

THE
GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

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

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The Family Portion ;

OR, WORDS OF SPIRITUAL CAUTION, COUNSEL, AND COMFORT

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

"OUR INHERITANCE."

"*The earnest of our inheritance.*"—EPHESIANS i. 14.

THIS Epistle was written to the saints who lived at Ephesus, and to those who were full of faith in CHRIST JESUS. They had been "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in CHRIST." They were a people who had been Divinely chosen in CHRIST before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame in GOD'S sight. They had been predestinated unto the adoption of children according to the good pleasure of GOD'S will and to the praise of the glory of His grace. They had redemption through CHRIST'S blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of GOD'S grace, and they had in CHRIST obtained an inheritance, being predestinated thereto "according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Having heard the word of truth, the Gospel of their salvation, they had believed in CHRIST and had been "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory."

Thus the persons to whom this Epistle is addressed were a highly-favoured people. GOD had thought of them before He laid the foundation of the world, and therefore before they had any being. Accordingly He had chosen them in CHRIST and had determined to adopt them into His family and to redeem them

by the precious blood of CHRIST, and finally to bring them to the heavenly inheritance which He had designed for all the members of His family. But the saints of GOD at Ephesus have no advantage over the saints of GOD to-day. If we have heard the word of truth and have believed in CHRIST through grace, then we may be certain that we, too, have been chosen in CHRIST, predestinated unto the adoption of children, redeemed by the blood of CHRIST and destined for the inheritance which is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" for the people of GOD. Writing to the Thessalonian Church, the apostle said to them, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of GOD" (1 Thess. i. 4). How did he know it? He knew it by the fact that the Gospel had come to hem in power and in the Holy Ghost, and that they turned to GOD from idols to serve the living and true GOD, and to wait for His SON from heaven Who had delivered them from the wrath to come. Thus all to whom the Gospel has come in power, who have been convinced of their sins, and have turned to GOD through CHRIST, are amongst the chosen, adopted and redeemed people of GOD. The justified ones have all been called, and the called ones have all been predestinated (see Rom. viii. 30). The experience of the work of the SPIRIT within us is the proof of the eternal purpose of GOD'S grace towards us. If I am a believer in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, then I must be one of GOD'S elect people. If I am a saved man then my salvation is according to GOD'S own purpose and grace which was given me in CHRIST JESUS before the world began. (See 2 Tim. i. 9.)

Now the indwelling presence of the HOLY SPIRIT in our hearts is "the earnest of our inheritance." It is the pledge that the inheritance will one day be certainly ours. "If any man have not the SPIRIT of CHRIST he is none of His," but if any man have the SPIRIT of CHRIST dwelling in him, then he evidently belongs to CHRIST, has been redeemed by CHRIST, and he is a child of GOD and an heir of the inheritance.

The word "inheritance" denotes all the future blessedness which will be the portion of GOD'S people when the LORD comes back to receive them unto Himself.

That blessedness is ours now in the Divine purpose, and it is

certain to be enjoyed by us hereafter. We have been begotten to the inheritance which is reserved in heaven for us (1 Peter i. 3, 4).

"Our inheritance"—what a mercy to be able to say it is *ours*. We remember reading a story of a boy who was being shown over a new house by his father, and as they went from room to room, he exclaimed, "Father, is this ours?" So the child of GOD is shown over the heavenly inheritance in His FATHER'S Word, and he may well exclaim, as he views the glories that are in store for the LORD'S children, "FATHER, is this ours?"

But now, what is included in our inheritance? Let us try to get to know all we can about it. Let us, however, avoid all mere speculation and keep close to the written revelation of GOD'S purposes towards His redeemed people.

1. *First, we learn that eternal life will be the inheritance of GOD'S people.*

By nature they are dead in trespasses and sins, and the wages of their sin is death. Bodily death and eternal death, or eternal separation from GOD, is their merited inheritance. But while "the wages of sin is death," "the gift of GOD is eternal life, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD." To secure this life for His people our LORD was lifted up on the cross. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the SON OF MAN be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, *but have eternal life*" (John iii. 14, 15). This eternal life our LORD speaks of as an inheritance to be enjoyed by all who forsake all and follow Him. "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, *and shall inherit everlasting life*" (Matt. xix. 29). In other words, all who count CHRIST precious, and who put Him before all earthly relationships and possessions, and who therefore trust only in His merits, shall receive "an hundredfold now in this time" with persecutions, and in the world to come they shall inherit eternal life (see Mark x, 29, 30).

The same truth is taught by the Apostle Paul. Those who are justified by Divine grace are made "*heirs of eternal life*" (see Titus iii. 7, R.V.).

The lawyer who stood up and tempted CHRIST asked Him, saying, "MASTER, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The rich young ruler asked the same question, and the words of our LORD which followed showed that to enter the kingdom of GOD and to inherit eternal life were synonymous terms. The disciples' question, "Who then can be saved?" suggests that the possession of eternal life is synonymous with being saved. (See Luke x. 25; xviii. 18, 24-26.)

It is clear that eternal life in its fulness is the future inheritance of the righteous. We read, "These" (i.e., the goats) "shall go away into everlasting punishment, *but the righteous into life eternal*" (Matt. xxv. 46). Here we see death all around us—death spiritual and death temporal. It is also revealed that eternal death is the wages of sin. Thank GOD, however, that through the infinite grace of GOD, and by the blood and righteousness of CHRIST, GOD's believing people can look forward to inheriting eternal life.

2. *Secondly, we learn that salvation will be the inheritance of GOD's people.*

We read of the angels, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that *shall inherit salvation*?" (Heb. i. 14, R.V.).

Full salvation from the penalty, the power, and the very presence of sin, is to be the inheritance of GOD's people. The LORD JESUS came into the world to save sinners, such as they are by nature. The name "JESUS" was given to Him because He was to save His people from their sins. He it is who seeks and saves the lost. It is true that in a measure they are now saved by Divine grace, but full salvation is yet to come. "GOD hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him" (1 Thess. v. 9, 10). To live eternally with CHRIST in risen, glorified, immortal, and incorruptible bodies, is salvation, and this is the inheritance of GOD's people. They are, as Toplady speaks of them, "*the heirs of salvation.*"

3. *Thirdly, we learn that a kingdom will be the inheritance of GOD's people.*

The LORD will say to them when He comes, "Come, ye blessed of My FATHER, *inherit the kingdom* prepared for you from the

foundation of the world" (Matt. xxv. 34). This kingdom is "the everlasting kingdom of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST" (2 Peter i. 11). Believers have already been translated into this kingdom (Col. i. 13). But the full glory thereof is yet future. He shall reign for ever and ever in this kingdom, and His people shall reign for ever and ever with Him (see Rev. xi. 15; xxii. 5). Nothing that defileth shall enter this kingdom, and none "but they which are written in the LAMB'S book of life." "No more curse" will be a characteristic of this kingdom and righteous rule will characterize the KING. To inherit this kingdom points to glory, honour, and wealth, and blessed are they who shall inherit it. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not GOD chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and *heirs of the kingdom* which He hath promised to them that love Him" (James ii. 5).

Kingly glory will be their portion. They will sit with CHRIST on His throne (Rev. iii. 21). "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim. ii. 12).

4. *Fourthly, we learn that the new heavens and the new earth will be the inheritance of GOD'S people.*

The present heavens "shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

"Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter iii. 10, 13).

The Apostle John saw in vision the new heaven and the new earth, and in connection with this new display of GOD'S power he heard a voice out of heaven, saying, "Behold the tabernacle of GOD is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and GOD Himself shall be with them, and be their GOD. And GOD shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Then the LORD JESUS, the Alpha and the Omega, adds, "He that overcometh *shall inherit these things*" (margin of Rev. xxi. 7).

Thus GOD'S people shall inherit the new heavens and the new earth. They shall inherit the full manifestation of GOD'S presence.

They shall inherit eternal exemption from death, from sorrow, from tears, and from pain. All the blessings connected with the new heavens and the new earth shall be their portion.

Only the actual experience of these things will make us realize all the blessedness which they mean to the "favoured sinners" who shall enjoy them. To cheer us in our pilgrim path these things are revealed. These blessings will never be our portion down here. Social reforms may mitigate in some degree the hardships connected with our earthly lives, but they cannot remove sin, sorrow, pain and death. The good time that is coming depends on the Advent of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. We look therefore for the SAVIOUR. We look beyond all present circumstances to His coming the second time, "without sin unto salvation."

5. *Fifthly, we learn that GOD Himself will be the inheritance of His people.*

His Covenant promise is, "I will be their GOD." It is a promise partially fulfilled now, but its fullest accomplishment is yet future (see Rev. xxi. 3). The apostle says, "If children, then heirs; heirs of GOD, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. viii. 17).

The LORD's children then are "heirs of GOD." GOD Himself is to be their inheritance. They will possess Him as their eternal portion. The Psalmist says, "The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup" (Ps. xvi. 5). Another Psalm says, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but GOD is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever" (lxxiii. 26). Matthew Henry says, "The vision of GOD, and the fruition of GOD, make up the inheritance the saints are heirs to." Dr. Gill says, "They are heirs of Himself. He not only makes them His heirs, but He Himself is their inheritance and portion: they are heirs of all things which are His." His glory will be theirs. Hence they "rejoice in hope of the glory of GOD." He hath called them "unto His eternal glory by CHRIST JESUS" (1 Peter v. 10). CHRIST is the "Heir of all things" and they are joint-heirs with Him. Thus, they share with CHRIST in the inheritance of all things.

The words "our inheritance" are thus very comprehensive. Eternal life, salvation, a kingdom, the new heavens and the new earth, and GOD Himself, constitute the everlasting inheritance of

the redeemed. This leads us to point out, in conclusion, who are the heirs to this great and heavenly inheritance.

a. They are the *called ones*. It is they which are called who "receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb. ix. 15). Those who are effectually called out of darkness into GOD's marvellous light shall enter upon this inheritance.

b. They are the *justified ones*. "Whom He called, them He also justified," and it is those who are "justified by His grace" who are made "*heirs of eternal life*" (Titus iii. 7).

Moreover, as justification is apprehended by faith it is those who are "rich in faith" who are "*heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him*" (James ii. 5).

c. They are the *sanctified ones*. It is the "inheritance of the *saints*" (Col. i 12); "an inheritance among them that are sanctified" (Acts xx. 32; xxvi. 18). No one who is not sanctified and indwelt by the SPIRIT shall enter upon this inheritance

d. They are *adopted ones*. The redeemed receive the adoption of sons. Sonship involves heirship. "If a son, then an heir" (Gal. iv. 4-7). The SPIRIT is "the earnest of our inheritance." "As many as are led by the SPIRIT of GOD, they are the SONS of GOD." The SPIRIT beareth witness that they are GOD's children. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of GOD, and joint-heirs with CHRIST" (Rom. viii. 14-16).

Scripture is thus clear that those who shall finally inherit the glories of heaven are they who have been effectually called, Divinely justified and sanctified, and also numbered amongst the children of GOD. They have been called out of the darkness of sin and Satan. They have been declared righteous through the imputation of CHRIST's righteousness. They have been sanctified and regenerated by the HOLY GHOST, and they have been predestinated unto the adoption of children. Have we who read these lines been washed, sanctified and justified, in the name of the LORD JESUS and by the SPIRIT of our GOD? If so, we can look forward with assured confidence to "the inheritance of the saints in light."

