 Peter 2:7).

Those that fear Him are "in Christ" and to them are revealed by the Holy Spirit many precious treasures, which are theirs "*in Christ*." Redemption is theirs—"redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ." "Precious promises" are given to them, and they prove for themselves the great faithfulness of God. "He is faithful that promised" (Hebrews 10:23).

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Then consider, too, what precious gifts God gives to His children: Repentance, Faith, Peace, Joy.

Above all other is the gift of the Holy Spirit, through Whom the child of God is born-again. It is only through the Holy Spirit that we can know anything of "the things of the Lord." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). "It is the Spirit that quickeneth" (John 6:63). Before the new birth every one of us is "dead in trespasses and sins," and only by grace through the work of the Holy Spirit are we quickened, made alive. Therefore, "if any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creature (creation); old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Then with thanksgiving and perfect assurance we can say "The Lord hath done *great things* for us whereof we are glad." How precious to our souls is "the grace of God that bringeth salvation," for it is "according to His mercy He saved us" (Titus 2:3). We can but say, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15).

Thus can be seen the working out of God's purposes in grace of "*so great salvation*," for His goodness is shewn in the love of the Father, the precious death and resurrection of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the quickening power of the Holy Spirit.

O Lord, how infinite Thy love,

It spans all time and space,

Enwraps Thy loved ones to the end,

In its encircling grace.

H. F. Lyte, 1845.

"WHY ART THOU CAST DOWN, O MY SOUL?"

But sometimes for various reasons a child of God becomes down-cast and is sad and miserable. The "joy of salvation" and "the peace of God" seem to have departed.

Do we realise this is one of "the wiles of the Devil," the enemy of souls? "We are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Corinthians 2: 11). By God's help we are enabled to overcome. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4: 7).

With David in Psalm 42: 5 we can say: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance."

Why should I ever careful be

Since such a God is mine?

He watches o'er me night and day,

And tells me Mine is thine.

Catesby Paget, 1855.

So even when in an unhappy state we learn the goodness of God, for He knows "my downsitting and mine uprising." But "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in Him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him" (Lamentations 3: 24, 25).

HE CHANGES NOT

How good it is to know that salvation, faith, peace and joy do not depend on ourselves but on the Lord Himself, the Giver of all good things. We change, but He changes not.

Having Christ we have all things. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today and for ever" (Hebrews 13: 8). For "in Christ," we are told in Colossians 2: 3, "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"; and in 1 Corinthians 1: 30, "Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."

We notice with joy and thanksgiving that these great and precious treasures are "unto us," and belong assuredly to each one "in Christ," because His goodness is laid up for them that fear Him and wrought for them that trust in Him before the sons of men. Then we are enabled through the power of the Holy Spirit to rejoice and to say "Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph (or leadeth us in triumph) in Christ" (2 Corinthians 2: 14).

"Whosoever is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord" (Psalm 107: 43).

May, 1962.

A.D.R.

PILGRIM PAPERS

WALKS AND TALKS WITH JESUS

By the REV. DR. D. A. DOUDNEY

Talk on the Road to Bethany

WHAT a marvellous change must have been observable in the tone and words of Jesus, before and after the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary.

Ere "the hour had come," He said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished" (Luke 12: 50). In Gethsemane, He exclaimed again and again, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matt. 26: 39). On Calvary's cross, He cried, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27: 46).

But after His death and resurrection; and, when of a sudden, and so unexpectedly, "He stood in the midst of His disciples, He saith unto them, Peace be unto you." He added, moreover, "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 showed them His hands and His feet."

The act, as well as the words, of Jesus, at this time, ought to suffice to set for ever at rest the blasphemous notion of a pretended sacrificing priest presenting the body and blood of Jesus, in the mere emblematic bread and wine of the Lord's supper. Jesus, upon this memorable occasion of showing Himself to His disciples, dealt in the *real* and the *substantial*, and not in the mere *ideal* or the *visionary*.

ASCENSION

But, at the close of this last chapter of the Gospel of Luke, we read:

"And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them."

It was the disciples' last walk and talk with Jesus, down here in this vale of tears.

His last act, however, was to "bless them."

"And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."

How sweet to the memory of the disciples must have been that memorable scene: their parting, ascending, blessing Lord! Methinks His last words, His last look, His last act—that of blessing—would never, never be erased!

Parted as they were—the Master gone to heaven, the servants left to tarry awhile on earth—the last “Walk and Talk of Jesus” left its blessed effects behind, for we read:

“And they worshipped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.”

Where high the heavenly temple stands,
The house of God, not made with hands,
A great High Priest our nature wears;
The Guardian of mankind appears.

He who, for men, their Surety stood,
And poured on earth His precious blood,
Pursues in heaven His mighty plan;
The Saviour and the Friend of man.

Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a Brother's eye;
Partaker of the human name,
He knows the frailty of our frame.

Our Fellow-sufferer yet retains
A fellow-feeling of our pains;
And still remembers, in the skies,
His tears, His agonies, and cries.

In every pang that rends the heart,
The Man of Sorrows hath a part:
He sympathises with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief.

All who have walked with Jesus on earth shall walk with Him in heaven. “And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For 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.”

1876. Bedminster, Bristol.

D. A. DOUDNEY.

PROTESTANT BEACON

A PROTESTANT ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

GEORGE ABBOT (1562-1633)

GLEANINGS FROM HIS LIFE AND TIMES

THIS year marks the quater-centenary of the birth of GEORGE ABBOT, whose life marked a period of notable events in the struggle between light and darkness in this land. He was zealous for the Protestant faith, and wielded great influence in the public affairs of his time. We shall, however, confine ourselves, principally, to those circumstances of his life which represent him as a man of God and zealous for the cause of His truth. He was born on October 29, 1562, at Guildford, Surrey, and his parents are said to have been distinguished by their steady zeal for Protestant and Scriptural truth. When George was grown to an age proper for receiving the first tincture of learning, he was sent with his elder brother, Robert (later bishop of Salisbury) to the free school, erected in Guildford by Edward VI.