On the other hand, there is the solemn statement of the inspired apostle about those who shall be excluded from this inheritance: "Know ye not," he says, "that the unrighteous *shall not inherit*"

the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, *shall inherit the kingdom of God*” (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10). The same solemn truth is taught in Galatians v. 21, and Eph. v. 5.

Oh, the mercy! if we have been begotten to the inheritance reserved in heaven for the redeemed people of God! Such can sing:

“Quickened by His Holy Spirit—
Covered with His righteousness;
He has said, I shall *inherit*
Everlasting life and bliss:
Blessed Jesus!
How my soul exalts in this.”

(Joseph Irons.)

Whittington Vicarage,
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THE EDITOR
(Thomas Houghton).

THE VALUE OF THE INSPIRED WORD.

“HENCE the inexpressible value of the inspired word of Scripture. It is the communication from God to man respecting the deep things of the unseen world. It supplies that which lies beyond the reach of human investigation, and gives us exactly that information which dying man requires. It unfolds to us the eternal nature of God, and the plan of salvation which He has prepared in tender mercy for a fallen world. If therefore our Bible fail us, our whole hope fails with it, and if we cannot rely on its sacred statements, we are left without any trustworthy information as to all those great truths which most deeply concern us. If we cannot rely on Scripture as a communication from God we have nothing to take its place; and all our present joy, as well as our future hopes, must melt away into utter ignorance respecting all that lies beyond the range of science, and utter hopelessness as to all beyond this present world.”—(Canon Edward Hoare's “*Great Principles of Divine Truth*,” p. 16.)

(We would add that if we follow the Higher Critics the Bible will indeed fail us. It will no longer be trustworthy, and we shall be left in an utterly hopeless condition, as Canon Hoare points out. Higher critical teaching deprives us of our foundations. It is the enemy of all spiritual peace, joy, and hope.—EDITOR.)

Wayside Notes.

THE CERTAINTY OF DIVINE JUDGMENT.

“And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the King of Israel between the joints of the harness. . . . And the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even.”—1 KINGS xxii. 34, 35.

THE certainty of Divine judgment upon the ungodly is frequently illustrated in the narratives of the inspired Word. It often happens that the Lord delays to visit judgment upon nations and upon individuals, and ungodly men are apt to think that therefore judgment will never come. They go on in their wickedness as though God would take no notice of it. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Eccles. viii. 11). But another Scripture teaches us that nothing can or will hinder the judgment of God from coming on the ungodly. It may be delayed, but it will certainly come. “Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished” (Prov. xi. 21). The judgment of the Flood was announced long before it came, but at last “all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened,” and God brought in the flood upon the world of the ungodly. There was some delay in the judgment which came upon the Sodomites, but as soon as Lot was safe, “The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground” (Gen. xix. 23-25). The judgment of God upon the Canaanites was delayed, but as soon as the iniquity of the Amorites was full, then the Lord used Joshua and the people of Israel to exterminate them. The longsuffering of God delayed the terrible judgment of the Babylonian captivity, because God “had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place,” but at last, “the wrath of the Lord arose against His people” and “there was no remedy” (2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16).

The wicked may prosper for a time and be comparatively free from trouble. They may “speak loftily” and “set their mouth against the heavens,” but at last they are “brought into desolation,

as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors" (Ps. lxxiii. 3-19). David says, "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found" (Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36).

The thought that Divine judgment will not come lies behind the words of the scoffers who will come in the last days. They will say, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." The apostle's answer is partially given when he says, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He is delaying till He has accomplished the number of His elect. He is not willing that any of His people should perish, but that all of them should come to repentance. But though the day of the Lord is delayed, it will certainly come, and ultimately "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter iii. 3-10). "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Peter ii. 9).

These solemn reflections have been suggested by the certainty with which judgment eventually came upon Ahab, the wicked King of Israel. His reign was characterized by sin from its beginning. He married a heathen woman, and went and served Baal and worshipped him. Under his rule the nation as a whole became idolatrous. "There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel" (1 Kings xxi. 25, 26). The Lord chastised him by sending a prolonged drought, but he went on in his sins. For twenty-two years the Lord allowed him to occupy the throne, and at last after long forbearance, He visited him with death. When Ahab went to wrest Ramoth in Gilead from the hands of the Syrians, "A certain man drew a bow at a

venture, and smote the King of Israel between the joints of his harness." The wound proved fatal, and he died at even.

The record of his death is full of solemn instruction for us. Let us think of it.

1. *First, notice that Ahab was smitten with death in spite of his religion.*

The Latin word for religion means "belief in and reverence for the gods." In this sense Ahab was a religious man. He was not an atheist: He did not say, "There is no God," but he believed in and revered a false god. He was a worshipper of Baal, "the supreme male divinity of the Phœnician and Canaanitish nations" (Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*). His religion, however, did not prevent the judgment of the true God from coming upon him for his sins. People to-day may be religious, but their religion may be false, and not based upon the teaching of Scripture. There may be religion, and yet a rejection of Christ. Saul of Tarsus said of his unconverted days, "After the most straitest sect of *our religion* I lived a Pharisee," yet he says, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them" (Acts xxvi. 5, 9, 10). Here was a religious man who was a bitter enemy of Christ and His people. Many people may be religious, and yet destitute of the fear of God. They may be punctilious in attending upon outward rites and ceremonies and upright in their lives to a large extent, and yet they may know nothing of the new birth and of reconciliation with God through faith in the blood and righteousness of Christ. They may be going about to establish their own righteousness and reject that one righteousness by the imputation of which alone can we be acceptable in the sight of God. True religion is piety towards the true God. It is that fear of God which is the result of possessing a new heart and is always accompanied by faith in the atoning merits of the Lord Jesus Christ (see Jer. xxxii. 39, 40). Let us beware of all false religions. The judgment of God will certainly come on all those who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. *Secondly, Ahab was smitten with death in spite of his prophets.*

He had about four hundred prophets. They were false prophets, though claiming to be able to foretell the future. With one voice they advised Ahab to go up against Ramoth-gilead to battle, and assured him that the Lord would deliver it into his hand. They were evidently associated with Ahab in his idolatries. Their advice and their prediction of success proved to be foolish and false. Ahab, however, listened to them, rather than to the voice of Micaiah, a true prophet of the Lord, and he was defeated and slain in spite of their predictions of prosperity. Our Lord has said, "Beware of false prophets," and His apostles warn us against such men in the professing Church. It is usually assumed that if a man is a minister of a Church, especially if he be a bishop or an archbishop, that his teaching is necessarily sound and Scriptural. This by no means follows.

The teaching of all ministers, whatever their position, should be tested by Scripture. The Apostle Paul speaks of "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." He proceeds to teach that Satan himself "is transformed into an angel of light," and that "it is no great marvel if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor. xi. 13-15). The possibility of such men occupying high positions in the Church is very real. Such men "by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. xvi. 18). Under the influence of such men the souls of large numbers may be ruined. Ahab was smitten with the judgment of God in spite of his prophets. They were a hindrance rather than a help to his soul.

3. *Thirdly, Ahab was smitten with death in spite of godly allies and friends.*

Jehoshaphat, the godly King of Judah, came down to see Ahab. It was wrong for him to have fellowship with such an ungodly king, and he nearly lost his life in consequence. But having come down to Ahab he promised to assist in the battle against Ramoth-gilead. He said, "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses." Accordingly, Jehoshaphat went up to Ramoth-gilead with Ahab. Ahab was thus supported by godly allies, Jehoshaphat and his people. But their presence did not

prevent judgment falling upon Ahab. You may have godly relatives and godly friends, and yet your soul may be lost. The five foolish virgins were in good company when they went forth to meet the Bridegroom, along with the five wise virgins, but when the Bridegroom came they were excluded from the marriage feast. The door was shut, and the Bridegroom said, "I know you not."

The Tares grow along with the Wheat, but when the harvest time comes, they are separated and cast into a furnace of fire. The chaff is in close association with the wheat, but Christ will gather the wheat into the garner, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Judgment may come upon us in spite of godly friends, and godly associations.

4. *Fourthly, Ahab was smitten in spite of His own efforts to save himself.*

Evidently his conscience pricked him. He thought that there might be some truth in what Micaiah, the prophet of the Lord, had said. It would be wise, therefore, to take precautions. "I will disguise myself," he said, "and enter into the battle"; but to Jehoshaphat he said, "Put thou on thy robes." This was a clever effort to deceive the Syrians, and it succeeded so far as they were concerned, but He could not deceive God, and so in spite of his effort to save himself, he was smitten.

Many now make strenuous efforts to save themselves from eternal death. They disguise their true character by decking themselves with the filthy rags of their own righteousness, but unless they have on the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness the King will perceive their lack of that necessary garment, and will say, "Bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness."

5. *Fifthly, Ahab was smitten with death in spite of the failure of the Syrian captains.*

The King of Syria had said to his thirty and two captains, "Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the King of Israel." Accordingly, they looked for a man clothed in royal apparel, and when they saw Jehoshaphat in his royal robes, they said, "Surely it is the King of Israel." And they directed all their energy against him. Mercifully the Lord listened to Jehoshaphat's prayer and moved them to depart from him (see 2 Chron. xviii. 31).

Otherwise Jehoshaphat would have been slain. The Syrian captains therefore failed to find the King of Israel, and possibly he thought, "I am now safe," but God had by the mouth of His prophets, Elijah and Micaiah, decreed his death, and nothing could frustrate the Divine purpose. Accordingly, "A certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the King of Israel between the joints of his harness." The man had no thought of smiting the king. He had no thought of smiting anyone in particular, but God directed the arrow and caused it to inflict a mortal wound upon Ahab. The failure of the Syrian captains to discover him did not prevent Divine judgment from reaching him. God can use the most uncertain means to certainly fulfil His purposes.

6. *Sixthly, let us note that Ahab was smitten because of his sins.*

"The wages of sin is death": "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Ahab had grievously sinned. He and his father's house had troubled Israel in that they had forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed Baalim, and God had decreed his death. "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine" (1 Kings xxi. 19).

Men may go on for a long period in rebellion against God, and they may even prosper, but at last judgment comes. "Be sure your sin will find you out," sooner or later.

7. *Lastly, Ahab was smitten according to the Word of the Lord.*

The word of the false prophets said, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper; for the Lord shall deliver it into the king's hand." The word of the true prophet said, "I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace." The Divine decree was that Israel should be deprived of their earthly shepherd and master. The expedition to Ramoth-gilead was to issue in the king's death. Accordingly we read, "So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour; according unto the word of the Lord which He spake" (1 Kings xxii. 37, 38). In spite of his religion, in spite of his prophets, in spite of his godly allies, in spite of his own efforts to defeat the purpose of God, and in spite of the failure of the

Syrian captains, the king was smitten with the arrow of the Lord. The Lord had decreed his death and nothing could prevent it. It is a solemn history. It teaches us the enormity of sin and the certainty of Divine judgment. It also illustrates the certainty of the final judgment revealed in Scripture as the portion of the ungodly. If we through Divine grace realize our sinfulness, what a mercy it is to know that Another took our place and was smitten with death in our stead. "Awake, O sword against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered" (Zech. xiii. 7).

Jehovah's Fellow, His Co-equal and eternal Son, was smitten with death that His people, His sheep, might not have to be smitten. He was wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their iniquities. The chastisement or punishment necessary to secure their peace was upon Him, and with His stripes they are healed. The wages of their sin is death, but the gift of God which He bestows on them is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. If left to ourselves we, too, might have been like Ahab. Let us thank our God without ceasing, if through His infinite grace, He has saved us from eternal ruin, and let us seek to show forth our gratitude by giving up ourselves to His service, and by walking before Him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives.

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Stoke Ferry, King's Lynn.*

THE WHOLE BIBLE OR NONE.

"THE conclusion to which I am irresistibly brought is, that we have no right to pick and choose amongst the various portions of the Word of God. I believe the whole to be arranged as a whole for the accomplishment of God's great purpose that the whole is included in 'the Scriptures,' and that the parts are so interwoven one with another, and so beautifully fitted into each other by God's Divine hand, that there will be found ultimately to be no intermediate path between receiving the whole as the Word of God, or sweeping away the whole and launching forth on a sea of scepticism, without a Bible, without a Saviour, and, as the last step, without a God."—*Canon Edward Hoare's "Great Principles of Divine Truth," p. 23.*

Pilgrim Papers.

WELLSPRINGS.

“For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”—2 COR. i. 20.

THE apostle is declaring the faithful preaching of an immutable Gospel setting forth Spirit-taught truths, and the whole counsel of God. “God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the Son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall not He do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?” which gloriously great truth even the lips of the profane Balaam were made to utter. And in these later days, when the glorious Gospel of God’s invincible, irresistible and Sovereign grace was ushered in by the coming of Him Who was the Fulfiller of every Divine promise, it was thus gloriously heralded by His servants, who could declare with all the glorious hope and joy it brought, “For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” It was not yea and nay. It would not be flesh-pleasing. It was not to be how Christ had done *His* part, and now it was for the poor sinner to do his. The Spirit-taught apostles, and indeed every Spirit-taught minister of the everlasting Gospel of God’s free, discriminating, electing, predestinating grace, have a better message to declare than a half-and-half Gospel. “For,” says St. Paul, “the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in Him was yea.” That is the only Gospel which will meet a poor, lost, guilty, undone sinner’s need and extremity, and glorify the God of that sinner’s salvation. Oh! a yea and nay Gospel is a poor Gospel at its best. It leaves a helpless sinner to do what he finds he cannot do. But the Gospel of yea in Christ meets such a need. It convinces a sinner that he can do nothing, and then lifts him out of that pit of despair to find that Christ his Saviour has done everything, and that therefore there is hope and salvation and rejoicing for the vilest and foulest and guiltiest who know their need of such a Saviour. Oh! the sweet promises of God! How they cheer and gladden the heart and lift us up when cast down, and give us to hope against despair; to “look again” when seemingly cast out of His sight, and wait and encourage the soul to wait on, until He return convincingly with His “thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give us an expected end.”

My mind is being led through the precious Word of the living God, wherein all these “exceeding great and precious promises” are found, and it is as though the sacred oracles were a beautiful garden, wherein grows every lovely flower of promise planted by the Divine hand of the heavenly Gardener. They are there to be admired and wondered at, but much more; we must gather them, examine their beauty, inhale their perfume, catch their fragrance, and handle them closely to see their perfection. That is what we do with a lovely blossom

in an earthly garden, and just so must we scrutinize, admire and receive the promises, take them to our bosom and gain the sweet scent by inhaling them and feeding upon them by faith.

We visit in our meditation thus, the first garden of Scripture and find the first promise therein, and the seed germ of all the rest! Thus early and thus graciously did the heavenly Husbandman plant that holy promise which, though it lay as a seed under ground many an age, was yet to live in God's time to His eternal glory. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. iii. 15). There in that lovely garden, perfect in its primeval beauty which adorned it throughout, and peaceful until "sin stepped in and marred God's beautiful creation," God's matchless mercy meets the poor guilty sinner's need. Adam has fallen; he is ashamed; he seeks to hide himself among the trees of that garden wherein he and his Maker had until now held unbroken communion. And now, walking there in that beautiful place of His creative hand, He calls to poor guilty man, "Adam, where art thou?" Solemn as the words are, let us look at them to discover their majesty and glory; but also their goodness and mercy. A Trinity of Persons is in that garden, and so soon as man fell! Yes, they are there. Ah! and Adam was long before he fell, in Christ. But here come into their garden, the garden they had given to man "to dress it and keep it," those sworn Covenanters and they say, "Where art thou now, poor fallen Adam?" You see nothing can surprise our God; nothing can arise which He has not foreseen, and no disaster, however great and appalling, but that He has His remedy at hand. This, which was an insurmountable difficulty and impassable barrier to man, is none to Him and He can bridge it over and come over the mountain of separation which otherwise must have eternally exiled the sinner from his God! Such were the thoughts of love and mercy which flowed in the eternal bosom and delivered man from the pit, by finding His own ransom. And so the Lord God plants the first promise in which was the living germ of immortal destiny of blessing and life, in and through the work and life and death of the incarnate Son of God, in Whom "all the promises were yea and amen." Yes, that first promise was a Covenant promise and made to centre in Him Who was to be given for a Covenant for His people, and the first token of that Covenant quickly followed in the slain beast whereby our fallen parents were Divinely clothed. The first sacrifice at Eden's gates for sin! A rainbow soon followed and that Covenant promise was kept prominently in view, and "God remembered," and He still remembers when you and I forget, beloved. The bow of promise spans from Genesis to Revelation, and His Covenant He will not break, alter, or disannul. "Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David." And so God remembered His first promise, that beautiful plant of His right hand planting as age after age went by and the promised seed had not come, nor the fulness of time arrived.

But delays are not denials. "In the end it will surely come and will not tarry." And nothing can change the eternal purpose "nor make Him His promise forgo." The *yea and amen* in due time came and that first promise in Eden was fulfilled, after 4000 years! Is our God worth waiting for, beloved reader? Though the vision tarry in your dark experience, is He not worth all the waiting, longing and hoping, because He keepeth Covenant?

And Jesus came, did His Father's will, and finished that holy, blameless and obedient life on Calvary, and planted another precious promise of glorious union of Himself and His members in another garden when He spoke those tender words to the much-forgiven Mary Magdalene as her resurrection Lord on that Easter morning: "I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God," pronouncing the indissoluble union which by His own merits, henceforth existed between Christ and the members of His mystical body. So we learn:

"Whate'er He found thee at thy best,
He's at thy worst the same:"

and whether it be in garden or wilderness, heights of bliss or depths of affliction, on the billow crest of joy or in the deep trough of the sea of sorrow, on the mount with God, or in the desert place, sad and lonely, Jesus is the same, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the *yea and amen* of God! Let us turn briefly to our text and take it word by word. "*For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.*"

For—this word shows us there is a connecting link and a basis too of argument. The apostle well knew by Divine training that such a Gospel other than this could never satisfy a poor dying perishing sinner nor glorify the God of their salvation. And so he declares with no uncertainty nor contingency, Christ has done the mighty work and is the Author of salvation to every one of His redeemed, and this is the glory of His message. And moreover He says that *all*, without exception, *all* the promises of God (remember how it is computed that the Word of God contains 30,000) are made over to the inheritors of the promises. Do not words fail us and expressions die upon our lips? We cannot speak as we would of this fathomless love of God, and we cannot scale the heights and depths of the riches of His grace. But it is all *in Him*. There is the secret hidden in this smallest and yet greatest of words. It is a Pauline word and the key word to his Epistle to the Ephesians. And we find it here in our text. It speaks to you and me. "If any man be *in Christ* he is a new creature," and he can, and may, plead the promises found in Christ effectually.

"For all the promises of God in Christ are *yea and amen*," and the Father cannot deny His beloved Son. There is no "nay" to Him and His, and the Father entrusted all to Him, and knew that nothing could possibly fail. I love to think that in Old Testament language God the Father thus spoke of Him; had Him in His Divine mind when *He* used the word given us by the inspiration of the Holy

Spirit, "yea, He loved the people" (Deut. xxxiii. 3), and "yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. xxxi. 3), and how it was confirmed by Jesus Himself in the same setting forth of His eternal, unchangeable love. For *yea* of the Old Testament is equivalent to *verily* of the New, and Jesus used both. Verily, verily! truly, truly! yea, yea! We find these verities so constantly repeated in John's Gospel, over two dozen times, and it is significant that John ever kept in mind the Godhead of Christ, and therefore these words from the Divine lips are potent of Divine kingship, and grace and power. Nor can we pass on without alluding to that word falling from the lips of the Yea and Amen Himself on that tender, gracious, compassionate occasion when the proud and self-sufficient "chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David. And said unto Him, Hearest Thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea, have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?" The praises of those little children were as sweet music to His ears and He heard them, marked them, and quoted Ps. viii. 2 as a rebuke to those who would have robbed Him of this due. Methinks His blessed voice was tender as He said that "Yea."

Now have we said sufficient, dear exercised reader, to encourage your desponding heart, and bid you look away from yourself to the keeper of His saints? Every promise in this holy word being Divine, *must* be fulfilled. This is, or should be, our comfort, and stay, and hope—and—

"His oath, His covenant and His blood,
Support me in the 'whelming flood."

Bunyan, in his Allegory, shows so beautifully how the key called Promise which lay in the Christian's bosom unlocked the bolts of the dungeon and castle gates of Giant Despair. He also shows how Christian owned to his folly in not remembering he had such a key before. So, child of God, whatever your condition, it is your comfort to *plead* the promises; *present* them at the bank of faith; *rest* upon them and *meditate* in them. "Unless the promises are pleaded in faith, we are like a bird without wings" (Calamy). Again, the same writer says, "If thou art poor in estate, meditate on Ps. xxxiv. 10; Matt. vi. 32; Heb. xiii. 5. If thou art barren, on Isa. lvi. 5. If persecuted for Christ's sake, on Ps. xciv. 12; Matt. v. 10. If sick, on Ps. l. 15; Isa. lxiii. 9. If tempted, on 1 Cor. x. 31; 1 John iii. 8; if thy corruptions are too strong for thee, on Rom. vi. 14; Micah vii. 19. If God hides His face, on Isa. l. 10, and liv. 7, 8. If ready to faint in waiting for the fulfilment of His promises, on Isa. xxx. 18; lxiii. 3, and so on."

The promises are so various, so beautifully fitted to our every need; they are likewise so distinct and different, useful and profitable and yet so exquisitely and perfectly blended in Christ Jesus, that in every

occasion of our need they draw us to God's throne and draw out our faith and fetch heaven down to us, by moving the heart of Him Who is His people's Yea and Amen; and they pillow our weary heads and support our fainting frames and give us to wait and hope and finally to conquer.