I.—AT OXFORD

In 1578 he removed to the university at Oxford, and entered a student in Balliol College. On November 29, 1583, being then bachelor of arts, he was elected probationer-fellow of his college. He was called to the Christian ministry, and was a gifted preacher of the gospel. In September, being then doctor of divinity, he was elected Master of University College. About this time it was that the first differences began between him and the famous, yet infamous, William Laud, who was a striking contrast to him. Differences subsisted betwixt them as long as they lived and were the cause of great strife.

II.—OPPOSITION TO IMAGES AND IDOLATRY

In 1600 Abbot was vice-chancellor of the university of Oxford and distinguished himself whilst in that high office by the opinion he gave with respect to the setting up again of the cross in Cheapside, about which there were great disputes; but in the end he carried his point against Bancroft, then bishop of London and afterwards of Canterbury, which gained him great reputation as appears by a tract published on the subject.

The cross at Cheapside was taken down in 1600 in order to be repaired, and upon this occasion the citizens of London desired the

advice of both universities on this question: Whether the said cross should be re-erected or not? And Dr. Abbot, as vice-chancellor of Oxford, gave it as his opinion that the crucifix with the dove upon it should not be again set up, but approved rather of a pyramid, his letter. In this determination he acted consistently with his own or some other matter of mere ornament, for the reasons assigned in practice when in his said office he caused several superstitious pictures to be burnt at the market place of Oxford, and, among the rest, one in which was the figure of God the Father, over a crucifix, ready to receive the soul of Christ; and he professes in his letter that he was moved to such proceedings by his own observation and experience.

"I remember," says Abbot, "in that College (Balliol) where I first lived, a young man was taken praying, and beating his breast, before a crucifix in a window; which caused the master and fellows to pull it down and set up other glass. Which example makes me nothing doubt but that the cross in Cheapside hath many, in the twilight and morning early, who do reverence before it, besides Campion, whose act is famous, or rather infamous, for it. And, I am informed, that so much hath been signified by the neighbours, or inquest, making presentments concerning the circumstances of this cause. By all which, I do conclude, that it is a monument of their superstition, a great inducement, and may be a ready way to idolatry; and that there can be no tolerable use of this matter, which may be able to countervail the dangers and obloquy arising upon the retaining of it; and so much the rather, because it is perceived that many evil affected men do make their advantage from hence, to insinuate into the minds of their credulous hearers that it is a token of the return of their faith again into this land, since their monuments are not extinguished in the chief street of our greatest city."

III.—A TRANSLATOR OF THE AUTHORISED VERSION

The list of translators actually employed in the work of the Authorised Version Translation numbers only forty-seven. They met at Oxford, Cambridge, and Westminster, being divided again at each of these places, so that there were six companies in all. Dr. Abbot was the second of eight pious divines in the university of Oxford to whom the care of translating the whole New Testament (except the epistles) was committed.

"We cannot but admire," wrote J. C. Philpot, "the great faithfulness of our translators in so scrupulously adhering to the exact words of the Holy Spirit, and when they were necessarily compelled

to supply the ellipses in the original, to point out that they had done so by marking the word in italic characters. By so doing, they engaged themselves, as by bond, to give the Word of God in its strict original purity; and yet, as thorough scholars in the original tongue and complete masters of their own, they were enabled to give us a version admirable not only for its strict fidelity, but also for its eloquence, grandeur, and beauty."

Dr. Abbot likewise in the same year, 1604, published "The Reasons which Dr. Hill hath brought for the upholding of Papistry, unmasked and shewed to be very weak." This Thomas Hill had quitted the Church of England for Papal Rome.

About this period of Abbot's life were also published his sermons on the prophet Jonah, which is a learned, laborious and comprehensive exposition of that book. In 1605 he was a third time vice-chancellor. In the succeeding year he had a great share in the conflict with Laud, who was called to account by the vice-chancellor, Dr. Henry Airay (commentator on the epistle to the Philippians) who shewed himself a zealous Calvinist and a great maintainer of such that were of the same mind. In the discharge of his vice-chancellorship he came into conflict with Laud, who even thus early was manifesting his Romish tendencies.

IV.—DIFFERENCES WITH JAMES I

Abbot, appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1611, was opposed to James I's Declaration to encourage sports and recreations on the Lord's Day, called the "Book of Sports." The Declaration was ordered to be read in all churches, but many Puritans declined to comply, and Abbot refused to allow it to be read at Croydon, where he was at the time.

He also rebuked the king for his toleration of Popery, and for the intended marriage of Prince Charles to the Spanish Infanta. Although this Spanish match was broken off, a treaty was made for Charles' marriage to Princess Henrietta, a popish sister of the French king. "May it please your Majesty," said Abbot, "I have been too long silent, and am afraid by my silence I have neglected the duty of the place it hath pleased God to call me unto, and your Majesty to place me in. Your Majesty hath propounded a toleration of religion. I beseech you, Sir, take into your consideration what the act is, next what the consequence may be. By your act you labour to set up that most damnable and heretical doctrine of the church of Rome, the whore of Babylon. . . . And hereunto what you have done in sending the Prince into Spain. . . . What dreadful consequence these things may draw after them,

I beseech your Majesty to consider; and above all, lest this toleration and discontinuance of the true profession of the gospel, whereby God hath blessed us, and under which this kingdom hath for many years flourished, your Majesty do not draw upon the kingdom in general, and yourself in particular, God's heavy wrath and indignation. Thus, in discharge of my duty towards God, to your Majesty, and the place of my calling, I have taken humble boldness to deliver my conscience. And now, Sir, do with me what you please."

V.—RE-PUBLICATION OF THOMAS BRADWARDINE'S WORK:

"THE CAUSE OF GOD"

The doctrinal sentiments of George Abbot can be deduced from the fact that he had a chief hand in the re-publication of Thomas Bradwardine's "The Cause of God." Bradwardine (1290-1349) was elected Archbishop of Canterbury in 1348, but died the following year. His work is an able defence of the doctrines of grace. "THE CAUSE OF GOD" was written as an antidote against Pelagianism, and to demonstrate the absoluteness both of providence and grace. The work was re-published in 1618, by the care, and it appears, at the joint expense of Dr. George Abbot and Sir Henry Savile.

Bradwardine was first attached to the teaching of Pelagius, which heresy is quite compatible with every carnal, natural, mind, and he was quite content to follow it, until there came an evident change. The doctrines of divine grace were revealed to his understanding, now enlightened by the Holy Spirit of truth. "I was at one time," wrote Bradwardine, "while still a student of philosophy, a vain fool, far from the true knowledge of God and held captive in opposing error. From time to time I heard theologians treating of the question of grace and free will, and the party of Pelagius appeared to me to have the best of the argument. For I rarely heard anything said of grace in the lectures of the philosophers, except in an ambiguous sense; but every day I heard them teach that we are the masters of our own free acts, and that it stands in our power to do either good or evil, to be either virtuous or vicious, and such like. And now and then when I heard in church a passage read from the apostle which exalted grace, and humbled free-will, such as that word in the 9th Romans, 'So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy,' and other like places, I had no liking for such teaching, for towards grace I was still unthankful. . . . But afterwards, and before I had become a student of theology, the truth before mentioned struck upon me like a beam of grace, and it seemed to me

as if I beheld in the distance, under a transparent image of truth, the grace of God, as it is convenient in time and nature to all good deeds. . . . God in truth being in all movements the prime Mover. Wherefore also I give thanks to Him who has freely given me this grace."

VI.—THE SYNOD OF DORT

During the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, there arose on the continent of Western Europe a notable advocate for free will doctrines, namely Jacobus Arminius, professor at the University of Leyden. Disputes arose, particularly in Holland, until at length it was decided to hold a Synod at Dort, to attempt a settlement of the controversy. Representatives were sent from the English church: George Carleton, Joseph Hall, John Davenant, and Samuel Word. Joseph Hall was obliged to return on account of ill-health, and Thomas Goad, chaplain to George Abbot, was sent in his stead; and we have no doubt that the Archbishop and his chaplain were of one mind in such matters.

The oath, taken by each member of the Synod, ran thus: "I promise, before God, whom I believe and worship as the ever-present searcher of the reins and hearts, that I will, in the whole business and transaction of this synod (wherein shall be appointed an enquiry, judgment, and decision, as well concerning the famous Five Points, and the intricacies arising from them, as concerning all the other doctrinal matters), that I will not admit of any human writings, but allege the word of God only, as the certain and undoubted rule of faith; and that I will propose nothing whatever to myself, in this whole business, but the glory of God, the peace of the church, and especially the preservation of pure doctrine. May my Saviour Jesus Christ so be merciful to me; whom I most earnestly beseech, that he would, by the grace of his Spirit, be ever present with me in this my purpose and resolution."

As is known, "the famous Five Points" were, the doctrines of election, limited redemption, the spiritual inability of the human will through original sin, the invincible efficacy of grace in regeneration, and the final perseverance of truly converted persons.

The following departments fell to the British representatives, in consequence of a plan previously settled among themselves. "We have now," said Walter Balcanqual (who had later joined the British party), "divided the business among us. Dr. Ward's part is to refute the Arminian doctrine of a decree to save men, considered as believers. Dr. Carleton's part is to answer and solve such arguments as the Arminians are wont to urge, in behalf of that general

decree. Dr. Goad's part is to refute the Arminian tenet of election on faith foreseen, and to prove, in opposition to it, that faith is (not the cause, or condition, but) the fruit and effect of election. Dr. Davenant's part is to vindicate the orthodox doctrine of election from the objections alleged against it by the Arminians. My part is to encounter all the arguments in general which the Arminians bring against the orthodox (i.e. against the Calvinistic) scheme."

The ensuing passage, from a letter written at Dort by the British representatives themselves, and sent to George Abbot, subscribed by the hands of them all, demonstrates their views in the article of redemption: "Nor do we, with the remonstrants, leave at large the benefit of our Saviour's death, as only propounded loosely to all . . . and to be applied by the arbitrary act of man's will; but we expressly avouch for the behoof of the elect, a special intention, both in Christ's offering, and God the Father accepting; and, from that intention, a particular application of that sacrifice, by conferring faith and other gifts, infallibly bring the elect to salvation."

VII.—AFFLICTIONS AND DEATH

Abbot's physical health being impaired, and outdoor exercise being deemed advisable, he was invited by Lord Zouch to hunt in his park. An arrow from his cross-bow, aimed at a deer, struck a gamekeeper in the left arm, by which wound a large blood-vessel being pierced, he bled to death. This was a great affliction to Abbot; and, during the rest of his life, he observed a monthly fast on Tuesday, the day of the incident. He also settled a liberal annuity on the widow. But he had many enemies, and there were not wanting those who represented it in a sinister light.