Dear child of God, for your encouragement let me inquire, have you a hope in even *one* promise? Well, it is an earnest of all the rest. For, if your hope lies in Jesus, *all* the promises are there in Him for you and will be fulfilled to *the glory of God by us*. In the Epistle to the Ephesians (iii. 10) St. Paul so grandly sets out the purpose and ultimate glory of God in the purchase and preservation of His Church. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." I recall a remark of the saintly James Ormiston upon this text: "It pleases Him Who has redeemed them, to make the Church an object lesson to the angelic host to contemplate."

After man fell, sin needed the planting of that seed-germ of promise which fructified in all the rest. Thus the bright flowers of the promises, many hued and variegated, lovely and delightful, have sprung therefrom and His glory is indeed great in every sinner's salvation.

Dear reader, we repeat our text, and would remind you of Hebrews xi, where you will read of *the promise* and the promises. "All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

"We bless Thee, O Thou Great Amen!
 Jehovah's pledge to sinful men,
 Confirming all His word;
 No promises are doubtful then,
 For all are yea, and all amen,
 In Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Ye saints of God, in age and youth,
 Who swear by Him, the God of Truth,
 By Him, I say again;
 Make Him, Whom God hath made to you
 Your Alpha and Omega, too,
 God's Christ is your Amen.

"Nor less, above, ye heavenly host,
 To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
 Give praise, through Him, with men;
 For of Him, through Him, by Him, sure
 The Church shall glory evermore
 In Him, the Great AMEN."

Beloved! since God the Father laid up all the promises in Jesus, He is pledged to fulfil them, and will He not with Him freely give His children all things? May He grant us the rejoicing in heart and spirit to glorify the Author and Finisher of so great salvation, and the Keeper and Fulfiller of such "exceeding great and precious promises."

R.

Sermons and Notes of Sermons.

THE STAGGERINGS OF UNBELIEF, AND THE PERSUASIONS OF FAITH.

(ROMANS iv. 20, 21.)

BY THE LATE J. C. PHILPOT.

(Communicated.)

A FEW words upon the connection of our text with the general subject of the Epistle may not be altogether out of place, and may serve, with God's blessing, to cast a fuller, clearer light upon it. I love to make clear work; to act, as far as I can, upon the Scripture direction, "Make straight paths for your feet" (Heb. xii. 13). By so doing, I follow Paul's exhortation to Timothy: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15). But we cannot rightly divide the word of truth unless we first clearly understand it. No minister, therefore, should attempt to take a subject which he does not fully understand; for if he do, his want of clearness of thought will be sure to produce want of clearness of expression; and what is the consequence? Minister and hearer are soon lost in a fog of confusion. The people go away weary and perplexed, the minister, if he has any right and proper feeling, leaves the pulpit ashamed and disappointed; and what might have been a season of edification to both is little else but a season of weariness, perplexity, and confusion to all. It is, therefore, very necessary, or at least highly desirable, that every servant of God should make clear work, and not only understand his subject by the teaching of the Holy Spirit and by some personal experience of it, but be enabled well and fully to clear his ground, and from whatever text he preaches to set forth the truth of God in such a plain, simple, clear, intelligible way, that the people may understand his meaning, and derive instruction and edification from his testimony. I would not say a word against the weakest or the least of the sent servants of God: but this I must say, if God has sent them He has sent them with a message to His people; that they stand up to instruct, comfort, encourage, and build up the Church of God on her most holy faith, and therefore if they cannot do this work clearly and intelligently, they bear but feeble marks of their message or their ministry being given them of God. All ministers indeed are subject to their seasons of darkness, confusion, and embarrassment when they are miserably shut up both for gracious thought and a door of utterance. I feel much of it myself at times, and can therefore feelingly sympathize with others in the ministry who are similarly exercised. But with all this, I never attempt to take a text or to preach from a subject which I do not seem in some degree to understand in its spiritual meaning, or of which I do not in some measure feel its power. Many ministers, especially young

ministers of an aspiring mind, aim at fine language and flowery expressions. But flowers are not food, and least of all artificial flowers. It would be much better if they would seek first to understand well their subject by an experience of its truth and power, and then to open it to the people in the simplest, plainest, clearest language that they can find.

The main subject of this Epistle, as you are doubtless aware, is the grand doctrine of justification. It is in this beautiful, or, as I may well call it, this grand and glorious Epistle, that we find the fullest, clearest solution of that mysterious and tremendous problem, how God can acquit, pardon, and justify a sinner, and yet remain the same pure, righteous, and holy God. None could solve the mystery till God Himself solved it in the gift and work of His dear Son; and to open the fruits and effects of this gift and work in the free justification of a sinner is the subject of the Epistle to the Romans, which may, therefore, well stand at the head of all Paul's epistles. Luther lay upon his bed three days and three nights, without eating, drinking or sleeping, under the weight and pressure of that terrible problem. It has driven some almost to the pool, and to the halter. The conviction of sin from a fiery law shut out all hope of salvation by works, and ignorance of the Gospel debarred from a knowledge of salvation by grace. This was just Luther's case. The words which ground him as between the upper and nether millstone were, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested" (Rom. iii. 21). "What!" said he, "does the Gospel demand a righteousness of me as well as the law? Then I am cursed by both, for I can no more obey the Gospel than I can obey the law." Now in this glorious Epistle, as full of logical argument as it is of doctrinal truth, the grand mystery is solved and a full and satisfactory explanation given how "God can be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." It is all contained in the compass of two or three verses, which ought to be written, I will not say in letters of gold, but on diamonds and sapphires, like the breastplate of judgment borne upon the breast of the high priest, in which there were four rows of precious stones, on which were engraved the names of the children of Israel. "But now the righteousness of God:" this does not mean God's own intrinsic, eternal righteousness, but the way whereby he justifies a sinner. I mentioned just now Luther's three days' agony from the pressure of these words. I must now tell you of his deliverance. As he lay on his bed thus distressed, on a sudden it darted into his mind that the righteousness of God manifested in the Gospel, was the way in which God freely justifies a sinner by the imputation of Christ's righteousness. The Holy Ghost bore such a testimony to the truth of this in his soul, that he leaped off his couch in as great a transport of joy as of previous trouble. This made Luther a preacher: to this we owe the Reformation. This, then, is the meaning of the words, "the righteousness of God."

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is mani-

fested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God: being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 21-24). These words I have just said should be written not merely in letters of gold but engraven upon diamonds and sapphires for beauty, brilliancy, preciousness, and permanency; but there is a better place still on which they should be written—the tables of the heart, as the apostle speaks: "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not in ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (2 Cor. iii. 3). And they are written there when the truth comes home with Divine power to the soul, and we are able to read the testimony in our own favour that by faith in the Son of God we are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses.

But now comes the question, "What has all this to do with Abraham's faith?" It has this to do with it. When the apostle, under Divine inspiration, thus solved the mystery, and showed how God could, as he elsewhere speaks, thus justify the ungodly, it must have appeared to be altogether a new religion, a novel, unheard-of doctrine, that there was a full and free justification by faith without the deeds of the law. To show, then, that it was no novelty, no unheard-of doctrine, the apostle comes at once in the next chapter to the case of Abraham, who was not only the acknowledged father of the Jews, all of whom came from him by lineal descent, but was "the friend of God" and was especially called and blessed by him. Now if the apostle could show that Abraham was justified, not by the deeds of the law but by faith, how triumphantly could he establish his point that righteousness is through faith and not by works. He therefore asks, "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?" (Rom. iv. 1). Did he find justification by the law? No, surely, "for if Abraham were justified by works he hath whereof to glory." If he could have been justified by his own obedience he would naturally have something to boast of. He therefore adds, "but not before God"; that is, God will never allow any one to boast or glory before him, therefore not even Abraham. But see how he fully proves his point by a direct reference to the word of truth. "For what saith the Scripture? as if that must be decisive: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." He thus brings forward positive Scripture testimony that Abraham was justified not by works but by faith; and therefore that all who walk in the steps of Abraham are justified in the same way as Abraham was justified. But this brings us to the words of our text in which the apostle opens the nature of Abraham's faith. This is really as necessary to understand as the fact itself, that Abraham was justified by faith; for unless we knew the exact character

of Abraham's faith we could not compare it with our own, or obtain any satisfactory testimony that we possessed the same faith as his. He opens it, therefore, under two distinct phases, which we may call its negative and positive aspects. He first shows the negative side: "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief." He then shows the positive side: "But was strong in faith giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform." In taking up these words I shall endeavour, as the Lord may enable, to bring before you four things connected with the statement thus given of Abraham:—

First, the negative side: "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief."

Secondly, the positive side: "But was strong in faith."

Thirdly, the expansion of this positive side in the fuller description given of the nature of his faith: "That he was fully persuaded that what God had promised he was able also to perform."

Fourthly, "How thereby he gave glory to God."

1. Taking the great bulk, the generality of the professing, people of God, they know more of the negative than the positive side, not only of faith but of the truth generally. They know and must know both sides, for in all true religions there are two sides, the dark and the bright, a knowledge of sin and a knowledge of salvation, an acquaintance with the malady and an acquaintance with the remedy. But taking them in the mass, leaving out of consideration the more favoured of the living family, I think we may boldly say that the greater part of those who are quickened into spiritual life are more acquainted with the dark side than the bright, and know more of the negative—unbelief—than of the positive—faith. This leads me, therefore, to devote a part of my discourse to that side of the question, that I may not overlook or pass by the great bulk, perhaps, here present, of those who possess Divine life and whose souls are continually exercised with the workings of that monster and master sin—unbelief.

The apostle, unfolding what I have called the negative side, tells us very clearly what the effect is of this sin of unbelief, and points out two evils connected with it: first, that it causes us to stagger: and secondly, he points out what the sin of unbelief chiefly regards, or rather disregards, viz., the promise of God. These two points I shall now, therefore, take up in my description of unbelief. When the Spirit of God begins to work with power upon a sinner's conscience, one of the very first things He does for him is to convince him of his unbelief. Thus our Lord speaks: "And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me" (John xvi. 8, 9). Before this convicting work, whatever was his life as regards actual sin, he was living practically in unbelief; he was nothing else but an unbeliever; there was not a grain of what God calls faith in his soul. But he knew it not, for he was shut up in darkness and death, Divine light not having yet shone into his mind, nor Divine life having yet visited

his soul. Though nothing but an unbeliever in the sight of God and in the sight of his people, he fully presumed he had faith; and this faith might, as we find in many cases, have risen to a great height, and yet in the sight of God have been nothing but vain arrogance and daring presumption, as not springing from the power of God, nor connected with holy fear and godly reverence of His great Name.