But Thomas Fuller justly observes that the ill-will he received from the court, and from those who were "high" in their notions of church polity, principally arose from William Laud. They, moreover, could not endure his Calvinism, which was not fashionable at court, nor admire his spirit, which could not promote persecution for the nonsensical trumpery which Laud afterwards introduced, and which men of all sorts might use, without having one spark of vital Christianity within them.

On the 4th August, 1633, Abbot passed away at his residence at Croydon, worn out with cares and infirmities, at the age of seventy-one. His remains were laid to rest in Holy Trinity Church, Guildford, his birthplace.

F.C.

TALKING WITH A ROMAN CATHOLIC

By the Reverend Mariano Rughi (former Roman Catholic priest)

Q.—What is the best method of dealing with a Roman Catholic?

A.—(a) Never thrust controversy at him; rather try to convince him that you have love for his soul, and would have him share in the common salvation. You will have lost your case if you show yourself to be out to win an argument.

(b) Indicate the points on which you and he agree: and these are quite a few. The doctrines contained in the first five of our 39 Articles are not alien to our Roman Catholic friends. These form a great common ground; deal with them and show where the divergence comes in, and why.

Q.—Could the Bible form a common ground for a discussion with a Roman Catholic?

A.—Undoubtedly. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the Bible is the Inspired Word of God. This we learn from the decrees of the Council of Trent, Session IV:

“(The Synod) following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates . . . all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament, seeing that one God is the author of both . . .”;

and of the Vatican Council:

“The Church holds (the Old and the New Testaments) to be sacred and canonical, not because having been composed by mere human industry they were afterwards approved by her authority; not merely because they contain revelation with no admixture or error; but because, having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author.”

Having therefore so much in common, let us keep to that for our discussion.

Q.—But a Roman Catholic is not allowed to read the Bible. Is that true?

A.—I do not want to say that the Roman Catholic laity, especially in this country, are absolutely forbidden the reading of the Holy Scriptures, but I do say that the Roman Church has imposed restrictions on the reading of the Bible. No individual is permitted to read and interpret the Scriptures otherwise than according to “the interpretation of holy mother Church . . . and to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.”

So one can say a Roman Catholic can read the Bible, but not with an open mind.

Q.—But nobody can deny the fact that there are obscure passages in the Bible; hence the wisdom of the Roman Church in forbidding the use of private judgment. What is the answer to that?

*A.—*We admit there are difficulties and obscurities in the Bible, and we say, it was to be expected that there should be such in a revelation from God. These difficulties and obscurities may be brought before us for particular reasons; yet we strongly contend that on all matters essential to salvation—and all things connected with the covenant of Grace—the Bible is plain and may be understood, if a man reads it in a right frame of mind and always looking to God for blessings.

Q.—Could any evidence of this fact be advanced?

*A.—*Yes, of course: the Bible is full of it. Here there are just a few:

David says in Psalm 119: 105, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Here he is speaking of the Word of God existing in his time, which certainly was not so plain as the New Testament, and yet this is the language he uses with regard to it.

In the same Psalm, verse 99, he says, "I have more understanding than all my teachers." And why? "For thy testimonies are my meditation." This was the reason why David had more understanding than all his teachers, because God's law was his meditation.

Q.—But may it not be said that this is arguing from the particular to the universal?

*A.—*To meet this objection it will suffice quoting Acts 17: 11-12:

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few."

From this passage we learn:

The Bereans took the Scriptures as the rule of faith. They searched daily "the Scriptures" to know whether Paul's teaching was true or not.

They exercised the right of private judgment on the interpretation of God's word.

The inspired writer praises them for doing so, saying they were more noble than those in Thessalonica.

The result was: "*Therefore many believed.*"

—From The Banner of Truth in Ireland, 1956.

M. RUGHI.

BIBLE EXPOSITION

OUR DAILY BREAD

By the REV. W. H. KRAUSE (Dublin)

"Give us this day our daily bread."—Matt. 6: 11.

AFTER some little interruption, which has been occasioned by the special services of our Church at this season of the year, we resume the consideration of this comprehensive form of prayer, which we call the Lord's Prayer.

We have already been permitted to consider a believer praying after the model that the Lord has given us in this passage. We have considered the expression of some of the holiest desires of the soul. We have considered some of the highest aspirations that go forth from the breast of a believing man, such as the drawing near to Jehovah in the relation of a Father in Christ—a relation which began before time, and which can never end. We have considered the harmony with the mind of God that is wrought in the breast of poor sinful, unworthy creatures, such as we are; for, from that time, when the Holy Ghost, in His sovereignty, and in His power, speaks life and light into the dark region of a sinner's heart, there becomes something responsive in the breast of that man to the mind and to the will of God, which there never was before. We have considered also the petition that the Lord's kingdom might come—that the Lord might make bare His arm, and manifest His government in this evil world; and further, that the Lord would hasten that time when there shall be "a restitution of all things," and when, as the Scripture has promised it, "In His days shall the righteous flourish."

In our text the man of God is presented to us in another aspect; we now behold him, in his supplications before the throne of grace, as a man who has to do with time, as well as with eternity; as a man who has to do with the things that are round about him in this evil world, as well as to hold communion with His Father in heaven.

Now, brethren, I am aware that there have been those who have deemed the bread that perisheth, to be a subject too insignificant to occupy the mind of a believing man in his fellowship with God; and, therefore, there have been those who have said that the meaning of this petition is, give us that bread of life; give us to feed upon Christ; give us spiritual sustenance.

I am quite sure of this, that *the man who can intelligently, and under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, pray for the bread that perisheth, that that man will ask for the bread that sustains the soul* to be given to him every hour. But I hold the meaning of this petition to be *that which lies on the surface, the giving to us our daily food; comprehending all the wants that a believing man knows he has here in time; comprehending all the concerns of a spiritual man, a child of God, in his passage through this evil world.*

Now, if it were otherwise, and if I were to be deprived of the privilege of going to my heavenly Father with all my concerns, all my daily interests, my daily wants, my troubles, my conflicts, my difficulties—if I were to be deprived of this, there would be some dark passages in my every day's experience.

O, brethren, the man who has been taught to know God as his Father in Christ Jesus, wants Him in his daily concerns, that belong to the world and to time; he wants Him in his family; he wants Him with regard to his children; he wants Him in his duties; he wants Him in his intercourse with others; he wants the Lord at every step of his journey. Therefore I take this petition to regard *the daily temporal concerns* of a man who is in the body; who has to do with time; who has his personal wants, his family concerns; circumstances of various kinds, in which he needs guidance, in which he wants help.

Now, I propose to consider the following subjects in connection with this passage.

First, I shall direct your attention to *the confident expectation of a man of God in offering up this prayer*, "Give us this day our daily bread"—the confident expectation, and the grounds of it.

Secondly, we shall view the petition *as an acknowledgment of our dependence, and of the sovereignty of God*—"Give us our daily bread."

Thirdly, we shall consider it *as regulating the expression of our desires as to temporal things.*

I believe that this is a most useful subject to bring before a congregation; and I am convinced that there are amongst us those who, before we have done, if the Lord enable His servant to speak wisely, faithfully, and rightly upon this subject, will be constrained to say, these are the very things which have passed through our minds as to prayer for temporal things. I am satisfied that God's servants, who have known what it is to pour out their hearts before the throne of grace, as to spiritual blessings, and who have been enabled with the key of faith to unlock the cabinet of rich treasure

which is in the Lord Jesus—I am satisfied that they have been much perplexed, at times, when difficulty has surrounded their path, to know how they ought to speak to God, as to these temporal matters.

I.—THE CONFIDENT EXPECTATION OF A BELIEVER

The first thing which we would call your attention to, brethren, is, *the confident expectation of a believer* in his approach to the Lord, when he says, "Give us this day our daily bread." I never can forget the relation in which a man of God stands to Jehovah. Every petition in this form of prayer flows out in its liberty, and in its enlargement, from the relation expressed in the first words of it, "*Our Father.*"

If you will refer to some two or three passages, you will see that it is upon the very ground of such a relation as this, that the believer is taught to expect his supplies in temporal things, as well as in spiritual things. For instance, in this same chapter, our Lord tells us, "Take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed?"—meaning by that, that there is to be no anxiety, or doubting, or questioning, whether tomorrow shall have tomorrow's provision. "Take no thought for the morrow, for *your heavenly Father* knoweth that ye have need of all these things; but seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6: 31-33).

So that here we see the relation in which the believer stands to God, and the relation under which he seeks to Him for the supply of all his temporal, as well as his spiritual wants; simply because God is His Father—simply because he is a child of God; and this world in which he is placed is God's world, and God makes it subservient to the wants and necessities of His own dear people. Remember what is said in the 3rd chapter of 1st Corinthians, "*All things are yours*"—a large expression, which the child of God ought to lay hold on, and appropriate for his soul's comfort: "All things are yours." Well, the Apostle enumerates them—the ministry of the Gospel; "the world, life, death; things present, things to come:" then he brings the relation forward, "Ye are *Christ's*, and Christ is God's." There is the secret of it. Again, in the 8th of Romans, we read, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not *with Him* also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8: 32).

So that upon the ground of the relation in which a believer stands to God, as a child to his father, it is his privilege to expect all these

things; because God is a faithful Creator: and as that good man, Mr. Cecil, once said, "when a man becomes a Christian, it is as if God wrote upon that man, *he is to be provided for*; he is never to want for anything."

Now, dear brethren, I believe that a great many of the doubts and the questions that arise in our minds, as to our privilege of laying before God our temporal wants and difficulties, spring from our not being well established upon this matter of our relation to God in Christ. You must begin *there*. I could not tell a man to go one step onward in a spiritual course until the man has real union to the Lord Jesus Christ. It would be beginning at the wrong end; it would be building without a foundation; it would be telling the dead man to walk. You must begin with these relations between the soul and Christ, or you can never make any progress in the Divine life; and when we turn to some passages in the Word of God, how beautifully that filial relation stands out. In the 103rd Psalm, for instance, God's fatherly love and care of His people is thus described: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." There is something so exceedingly beautiful in the thought of a *poor conflicting soul here on earth, nestling under the wing of a covenant Jehovah*, and seeking to Him for everything that it needs. The covenant is "ordered in all things and sure"; and that same covenant by which the people of the Lord are brought into union and communion with God, has provided for their daily wants and cares.

But then, again, as to the ground of this confidence of a believer, in looking up to the Lord to direct him in all, even the most minute circumstances of his daily life—the *ground of all this is, his having the pardon of all his sins through Christ; standing as a righteous man before God in Christ; having union to Christ*, which makes him a child of God for ever; having the seal of the adoption of the Holy Ghost in his own soul, by which he says, "Abba, Father." These are the people who can say the Lord's Prayer; these are the people who can say, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Now, if you ask me further for some of the warrants and grounds of these large expectations of a child of God, I say, first, the promises of God to His people, with which the Word abounds. One passage says, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you" (1 Peter 5: 7). Another passage says, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee" (Psalm 55: 22). Then again, another warrant is the faithfulness of the Lord, and the power of the

Lord, in performing these His promises. O how one delights to look at the Old Testament Scriptures, and to read of God's wonderful dealings with His people of old! Because a believing man says, I have to do with the same God, and what He did then He can do for His child now.