When, then, through the entrance of the Word with power, Divine light and life enter into a sinner's soul, unbelief is one of the first things which is made manifest among the hidden sins of the heart. I have said "hidden sins" because usually outward sins are first laid upon the conscience and inward afterwards. But as "all things that are reprov'd (or discovered) are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light" (Ephes. v. 13), so unbelief is sooner or later manifested by the light which shines into the soul. Now there is one peculiar feature in unbelief which seems especially to distinguish it from other sins, and by which it is made distinctly manifest. It is a sin practically and pointedly directed against God's faithfulness and against God's veracity. It is therefore a sin directed against those of His attributes which God holds most justly dear—His veracity and faithfulness. This peculiar feature distinguishes it from other sins. Thus sensuality is directed more against God's infinite purity; rebellion and murmuring more against His goodness; ingratitude more against His outstretched hand in providence; pride more against His majesty; worldly mindedness against His all-sufficiency and blessedness; covetousness and carnality more against His name and character as a God of blended holiness and love. But the sin of unbelief is directed point blank against His veracity, making God a liar.

We read: "Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name" (Psa. cxxxviii. 2), that is, above all Thine other revealed attributes. To doubt, therefore, and distrust, or deny God's Word, stamps unbelief with the greatness of the sin in proportion to His having so highly magnified it. But unbelief has another feature which stamps upon it a peculiar and detestable character. It is a mother sin, a breeding sin; it is not in the heart alone, but gives birth to thousands of sins, all springing up out of its fruitful womb, like the fabled sea monsters. We see in the wilderness how all through all their journeyings the grand, the crying sin of the people of Israel was unbelief. It was the parent of all their fretfulness, murmuring, and rebellion: it lay at the root of everything done by them displeasing to God: gave birth to all their idolatry and all their other sins, and eventually shut out all but Caleb and Joshua from the promised land. Their carcasses fell in the wilderness through unbelief. But it has also another marked and peculiar feature. It is a sin of so subtle a nature that, though ever working, it often escapes detection, except from a keen and practised eye. Conscience speaks at once against some sins: they are too flagrant and gross for conscience not at once to raise its voice against them, not to mention the universal testimony of all good

or even moral men as loudly condemning them. But there is something in unbelief so subtle ; it so intertwines itself round every thought ; it so meets us at every turn ; it so starts up at the sight of every difficulty, that it will perhaps work most when least perceived. Lurking deep in the recesses of the heart, it escapes the unwatchful eye ; as slippery as an eel, when grasped it glides out of the hand. If for a time seemingly dead, it suddenly starts up into fresh life ; if for a time weakened, it seems only to rest till it regains renewed strength.

But I must not omit that peculiar feature of unbelief of which the apostle here speaks : Abraham's faith did not stagger, or rather Abraham did not stagger through unbelief. This is one peculiar characteristic of unbelief, that it staggers, or makes us stagger, at the promise of God. To bring this point more clearly before your mind, let us see how it thus acts in a variety of instances ; and observe how it is especially directed against the promises. For instance, God has given us in His Word this gracious and encouraging promise : " If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness " (1 John i. 9). But now see how unbelief staggers at this promise. Look at that poor, self-condemned, inquiring child of grace, hanging down his sorrowful head, who wants to know the full and free pardon of all his sins, to receive forgiveness into his breast, and so have a testimony of his acceptance in Christ and for Christ's sake. Now here stands the promise, most sweet and suitable to his case, and as if purposely written for him : " If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Does not he confess them, and that with many tears, with true penitence and deep sorrow of heart ? But unbelief puts that promise aside. He cannot enter into it, receive it, embrace it, or feel the comfort of it, for through the power of unbelief he staggers at it.

Now what makes him stagger ? The greatness of his sins, the holiness of God, the condemnation and curse of a broken law, and a deep sense of his own desperate state and case as a condemned transgressor before the eyes of infinite purity. He feels that his sins are of a most aggravated hue, of a peculiarly deep and desperate character. Had they not been committed under this or that peculiar circumstance ; had they not been so much against light and conscience, against conviction, warning, admonition, perhaps against a profession of religion, with all its binding restraints, to sum it all up in one word, had he not been what he has been—for every heart knows its own bitterness, and it is a subject on which I must, for many reasons, touch but lightly—had he not been what he has been, and done what he has done, he thinks that mercy might reach his heart, and pardon might distil its sweets into his breast. But he staggers at the promise as seeing and feeling the greatness of his sins, the majesty of God, the holiness of the law, and how he ever is to receive it into his bosom in all its fulness and blessedness he knows not. Look again at another

cluster of promises, which I put together as having a certain connection, spoken by the mouth of our gracious Lord: "Ask, and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you"; "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out"; "Come unto Me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"; "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you." Here is promise upon promise. No vine was ever more richly laden with clusters of grapes than the Word of God is here laden with clusters of promises, such as these from the Lord's own lips: and they are all, "Yea, and in Him, amen, unto the glory of God by us." They all proceed from the mouth of Him Who cannot lie; they are all ratified by the oath of the Covenant; all witnessed to and sealed by the blood of the Lamb; and Jesus lives at God's right hand to execute and fulfil every one of them to the uttermost. Yet such is the power of unbelief, that there is a staggering in many a gracious heart at the promise, a coyly putting it aside, an inability to avail oneself of it, a hanging back, a shrinking away from it; and though the clusters hang before the eye in all their richness and ripeness, and the mouth waters after them, yet from the shortened hand it is not able to reach one of them and bring it down to the lips. Now take another promise. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18), Here we have the combination of an invitation and a promise. The invitation is to come out and be separate from the world; the promise is that God will receive such, and be a Father unto them. But how often is the invitation acted upon; and yet, from the power of unbelief there is a staggering at the promise. But do they not both go together?

Why then should we separate them? Why doubt that God has received you and will be a Father unto you if you have come out from among the ungodly, and are separate from every unclean thing, whether person, doctrine, or practice? I have no doubt that we have some, if not many, here, who are daily staggering at the promise of God, and that through unbelief. They cannot but see that the Word of God is full of promises; they cannot but feel how suitable those promises are to their state and case; and yet through unbelief they stagger, and as we read in Psa. cvii. of "those who do business in great waters," "reel to and fro like drunken men, and are at their wits' end," unable to receive these promises through unbelief. Now I would not encourage any one to venture upon these promises except in that faith which God gives; for I am sure, if we take the promises with a hand which God himself does not strengthen, if we lay hold of them with a faith which is not his gift, we shall be certain to repent of our presumption in so doing, and be driven back from the standing which we have taken. The children of Israel, on one occasion, "presumed to go up upon the hill top," when "the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, and Moses His servant, departed not out of the camp."

And what was the consequence of their presumption? "Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah" (Num. xiv. 45). Therefore, though it is painful, yes, painful in the extreme, to the children of God, to be so exercised with the power of unbelief, so to stagger and be at their wits' end, and not be able to avail themselves of the promises which are directed to their case, yet in the end what profitable lessons do they learn in that school; what a sifting there is of the chaff and the dust of unbelief from the pure grains of faith. In that furnace, how their presumption, their vain confidence, their fleshly arrogance, their false faith are burnt up as by fire, and how they learn in themselves and for themselves—there being no other way of attaining to a practical knowledge of it—that faith is the gift of God, and does not stand in the operation of our own hands, or stand in the wisdom of men.

(To be continued.)

SERMONETTES FOR STAY-AT-HOME SUNDAYS.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW.

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

THE law of God may be defined to be the expression of His will in relation to the righteousness which He requires from man. The moral law, contained in the ten commandments, is a perfect standard of righteousness. In its essence, it requires love to God and love to man, and every transgression proceeds from a lack of this love. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10, and see also Matt. xxii. 37-40). This law was implanted in the heart of man before he fell, and its working is still manifest in those peoples which have not the law of God, as writes the apostle, Romans ii. 14, 15, "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another." In the course of time, God gave the law to His chosen people, Israel, but that law they did not keep, as the martyr Stephen charges, when addressing the council of the Jews, saying, "Who have received the law by the disposition of Angels, and have not kept it" (Acts vii. 53).

What then was God's purpose in giving the law? (1) That all might be brought in guilty before Him. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." (2) That the Spirit-taught people of God might get to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and that they cannot become righteous through obedience to the law. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified (i.e., accounted righteous) in

His sight ; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." " Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound " (Rom. v. 20). " I had not known sin but by the law " (Rom. vii. 7), writes the Apostle Paul of himself.

(3) To be " the ministration of condemnation," and " the ministration of death " (2 Cor. iii. 7, 9), in the personal experience of those taught of God. St. Paul realized this. " I was alive without the law once ; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." Then, as do all God's children, he died to all legal hope, to all hope of being saved by his own righteousness. (4) To bring unto Christ, as Paul writes of himself and fellow believers. " The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith " (Gal. iii. 24). When the Spirit-taught man is convinced of sin, and finds that the holy law of God condemns him, and adjudges him to death, he can have no true peace until he finds it in Christ Jesus in whom there is " no condemnation " (Rom. viii. 1).

Reader, you and I have transgressed the law innumerable times, and we are constantly coming short of the righteousness it requires. Our only refuge is the Lord Jesus Christ, " The end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth " (Rom. x. 4). Trusting in His finished work, we can say :—

"The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do ;
My Saviour's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."
(A. M. Toplady.)

" NEITHER DO I CONDEMN THEE."

WITH the promise that He will take away the stony heart and give them a heart of flesh, God intimates to His people that their new life will be one of feeling. If they are to have fellowship with the Lord, they must know much sorrow, and know, too, the anointing with that oil of joy which in pre-eminence is for ever Christ's. And if they grow in grace (as all who are taught of the Spirit must) their spiritual realizations will be more acute. In the Book of Psalms, where the Lord discloses the effects of His goings in His people's hearts, every experience finds a place, from the wastings of envy to amazement at the tender lovingkindness and goodness of God, from the miseries of one's own nature to the comfortings of God's love and acceptance. What a fury David was in when they brought Nabal's message to him. That was not a spiritual God-given sensation surely. No, it was not, but the the repentance that followed it was, and so was the heart-melting conviction, softened with the dew of heaven, that the Lord had not forsaken him. It is a very great and sweet mercy and one that amazes the soul, to see that the Lord has prevented us with His saving power, and has delivered us from the prevailings of our own spirits.

I was wondering how Elisha felt when Gehazi left the room, smitten with leprosy for his lie. Naaman by that time was far beyond recall. He had gone with the belief that after all Elisha had taken some of his things although he had sworn by the living God that he would take none. Of course Gehazi had professed that they were for the young strangers, but still he would feel—I should think—cast down and would wonder what Naaman would think. How helpless he was to make that straight which God had made crooked! What a peaceful rejoicing night he would have had, but for this miserable ending! Probably many of us know what it is. The devil says, "I will run after him and take somewhat of him," and he is on our heels in no time, a thief coming to rob and to spoil, and our peace is taken away from us. Anything or nothing will do it, but whether it is anything or nothing the Lord God of Elisha is above it, and He Himself balances all His providences to keep His people at His feet, or to bring them back there. Perhaps Elisha turned to Psalm xxxvii, and read in the 32nd and 33rd verses, "The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged." It needs the light and illumination of the Lord Himself in the heart's experience to make us believe that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Day after day, with the Lord's emptyings and turnings to and fro, they seem to be condemned, although He Himself explains that it is present chastening instead of future judgment. That is a sweet verse, "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things." He knows amongst the "all things" how great His love is, how complete His removing and forgiving of all their sins, how ceaseless His care, how delicate His handiwork. He knows how to correct all the leprous encroachments of pride, how to make Himself dearer and more indispensable to His children. What a persuasion it will be and a revelation when *He* says, "Neither do I condemn thee, go in peace."