I turn to the 17th chapter of 1st Kings and I read of the Lord telling His servant Elijah to go and remain for a time in a certain place, and He says, "I have commanded *the ravens* to feed thee there" (1 Kings 17:4). Some one has said, "What a remarkable thing that was, that God should take the very birds of prey, the worst messengers, as we should have said, and should have commissioned them to bring him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening." Well, afterwards, that some man is told to go to another place, and the Lord says, "I have commanded *a widow woman* there to sustain thee." There she was, with her handful of meal, and a little oil in a cruse; but that meal wasted not, and that oil failed not, until the Lord sent rain upon the earth. These things teach us the faithfulness of God. Why, He will make all things bend to His own purpose of carrying out His promises to His people. O, when you and I get hold of a promise, however difficult it may seem to be to us to believe that promise, we ought to expect that heaven and earth shall move, rather than one word of it should want its fulfilment.

Consider, again, *the infinite resources of the Lord*. Our Lord says, "*Ask, and ye shall have.*" Now, dear brethren, it may be that some of us have never put ourselves upon the believing of that promise. We have gone before the Lord, doubting whether God meant what He said; and then the wise people come to us with their explanation of this passage, and they tell us, You ought not to expect its fulfilment exactly as God has promised; and they explain away the force of God's own blessed word of promise. We know when that verse is quoted what is said directly, "Will the Lord give me everything that I ask? What if I should ask for foolish things, will God give them to me?" I say to the believer, If you ask for foolish things, you forget that "the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." But I believe there is a great deal more fear of a believer not bringing his temporal concerns before the Lord, than there is of his coming and asking foolishly before the Lord. We shall show you presently that there are times when a man of God is taken up with his own will. The Lord at such times often makes

His poor child feel what slippery ground he is on, and that he had better by far put his hand in the Lord's hand.

We have shown you, brethren, that this is a petition as to temporal things; we have shown you the ground of a believer's confidence in this approach to the Lord—we have told you that it is the relation in which he stands to God in Christ, as "accepted in the Beloved"; and that the reason why there is so much questioning and doubting as to this matter, is *because we are not clearly and fully established as to our union to Christ, and our interest in His covenant*. We have shown you what a solid ground the Lord's people have for petitioning Him for the best things which they can possibly need: they have the Lord's own promises; they have His faithfulness and power engaged for the fulfilment of His promises. What does it matter what difficulties appear in the way?—*there are no difficulties with the Lord*. What is it to the Lord to open the windows of heaven, and to shower down blessings upon His people? And then we have set before you the infinite resources of Jehovah, and that He has said, "Ask, and ye shall have."

II.—AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF OUR DEPENDENCE

We now look at this petition as an acknowledgment of our dependence, and of the Lord's sovereignty in this matter.

Dear brethren, a Christian man is at times sickened with all the little infidel cavillings and puny objections that are brought against the truth of God. There stands one man very confident of his own knowledge, and he says, If these things are as sure as you say they are, that heaven and earth may pass away, but that not one promise of the Lord's shall fail, what is the use of your praying? And as to spiritual things, they sometimes tell us, If we believed what you say you believe, that there is such a thing as the soul being assured of its interest in Christ, we would feel that there would be a great temptation to slacken diligence; there is a great deal in such doctrines to induce presumption. You have heard this, brethren; I hope none of you have ever said it. I only tell you, if you understand the truth of God, and if you rejoice in it, you will hear enough of it; it is an objection which meets God's people almost every day of their lives.

The pensioner does not forget to go for his pension; it is sure to him, and he knows it is sure to him, but he does not, therefore, forget to go for it; and the Lord's people know that they are pensioners upon His bounty; they know that all they have must come down from Him; but yet the Lord's people are taught to go to Him, and acknowledge their dependence upon Him.

I must now call your attention to one of the dangers of our day, and of every age of the world. A man is treading upon the very borders of infidelity when his mind rests so entirely upon the uniformity and constancy of cause and effect, that he overlooks the Great First Cause, the hand that moves the world.

We understand cause and effect as well as others. I know that according to the uniform and general constancy of things, the seasons produce their fruits; that thriftiness will induce comfort; that diligence and skill will give success in the ordinary matters of the world; but when a man has so fastened his mind upon this uniformity of cause and effect continuing, as if there were a necessity in the matter, so that cause and effect should never be disturbed, then does God sometimes step out, and He shows how He can disturb, in a second, that uniformity—how He can blight in one moment those things which men say must so necessarily follow as effect from cause.

O it does occur to me, that if God, within these last few days, had only thrown some little more of violence into that storm which has made this city at this moment a monument that God rules, this city might have been now one large graveyard: those lightnings, if they had but come more closely to us, this city might have been now one smoking heap of ruins. *God* was in that storm; and we say it is in this way that God sometimes steps out and shows what He can do. On that very day, when God made the people of Dublin to feel that perhaps in one little hour their city might have been a wreck—on that very day did men say to one another, O what beautiful weather we have! What a season this has been! God deranged the whole course of things in some few minutes, and showed how dependent men are upon Him.

Now, I say that *the man of God learns to see God as the First Great Cause*. He is no fool: he understands something of the operation of cause and effect in natural things; but he can understand what the 104th Psalm tells us upon this subject: "*He sendeth the springs into the valleys which run among the hills.*" "*He watereth the hills from His chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Thy works.*" "*He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that He may bring forth fruit out of the earth; and wine, that maketh glad the heart of man; and oil to make his face to shine; and bread, which strengtheneth man's heart*". Then, speaking of leviathan, and of small and great beasts, it says—"These wait all upon *Thee*, that *Thou* mayest give them their meat in due season: that *Thou* givest them they gather."

Here, then, is the believer's dependence upon the Lord for all the things that he has. And we have said, besides, that this petition is an acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the Lord. Mark the expression, *Give us this day our daily bread*: it is the expression of a man who knows that he has no claim upon God; that what He is pleased to give must come in the way of His own sovereign bestowment; that it is God's to give—it is God's to withhold; we cannot control it.

III.—A REGULATION OF THE EXPRESSION OF OUR DESIRES

We said, in the third place, we would look at this petition *as conveying to us instruction as to the regulation of the expression of our desires*, when we come before the Lord with our temporal wants.

And the first thing that strikes us is the matter that is here prayed for—our daily *bread*. Now, it is quite evident that our Lord, when He used that expression, would teach us to ask for those things that are absolutely necessary; and, at the same time, we believe that it *comprehends all the things that are absolutely necessary to a believer*.

This brings us to that point which has perplexed so many of the Lord's people. There have been those who have said, "I do not know whether I am warranted to go to the Lord with every special concern which regards myself personally, or my family, or my business." Now, brethren, let me give you an answer from Scripture. The Apostle Paul says, in the 4th chapter of Philippians—"In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." The ground of this is what he states in the opening of the chapter: "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice." It is one thing to go to God in our waywardness and self-will, telling Him we want to have our temporal concerns arranged according to a certain plan which we lay down; but it is quite another thing to go to God with all, even the most minute circumstances of our daily lives—the things that trouble us; the difficulties that perplex us; the sicknesses, the wants, that press upon ourselves, our families, or our friends—to go to the Lord with these things, and to tell them all out to Him.

O I do believe *there has been very often a restraining of prayer before God in these matters*. I believe many of us put ourselves very much under the law, and not under the Gospel, in these matters. There is not anything which we cannot bring before the Lord, as His dear children; but there is a difference between telling out to the Lord all the sorrows of a poor burdened heart, and saying, we must

have things arranged in our own way. O think of that beautiful description which is given of Enoch: "Enoch walked with God"; he walked in God's way. I have no doubt but Enoch had to tell out to the Lord his tale of worldly sorrow, as well as others; but "he walked with God." What we too often want is to have God walking with us, *in our own way*. Many a time God's dear children have gone to the Lord with their trials, their family concerns, the little daily circumstances that nobody knows anything of; they have shut their door, and there has been the unburdening of their soul before their Heavenly Father. There has been no telling the Lord, You must settle the matter in my way: they dare not say this to the Lord; but they have spoken to Him; and *when they have remembered that Christ is the Head of the Church, that He is the Responsible One, the Shepherd of the Sheep*—that great High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, they have received encouragement, and they have felt that they would not for worlds take the matter out of the Lord's hand.

O how we sometimes have erred in this respect! *We have been determined to manage our temporal concerns in our own way*. God did not *punish* us for this; He has laid the *punishment* of all our transgressions on His dear Son. But what has God done? Very often He has let us see what our mistake would lead us to; but then He has taken us up again. Why, if He were to leave us to the consequences of having our own way, and of following where our own self-will would lead us, where should we be now?

But again, when we are taught to say, "Give us *this day* our daily bread," we are reminded of our pilgrimage state! We cannot see into tomorrow. The expression "bread" you know, I take to comprehend all temporal concerns. O what a comfort it is to the child of God to feel, as he rises in the morning, *that all the minute concerns of the day are in the Lord's hand*. It reminds him of that manna which from day to day fell around the camp of Israel of old.

SPIRITUAL THINGS

And now, before we close, let us say that it is the great privilege of the child of God not only to go and speak with God, with all unrestrained communion, as to temporal matters; but as to spiritual things, it is the very secret of the spiritual life, depend upon it, to live upon the Lord for the daily sustenance of our souls. O we do dread that urging upon God's people their own determinations, their own resolutions to put forth their own strength. Such things weigh them down. What they want to be told is, that instead of going on their way in a spirit of bondage, they should remember that

"the joy of the Lord is their strength." As we said to our congregation on Wednesday last, we are not afraid of encouraging God's people: they want encouragement; they want strength; they want the precious balm of the Gospel to be poured into their hearts; and His ministers must remember that it is their duty to feed His sheep.

We tell the people of God, then, that the very spring of all spiritual growth—the very secret of all spiritual happiness—is the living in constant dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ for the supply of all their spiritual wants. The child of God has his temptations today which he never had before; the devil assaults him today in a way in which he never did before; he is learning more of his own heart than he ever knew before; and he is learning, in proportion, to see more of the adaptation of Christ to all his wants than he ever saw before. O how skilful he is becoming in applying the blood of sprinkling to his heart and conscience! How he is learning to shelter himself under the righteousness of Christ! What confidence he feels because he stands in Christ!—because God is true—because he knows that God will keep him to the end—because God the Holy Ghost has sealed to his soul the blessed promises of that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure.

Take that word, children of God, and live upon it: "The life," says St. Paul, "which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." O, if you can take that precious bough, laden as it is with fruit, and shake it, you will find it sweet to your taste; and, brought into the Lord's banqueting-house, you will find that "His banner over you is love." Dublin, 1853.

W. H. KRAUSE.

SECURITY

For every saint there is a pillar-cloud
In paths of righteousness their steps to guide,
And in the night to be a welcome shroud
Wherein they may in quietude abide.
The Lord a strong pavilion will provide
In which they may at all times find their rest,
Whilst in each trial He is at their side
To tell them they are of His love possessed
And that the children of His care are always blest.

Rookwood, Styles Hill, Frome, Somerset.

T. Pittaway.

CURRENT TOPICS

"THE BANNER OF TRUTH"

In view of its importance for the times in which we live today, the whole of d'Aubigne's work on *The Reformation in England* is being reprinted in two volumes by the Banner of the Truth Trust—a bound volume, 480 pages, at 15s. and a paper-back edition, same type, at 7s. 6d.