FOLLOWER-ON.

PROVISION FOR ALL.

"O fill me with Thy fulness, Lord,
 Until my very heart o'erflow,
 In kindling thought and glowing word,
 Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show."

THIS is my prayer as I write this short paper for the dear GOSPEL MAGAZINE readers. One feels language so inadequate and words all too poor to express the telling of His love and the showing of His power. It is sweet to remember that the Master Himself gave us the familiar pictures of homely every-day matters that we see all round, and that appeal to us so strikingly, to express His intense love and His constant care for us, and His continual remembrance of us. He argues from the less to the greater and from the greater to the less.

Let us take, for instance, two or three well-known instances from His wonderful Sermon on the Mount. "Why take ye thought for raiment?" *Why?* "Consider the lilies of the field. . . . *Wherefore* if God so clothe the grass of the field which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not *much more* clothe you, O ye of little faith?" *They are transient, you have everlasting life in Me.* Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these simple, beautiful flowers, God's *Own* handiwork, but *how much more* you, dear child of God. For He has not only provided for all needs here, but "He hath *clothed* me with the garments of salvation, He hath *covered* me with the robe of righteousness," and that righteousness is the righteousness of His dear Son. "He hath made *Him* to be *sin* for us, Who knew no sin, that *we* might be made *the righteousness* of God in Him."

"When I stand before the Throne,
Dressed in beauty *not my own* ;
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then, *how much* I owe."

Then again, the great and tender and loving Preacher, thinking of His needy hungering ones, said, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink. . . . Behold the fowls of the air . . . your heavenly Father feedeth *them*. Are ye not *much better* than they?" I have often noticed the poor little birds. They do not know where breakfast and supper will be found, but He knows and provides. And if for them, *how much more* for the beloved, redeemed family. Yes, and He does not let us go unfed in spiritual food either. I am deaf, and listen in consequence very closely to sermons. A few days ago, listening to a dear man of God, I caught only two words, "God's own," but they were a feast. "*My* people," *Mine own*—purchased, bought, redeemed—God's *own*.

We have yet another phase of feeding in the Sermon: "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish will he give him a serpent? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, *how much more* shall your Father Which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" Ah! how many of us have known the *much more*. We ask, and He loads us with good things; sometimes good things in disguise which *seem* evil; sometimes turning our wishes into other desires far better than we had first asked.

I was looking very recently over some old papers and came across a tract which had been treasured for years. I found in it a sweet, simple story of a dear little child which will be appreciated by loving readers. "One day a lady was giving her little nephew some lessons. He was generally a good, attentive child, but on this occasion he could not fix his mind on his work. Suddenly he said, 'Auntie, may I kneel down and ask God to help me find my marble?' His aunt having given her consent, the little boy knelt by his chair, closed his eyes and prayed silently. Then he rose and went on with his lessons contentedly.

Next day, almost afraid of asking the question, lest the child had not found his toy, and so might lose his simple faith, the lady said to him, 'Well, dear, have you found your marble?' 'No, auntie, but God has made me *not want to.*' You will read between the lines and see the inference. I believe this is the key to many seemingly ungranted prayers. Our Father does not give us that for which we ask immediately, but so turns our desires to that which He had prepared for us, that we actually do not *wish* for that which we had previously asked. Ah, "*Thy will be done*" is not always submission only, not always acquiescent yielding to the undesired. But by the Spirit's eye-opening and heart-softening it is a joyous, love-lifting response. Knowing "*Thy will*" comprises all the working out of the infinitely wise and tender and complete life-plan of the Lover of souls for His precious, blood-bought people. And so all is well. His will is all love-designed. We have many foes, and in these last days Satan's hosts are doing their worst to entangle and confuse and blind the people of God. But He sees and knows His fearing and His weak ones. "Fear not, little flock," He says; "it is your *Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*" God so loved that He gave, and in the beloved Son He gave He "is well pleased." And Christ is personally interested in us: He knows our difficulty and sympathizes. "*I know their sorrows and am come down to deliver them.*" He has His Peters still who in fear of poor human scorn deny Him, but whom He recalls to allegiance with a look. What must that look have been to Peter? Love, anguish and reproach all mingled when Christ heard, as He undoubtedly did hear, the three-times denial. Yet tenderest love and remembrance mingled when He asked Peter three times: "*Lovest thou Me?*"

He has His Thomas's, too, who will not believe unless they *see*, to whom He shows very distinctly the wounds in His hands and side. He still has His beloved Johns who rest on His bosom, and to whom He reveals the secrets of His Covenant love. He has His Marys, who in loving sacrifice give their all of sweetness and devotion, and He has His Marthas, who delight to work for Him with their hands. He values their handiwork, but He bids them, nevertheless, give not only hands but hearts in the love that quietly listens, unwilling to lose one word that falls from His sacred lips. Oh, He notes all and values all the service, all the faith, the little faith, the great faith, and the lowly in heart. The great Captain of our salvation is watching. Our foes are many and strong, but He is stronger, and He will be victorious. Hold on and hold out, dear soldier of Christ. He is holding thee.

"By faith I counter-plot my foes
Nor need their ambush fear;
Because my lifeguard also goes
Behind me in the rear."

Before, beside, behind—oh, what hast thou to fear?—nothing, no one. He "hears thy sighs and counts thy tears." He knows thy sins which are many. Thou weepst for them, but behold Him. "Behold *Me!* Behold *Me!*" He cries to thee, "Behold and live!"

“Though thy sins were untold as the sands,
Thy Saviour has scattered them wide;
Oh, look on the palms of His hands,
And the rent and the stream at His side.
So long as Thy Saviour shall reign,
And the Throne of His glory endure,
So long will His promise remain,
And thy pardon and peace are secure.”

“White in the blood of the Lamb.” “I beheld, and lo! in the midst of the throne, stood a Lamb as it had been slain.” “He shall reign for ever and ever.”

NETTIE.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

FROM “THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAW AND GRACE UNFOLDED.”
BY JOHN BUNYAN.

OBJECTOR: Alas, Man, I am afraid I have sinned the unpardonable sin, and therefore there is no hope for me.

ANSW.: Dost thou know what the unpardonable sin (the sin against the Holy Ghost) is? And when it is committed?

REPLY: It is a sin against Light.

ANSW.: That is true; yet every sin against Light is not the sin against the Holy Ghost.

REPLY: Say you so?

ANSW.: Yea, and I will prove it thus; if every sin against Light had been the unpardonable sin, then had David and Peter, and others, sinned that sin: but though they did sin against Light, yet they did not sin that sin; therefore every sin against Light is not the sin against the Holy Ghost, the unpardonable sin.

OBJECTOR: But the Scripture saith, “If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”

ANSW.: Do you know what that wilful sin is?

REPLY: Why, what is it? Is it not for a man to sin wilfully after enlightening?

1. ANSW.: Yes; yet doubtless every willing sin is not that, . . . for then Jonah had sinned it, when he fled from the presence of the Lord; and Solomon also, when he had so many concubines.

2. ANSW.: But that sin is a sin of another nature, which is thus: for a man, after he hath made some profession of salvation, to come alone by the blood of Jesus, together with some light and power of the same upon his spirit, I say, for him, after this, knowingly, wilfully, and despitefully, to trample upon the blood of Christ shed on the cross, and to count it an unholy thing, or no better than the blood of another man, and rather to venture his soul any other way, than to be saved by this precious blood. And this must be done, I say,

after some light (Heb. iv. 5), despitefully (Heb. x. 29), knowingly (2 Pet. ii. 21), and wilfully (Heb. x. 26, compared with verse 29), and that not in a hurry and sudden fit, as Peter's was; but with some time beforehand to pause upon it first, with Judas; and also with a continued resolution never to turn or be converted again. "For it is impossible to renew such again to repentance," they are so resolved, and so desperate (Heb. vi.).

QUEST.: And how sayest thou now? Didst thou ever after thou hadst received some blessed light from Christ, wilfully, despitefully, and knowingly, stamp or trample the blood of the Man Christ Jesus under thy feet? And art thou ever resolved so to do?

ANSW.: Oh, no, I would not do that wilfully, despitefully, and knowingly, not for all the world.

INQUIRY: But yet I must tell you, now you put me in mind of it, surely sometimes I have most horribly blasphemous thoughts in me against God, Christ, and the Spirit: may not these be that sin, too?

ANSW.: Dost thou delight in them? Are they such things as thou takest pleasure in?

REPLY: Oh, no, neither would I do it for a thousand worlds. Oh, methinks they make me sometimes tremble to think of them: but how, and if I should delight in them before I am aware?

ANSW.: Beg of God for strength against them, and if at any time thou findest thy wicked heart to give way in the least thereto (for that is likely enough), and though thou find it may on a sudden give way to that hell-bred wickedness that is in it; yet do not despair, for as much as Christ hath said, "All manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven to the sons of men. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man (Christ) as he may do with Peter, through temptation, yet upon repentance, it shall be forgiven him" (Matt. xii. 32).

OBJECT.: But I thought it might have been committed all on a sudden, either by some blasphemous thought, or else by committing some other horrible sin.

ANSW.: For certain this sin, and the commission of it, doth lie in a knowing, wilful, malicious, or spiteful, together with a final trampling the blood of sweet Jesus under foot (Heb. x.).

OBJECT.: But it seems to be rather a resisting of the Spirit, and motions thereof, than this which you say; for first, its proper title is the sin against the Holy Ghost. And again, "They have done despite unto the Spirit of grace," so that it rather seems to be, I say, that a resisting of the Spirit, and the movings thereof, is that sin.

1. ANSW.: For certain the sin is committed by them that do as I have said, that is, by a final knowing, wilful, malicious trampling under foot the blood of Christ, which was shed on Mount Calvary, when Jesus was there crucified. And though it be called the sin against the Spirit, yet (as I said before) every sin against the Spirit is not that, for if it was, then every sin against the light and convictions of the Spirit would be unpardonable, but that is an evident untruth,

for these reasons: First, because there be those who have sinned against the movings of the Spirit, and that knowingly too, and yet did not commit that. As Jonah, who when God had expressly by His Spirit bid him go to Nineveh, he runs thereupon quite another way. Secondly, because the very people that have sinned against the movings of the Spirit, are yet, if they do return, received to mercy. Witness also Jonah, who, though he had sinned against the movings of the Spirit of the Lord, in doing contrary thereto, yet when he called (as he saith) to the Lord, (out of the belly of hell) the Lord heard him, and gave him deliverance, and set him again about his work (read the whole story of that prophet).

2. ANSW. : But, secondly, I shall show you, that it must needs be wilfully, knowingly, and a malicious rejecting of the Man Christ Jesus, as the Saviour. That is, counting His blood, His righteousness, His intercession, in His own person (for he that rejects one rejects all) to be of no value, as to salvation. I say, this I shall show you is the unpardonable sin. And then, afterwards, in brief, show you why it is called the sin against the Holy Ghost. First, that man that doth reject, as aforesaid the blood, death, righteousness, resurrection, and intercession of the Man Christ Jesus, doth reject that sacrifice, that blood, that righteousness, that victory, that rest, that God alone hath appointed for salvation (John i. 29). "Behold the Lamb (or sacrifice) of God." "We have redemption through His blood" (Ephes. i. 7). "That I may be found in Him" (to wit) in Christ's righteousness, with Christ's own personal obedience to His Father's will (Phil. iii. 7-10). By His resurrection comes justification (Rom. iv. 25). His intercession now in His own person in the heavens, now absent from His saints, is the cause of the saints' perseverance (2 Cor. vi. 7, 8, also Rom. viii. 33-36, etc.).