To create fresh interest in the work a booklet of eight pages can be obtained from the Trust (78B Chiltern Street, London, W.). It is free in quantities, except for postage, any contributions being left voluntary.

The work is regarded by the Trust as in many respects their most important re-publication.

The story of the origin of d'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation* is told in the last issue of *The Banner of Truth*, a magazine published at irregular intervals.

"THE FORGOTTEN SPURGEON"

Also in the Magazine is a very interesting article (by the Editor, Iain Murray) on "THE FORGOTTEN SPURGEON."

The Spurgeon remembered today is the popular Spurgeon, whose sermons were being printed and circulated in many many thousands (a hundred million copies by the end of his century). But Mr. Murray centres upon the year 1856, when Spurgeon was but twenty-two years of age when he and his message were unwelcome and attacked.

A further article included is "MINISTERIAL GUILT," by the Rev. C. J. Brown. This was an address given in May, 1884, at the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland.

A SERMON BY GEORGE WHITEFIELD

We were interested to see a well-printed Sermon (pp. 17-29) on crying "*Peace, peace, when there is no peace*" (Jeremiah 6: 14). It is stated to have been preached in the High Churchyard, Glasgow, 1741.

It was evidently an early morning sermon, for at the end Whitefield said: "But it is time, perhaps, for you to go and prepare for your respective worship, and I would not hinder any of you. My design is to bring poor sinners to Jesus Christ. O that God may bring some of you to Himself."

The booklet containing the Sermon was sent by *Westminster Standard*, 183 Rutene Road, Gisborne, New Zealand (price 1s. 3d., postage extra). It contains also, in smaller type, an extract from "The Revivals of the Eighteenth Century, particularly at Cambuslang." This account apparently fails to take any notice of Whitefield's great year, 1737, its stress being on Scotland from 1741.

In the Sermon Whitefield spoke of religion as an inward thing, a work wrought in the soul by the power of God. Before they could speak to their heart they must be convicted of their actual sins and of original sin; they must also be convicted of the sins of their best performances, and be brought out of their self-righteousness; likewise of the sin of unbelief. They must be enabled to lay hold by faith upon the all-sufficient righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Whitefield then addressed directly the several sorts of persons before him.

There were some who perhaps could say, Through grace we can go along with you. These he saluted as dear brethren in Christ. He encouraged them, and also gave warnings against resting on their first conversion, against backsliding, against conformity to the world.

He then addressed "those who had got no peace with God." "Poor soul," he said, 'what a cursed condition you are in. I would not be in your case for ten thousand worlds. Why? You are just hanging over hell."

To those who despaired of mercy, he spoke with much feeling of the Lord Jesus as our peace, as having purchased peace by His blood. He addressed a word to some who had back-slidden and lost the sense of peace with God.

At times he referred to his own experience. 'My dear friends, I have paid dear for back-sliding. Our hearts are so cursedly wicked, that if you do not care, if you do not keep up a constant watch, your wicked hearts will deceive you and draw you aside."

Or again, "I know by sad experience what it is to be lulled asleep with a false peace; long was I butted asleep, long did I think myself a Christian, when I knew nothing of the Lord Jesus Christ. I went perhaps farther than many of you do; I used to fast twice a week, I used to pray sometimes nine times a day, I used to receive the sacrament constantly every Lord's day; and yet I knew nothing of Jesus Christ in my heart; I knew not that I must be a new creature—I knew nothing of inward religion in my soul."

He hoped that God did not intend to let him preach in vain that morning. "I hope God will reach some of your precious souls, and

awaken some of you out of your carnal security." If they believed the message of the Scriptures, he called upon them "in the strength of God to cleave to Christ."

It is an open-air sermon well worth constant persual.

"AS HIS CUSTOM WAS"

This year it is probable that in Parliament considerable place will be given to the revision of the laws concerning Sunday. It is therefore with appreciation that we note the offer of leaflets from The Lord's Day Observance Society (55 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4) at the special price of one shilling per 50, post free. In particular we are impressed with one by the late Rt. Rev. Harrington C. Lees, D.D., entitled "AS HIS CUSTOM WAS."

This takes the story of nine particular Sabbath days in the life of the Lord Jesus. It speaks of His regular attendance at Divine Worship, His reading of the lesson in the Synagogue at Nazareth and His exposition of the passage, and His diligent teaching in the Synagogues. "Wherever Christ goes He is found at Divine Worship and holy service on the Sabbath Day."

The leaflet also speaks of His Sabbath walk through the corn-fields and of His going to supper with Simon Peter and with a Pharisee, where He told the story of "The Great Supper." "There is an atmosphere of holy purpose and untroubled calm about these Sabbaths spent with Jesus."

Dr. Harrington Lees discusses various important matters, e.g., whether the Sabbath is Jewish and Sunday Christian; whether we are narrow in opposing compulsion for anybody to work on Sunday; and similar matters.

This is a very valuable leaflet for today, and we hope that many of our readers will avail themselves of it and circulate it among others.

WANTED by THE EVANGELICAL LIBRARY, 78a Chiltern Street, London, W.1; Philpot, J. C., Sermons (Set or Odd Volumes); Sukey Harley's Life; Whitefield, George, Works; Calvin, Commentaries.

GOOD Christian Books Wanted to spread Evangelistic Truth all over the world. Write for free illustrated booklet of this Loan Library to The Evangelical Library, 78a Chiltern Street, London, W.1.

VISITORS to the Peak District welcomed to TRINITY CHURCH, Hardwick Mount, BUXTON. Simple Prayer Book services and Bible Ministry. Sunday services 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.