Secondly, they that reject this sacrifice, and the merits of this Christ, which He by Himself hath brought in for sinners, hath rejected Him through Whom alone all the promises of the New Testament, together with all the mercy discovered thereby, doth come unto poor creatures. "For all the promises of God are in Him, yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God" (2 Cor. i. 20). And all spiritual blessings are made over to us through Him (Ephes. i. 3, 4). That is through and in this Man (which is Christ) we have all our spiritual, heavenly, and eternal mercies.

Thirdly, he that doth knowingly, wilfully, and despitefully reject this Man for salvation, doth sin the unpardonable sin; because there is never another sacrifice to be offered (Heb. x. 26). There is no more offering for sin, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin (Heb. x. 18) (namely, than the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, a sacrifice once for all. Heb. x. 10 and 14, compared with verses 18 and 26). No, but they that shall after light and clear conviction reject the first offering of His body for salvation, do crucify Him the second time, which irrevocably merits their own damnation. For it is impossible for those that were once enlightened, and have

tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come; if they shall fall away to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and do put Him to open shame. Oh, then, how miserable hath the devil deceived some, in that he hath got them to reject the merits of the first offering of the body of Christ; (which was for salvation) and hath got them to trust in a fresh crucifying of Christ, which unavoidably brings them speedy damnation.

Fourthly, they that do reject this Man, as aforesaid, do sin the unpardonable sin; because in rejecting Him, they do make way for the justice of God to break out upon them; which will be in the first place, sinners against the first Covenant, which is the soul-damning Covenant; and also despising of (even the life and glory, and consolations, pardon, grace, and love, that is discovered in) the second Covenant, forasmuch as they reject the Mediator, the Priest of the same, which is the Man Jesus. And the man that doth so, I would fain see how his sins should be pardoned, and his soul saved, seeing the means (which is the Son of Man, the Son of Mary, and His merits) is rejected. For saith He, If you believe not that I am He, you shall, mark, you shall, do what you can, you shall, appear where you can, you shall, follow Moses's law, or any holiness whatsoever, you shall die in your sins (John viii. 24). So that, I say, the sin that is called the unpardonable sin, is a knowing, wilful, and despiteful rejecting of the sacrificing of the Son of Man the first time for sin. And now to show you why it is called the sin against the Holy Ghost, as in these Scriptures (Matt. xii.; Heb. x.; Mark iii.).

First, because they sin against the manifest light of the Spirit. That is, they have been formerly enlightened into the nature of the Gospel, and the merits of the Man Christ, and His blood, righteousness, intercession, etc. And also professed and confessed the same, with some life and comfort in, and through the profession of Him: yet now against all that light, maliciously, and with despite to all their former profession, turn their backs, and trample upon the same.

Secondly, it is called the sin against the Holy Ghost, because such a person doth (as I may say) lay violent hands upon it; one that sets himself in opposition to, and is resolved to resist all the motions that do come in from the Spirit to persuade the contrary. For I do verily believe that men in this very rejecting of the Son of God, after some knowledge of Him, especially at their first resisting and refusing of Him, they have certain motions of the Spirit of God to dissuade them from so great a soul-damning act. But they being filled with an over-powering measure of the spirit of the devil do despite unto these convictions and motions, by studying and contriving how they may answer them, and get under a more convincing nature of them; and therefore it is called a long dispute unto the Spirit of grace (Heb. x. 29).

"OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST."

BY THE VEN. R. J. NOYES, M.A., B.D.

"LOOKING for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." This translation given of Titus ii. 13, in the R.V., is no doubt more accurate than that of the A.V., viz. : "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," though the latter rendering conveys the same meaning concerning the Person of Christ, that He is the great Saviour God of His people, the appearing of whose glory they are looking for. Jesus Christ, whose coming, and birth into the world, Christendom commemorates at the ecclesiastical season of "Advent" and "Christmas," is both perfect God and perfect Man, in one Person, as set forth in the above Scripture, as well as in very many others. In Isaiah ix. 6, we have a notable prophecy, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," and we are informed in Matthew i. 20-23, that His birth and His name *Jesus*, fulfilled another prediction "spoken of the Lord by the prophet" (Isaiah), "Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with us." In the name *Jesus* which means, *Jehovah, the Saviour*, we have a fulfilment of the prophecy, "They shall call His name *Emmanuel*," meaning God with us.

But the Lord Jesus was, and is, not only perfect God, but also perfect Man, the Godhead and Manhood being united in His one Person, according to the words of Isaiah ix. 6, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." This is clear also from the prediction of Micah v. 2, "But thou, Bethlehem-Ephrathah . . . out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," as well as from the announcement of the angel to the shepherds of Bethlehem, "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Now if we believe aright concerning the Person of Christ, we have no difficulty in believing the fact of His Virgin birth,—no more difficulty than in believing the fact of the creation of heaven and the earth, for with God all things are possible. If we hold the fundamental truth of the essential Deity of the Lord Jesus, we shall unhesitatingly receive the testimony of the Scriptures regarding the miracles which He wrought when here upon earth, as well as of His physical resurrection and His ascension into glory.

Moreover, as the God-Man, Christ Jesus, His people believe Him to be their great Saviour, Who lived a perfect life of obedience to the will and law of God, and then laid down His life for them, bearing in His own Person the penalties of the law which they have broken, for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made

a curse for us ; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree " (Gal. iii. 13).

We have not to think of an angry God being appeased by the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus, but of God in His Trinity of Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, carrying into effect His purpose of love and grace for the salvation of sinners in accordance with His infinite holiness, righteousness, and truth.

Well did John Kent write :—

" A monument of grace,
A sinner saved by blood,
The streams of love I trace,
Up to the fountain, God ;
And in His sacred bosom see,
Eternal thoughts of love to me."

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

" *The Lord our Righteousness.*"—JEREMIAH xxiii. 6.

It will always give a Christian the greatest calm, quiet, ease, and peace, to think of the perfect righteousness of Christ. How often are the saints of God downcast and sad ! I do not think they ought to be. I do not think they would if they could always see their perfection in Christ. There are some who are always talking about corruption, and the depravity of the heart, and the innate evil of the soul. This is quite true, but why not go a little further, and remember that we are " perfect in Christ Jesus " ? It is no wonder that those who are dwelling upon their own corruption should wear such downcast looks ; but surely if we call to mind that " Christ is made unto us righteousness," we shall be of good cheer. What though distresses afflict me, though Satan assault me, though there may be many things to be experienced before I get to heaven, those are done for me in the Covenant of Divine grace ; there is nothing wanting in my Lord, Christ hath done it all. On the cross He said, " It is finished ! " and if it be finished, then am I complete in Him, and can rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, " Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." You will not find on this side heaven a holier people than those who receive into their hearts the doctrine of Christ's righteousness. When the believer says, " I live on Christ alone ; I rest on him solely for salvation ; and I believe that, however unworthy, I am still saved in Jesus " ; then there rises up as a motive of gratitude this thought—" Shall I not live to Christ ? Shall I not love Him and serve Him, seeing that I am saved by His merits ? " " The love of Christ constraineth us," " that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them." If saved by imputed righteousness, we shall greatly value imparted righteousness.—*C. H. Spurgeon's " Morning by Morning."*

NOTES ON JUSTIFICATION.

BY THE LATE REV. JOSEPH SILVESTER, M.A., VICAR OF HAWKSHAW LANE, TOTTINGTON, BURY.

1. *Guard against wrong meanings of the word.* Two wrong meanings attached to it. Thought to be synonymous with pardon. Thought to be equivalent to "make righteous." Both unscriptural. For true meaning of the word see Luke vii. 29; 1 Tim. iii. 16. What did the publicans do when they justified God? Did they pardon Him? The thought impious and profane. Did they make Him righteous? Absurd! But this they did. They declared God "righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works." He was righteous in sending such a plain-spoken man as the Baptist was to them. Others complained of God's dealings with them in this respect. They said, "Behold, he hath a devil."

Justified in or by means of the Spirit of God.—The character under which Christ suffered was that of a malefactor "If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee." But His character cleared by His resurrection. It was shown He was righteous. He was declared righteousness. True He suffered for sins but they were not His own, but ours.

Quite plain then from these two Scriptures that justify means to declare righteous.

It is not a *state* as Romanists and Ritualists declare, but an act whereby God declares the believer righteous. It is a transitive act, passing from the subject to the object. The sinner who is justified has the sweet sense of God's love shed abroad in his heart.

2. *Justified by His grace—meritoriously.* Dwell on grace as the attribute of God—latent until the judgment scene in the garden of Eden. The highest Archangel did not know God was a gracious God until the fall of man. No grace shown to fallen angels.

The great reason perhaps why sin allowed to enter the world was to manifest this hitherto latent attribute—God's grace.

To show the freeness of God's justification of the sinner, compare Rom. iii. 24 with John xv. 25.

"They hated me, *ἔωρεάν*, without a cause or freely."

"Being justified, *ἔωρεάν*, without a cause" or freely.

Thus the same reason which the Jews had for hating Christ, God has for justifying us.

Why did the Jews hate Christ? Either for His words or for His works. But not for His words. See Luke iv. 22 and John vii. 46. Both confessions from those not friendly to Him. Therefore no reason in His words why they should hate Him. Not hated for His works. See Matt. xi. 5 and St. Peter's words, "He went about doing good." No reason in His works why they should hate Him. Why did they hate Him? The cause in themselves. They were so bad and He so good. They could not help hating Him.

Why does God justify us? Either for our words or our works?

Not for our words. How often we speak foolishly, unkindly, untruthfully, in vain and to no purpose. In Psalm xxx. 12, David calls our tongue our glory. So it is when employed in praising and glorifying God. But how often our glory is turned into shame. No reason in our words why God should justify us. Nor any in our works. Because all stained with sin. Hooker once said if our salvation were made dependent on the production of a single sinless act performed by any man since the fall it would never be accomplished. So corrupt and depraved has man become. No reason then in our works. Why then does God justify us? Because He is so good. The cause is altogether in Himself.

This abates the pride of the high-minded. This drives away the despair of the lowly in heart.

3. *Justified by faith instrumentally.* Guard against the High-Church idea that faith is counted *instead* of righteousness, a less thing for a greater, as though God made a kind of composition with sinners because they could not pay twenty shillings in the pound, he would accept the hundredth part of a farthing.

"His faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5). "*For*" does not mean here "*instead of*" as when we say, "Christ gave Himself for me." It is not *ἕνεκα*—instead of, but *εἰς*—unto the receiving of righteousness, that is, the means of receiving.

E.g., The conduit pipes convey water to our large towns, but the water comes from the lakes. What the pipes are in conveying water, faith is in conveying righteousness to the sinner.

The panes of glass in the window only convey the light—they do not make it. Faith conveys the blessing—it does not make it.

As faith is the means of our union with Christ, it is all important. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit," and therefore whatever the Lord has the believer has.

4. *Justified by works, i.e., evidentially.* Plato used to say in every man there are two men—an inward man and an outward man. St. Paul has adopted this mode of speaking (Rom. vii), "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," and 2 Cor. iv. 16. Now you cannot see my inward man, that is, you cannot really see whether I have faith or not, but you can see my outward man, that is, you can see what kind of life I lead, and if you see that my practice agrees with my profession you say, "I believe what he says, that he is a believer in Jesus." Thus before men we are justified by works. The evidence of our justification is our works. When St. James speaks of Abraham's being justified by works he must mean that he was justified before men, because by his act of offering up Isaac, he proved he was obedient. Really speaking, however, he was justified before Isaac was born (Gen. xv. 6).

5. "*Justified by His blood.*" Why? Because by consenting to shed His blood He gave the clearest and most unmistakable proof of His obedience. "He became obedient *unto* death, even the death of the cross." "By one man's obedience shall many be constituted righteous."

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

So far we have only alluded to what may perhaps be called the external manifestations of Christian unity, but now we turn to its real and essential nature. We are persuaded of its grand reality and present existence, and that it is not merely an unattainable ideal or a distant hope. Our Lord's great prayer, as recorded in John xvii. has not failed. His genuine disciples are truly one. Moreover, they are united by a bond similar to that which binds in one wondrous being the Father and the Son. The language is as clear as it is forcible, "that they all may be one (one essence) as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be one (one essence) in Us." And again, "the glory which Thou gavest Me have I given them, that they may be one (one essence), even as We are one (one essence)." And yet again, "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one (one essence)." Words like those could never be satisfied by any external union, even the most complete, or by any agreement in doctrine and practice, even the most elaborate. They speak of a spiritual, vital, and perfect unity of being which is the distinguishing hall-mark of every member of the real family of God. This unity is invisible. We know, of course, that as the spirit of a man reveals itself in his actions, so there are signs and tokens by which the inner character may in a measure be displayed and be discerned by the world. But the thing itself is, and must be, unseen. It is not to be sought in sameness of creed, uniformity of worship or community of outward life, and all attempts to realize it in that way must be misleading and vain. The word "church" is used in such a variety of meanings that there is a sense in which we may speak of it as visible; but the one true Church of Christ is essentially invisible, and cannot be seen in any external organization or group of organizations. It is, we are told, "the body of Christ, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Christ Himself the Head of the body is invisible, and so in reality are His members. The bond of union by which they are made one with Him cannot be discerned by the eye of sense, and neither can the vital oneness by which they are bound one to another. Moreover, the great company of His own people, who finished their course on earth and have gone to be with Him in Paradise, form an integral part of His Church, while they are removed from human vision, and from intercourse with their brethren who are yet in the world. If the Head is invisible, if the bond uniting the members of the body to Him and one another is invisible, and if a large part of the body lives in a sphere into which no eye can penetrate, surely the body must be invisible, and it must be wrong to take the language of the New Testament that is used regarding it as applicable to earthly and visible communities of professing Christians. We cannot, for a moment, assent to the idea that because professing believers are still divided into various denominations, the prayer of our Lord has failed, and He is waiting for men's efforts to enable Him to realize His own holy

purpose. Nor can we concur with the notion that the corporate reunion of Romanists, Easterns, Anglicans, Wesleyans, Baptists, Congregationalists, and so forth would, in any sense, bring about the fulfilment of His sublime desire expressed in His gracious prayer. Neither can we agree that differences in terminology and forms of worship are able to impair, much less sever, the vital and glorious unity of all those who are one in Christ for ever.—*English Churchman.*

THE "GOSPEL MAGAZINE" FUND.

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

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CHEERING TESTIMONY FROM KENT.

"OFTEN when reading the GOSPEL MAGAZINE I have felt I should like to send you a line or two to express the pleasure it has given me to know there are still just a few left in the Church of England who contend for the Truth as only to be known by the teaching of the Spirit, of whom I believe you to be one. I meet to worship with a few Strict Baptists, so can make no claim to being a Churchman, but that denomination was for the most part very concerned that the new Deposited Prayer Book should not be legalised by our Parliament, and as you so valiantly protested against it in the GOSPEL MAGAZINE we rejoice with you in its rejection. My object is to send you a word of encouragement as one outside your pale, and there are many others that feel kindly toward you, so that although you feel the frowns of those in the establishment, you have friends outside it."—*Jan. 10th, 1929.*

"CHRIST, THE DOOR."

(JOHN x. 9.)

BY THE LATE REV. F. PEACOCK, M.A., B.D.

I. *He is the Door by which the Shepherds enter.*

This is the mark of the true shepherd. He enters by the door. He does not climb over the wall in a surreptitious manner, but enters in a proper and authorized way by the door. The Pharisees were false shepherds. They showed by their conduct and by their treatment of the flock that they had never been called of God to the office. They would not accept Christ as the only way to God. They would not use Him as the Door. They had social position and superior knowledge, but neither money nor education can make a man a true shepherd. There are plenty of false shepherds abroad to-day. They act in the capacity of ministers. They have managed to secure "Holy Orders," but it does not follow that they are holy men. They have taken good degrees at the University, but these do not qualify them to be Shepherds of God's flock. The grand question after all is this. Have they entered by the Door? Have they come to the Lord Jesus as lost sinners, and been washed in His blood? If not, they may do what they please and say what they please, but the true sheep will never recognize them as their shepherds. They will look upon them as "strangers" and will flee from them. There is a great scattering of the Lord's flock in these last perilous days. The sheep are fleeing in all directions, and can we wonder at it!

II. *He is the Door by which the Sheep enter.*

All Christ's true sheep have personal dealings with Him. There is no other way for the sheep to get into the flock but by the Door. Some would tell us that Baptism is the door, but there are multitudes who have been baptized with water, who exhibit none of the marks of Christ's sheep. Others imagine that the Lord's Supper is the door. It is possible, however, to take the Lord's Supper regularly and yet miss the true Door and die in sin. Christ says "I am the Door, by ME if any man enter in he shall be saved, etc." That is the superscription over the Door—"If any man." The Door is wide open—it is an ever-open door—and any man, whatever his age, or country or condition, is welcome to enter in. None who come are excluded. On no account is anyone who comes cast out. The more sinful he is the more welcome he is. It is the proud boast of Dr. Barnardo's Institution that "no destitute child is ever refused admission." So it is with Christ. The poorer we are—the more destitute we are—the more bankrupt we are of any merit or goodness, the more ready he is to receive us. Anyone who ventures in, shall be SAVED.

"The Jew still remains the most irrefutable witness to the historical character and supernatural element of the Scripture narrative."—*David Baron.*

Our Young Folks' Page.

YOUNG BELIEVERS.

DELIGHTFUL news from a far country reached me on January 14th. Three Jinghpaw youths had been baptized on the 19th of the previous month by the river at Kamaing in the wilds of Upper Burma. They were attending the Government school in that place, and had given evidence of being real believers since June, 1928. From that time they had been receiving special teaching from the missionary in charge of that station. The missionary, who baptized them, travelled nearly a hundred miles in order to do so. He had an interview with each of the youths, and was quite satisfied with their answers. He believes that they are all truly born again. On the following day, in the afternoon, they were baptized in the presence of about fifty other Jinghpaws. The missionary says: "We had a very impressive time. In the evening we had the Lord's Supper in Jinghpaw, and the newly-baptized partook. Our little band has now grown to eleven, and one realizes what a mighty power for good these few can be if truly endued with power from on high."

The Lord is graciously working in the hearts of young people at home as well as abroad. Early in January of this year eighteen young men gathered together for a week-end with older servants of God, who might be useful to them with regard to their spiritual life. All the young fellows present had already felt God's call to go out as missionaries to China, and each hopes to do so when the Lord opens out the way.

In these days, when young folks, as well as older people, are running so eagerly after pleasure, that even the Lord's Day is used to carry out their sinful desires, it is lovely to realize that the Lord is calling out a people for His Name, some from our own and other civilized countries, and some from amongst degraded heathen tribes.

Telling you, my dear young reader, of the happy position of the three Jinghpaw lads, leads me to ask if, through God's mercy, *you* are born again. Has the Holy Spirit imparted new life to *you*? If you are doubtful about the matter, and yet longing to know if you are saved, turn to the Scriptures, where alone you can find the help which you need. Listen to the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in John iii. 36: "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life," and in chap. v. 24: "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, *hath everlasting life*." All who thus believe in Jesus flee to Him for refuge, as they realize their exceeding sinfulness and their great need. And oh! how gracious are His words in John vi. 37: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and Him that *cometh* to Me I will in no wise cast out"! Having thus come to Jesus, you will manifest that you are truly "born again" by His wondrous grace.

E. A. H.

Protestant Beacon.**EVANGELICAL CLERGY AND THE BISHOPS.**

ON December 24th last we received two letters from two Evangelical clergymen living in different parts of the country, and both referred to the proposed action of the Bishops in regard to the revised Prayer Book, twice rejected by Parliament.

One of the clergy wrote as follows: "I do not know whether you are feeling happier about your Church and its Bishops, but I expect that you are easier in mind. The whole attitude of the Episcopal Bench has been most distressing. I could never have believed that a body of Englishmen could have acted in so crooked a way, and certainly not Christian men, nor Bishops of the Church of England. I am sorry that my confidence in them has gone. Still, we are heartily thankful for the stand that has been made for the Truth, and possibly the manifestation of the extent of error may make many more valiant for the 'Truth.'"

The other clergyman wrote: "I am utterly ashamed of our Episcopal Bench. They seem to stand in need of learning the first elements of citizenship. What a spectacle!"

Needless to say, we ourselves are much saddened by the proposals of the Bishops to allow the use of a Book either in whole or in part which has been twice rejected by Parliament. We think that they blundered grievously when they refused to accept the first decision of Parliament, given in December, 1927. Now they are blundering again, and seem unconsciously to be courting fresh disaster.

Their proper course, surely, is to accept the decision of Parliament and administer and judiciously enforce the present legal Book of Common Prayer. They should remember their own ordination vows, and encourage others to do the same, and they should cease to promote men who are disloyal to the formularies and doctrines of the Church of England. Bishops of the Church of England, above all men, should set an example of loyalty to the Evangelical truths of the Bible, and to the principles of the Protestant Reformation, as well as of obedience to the law of the land.

AGED PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY.

THE financial year of the Society closes on March 31st, and if friends will please bear this in mind and send as early in the month as possible, their kindness will be much appreciated.

The inmates of our Hornsey Rise Home had their New Year's Tea on January 11th, after which the Rev. J. Wilmot, of Highgate, gave an address on the seven confessions of the 119th Psalm which was very much enjoyed.

Many friends have during the past year sent articles for the Sales of Work, and the Committee hope for a continuance of this favour this year also. The Sale of Work at the Camberwell Home will be

held on June 13th, and that at Hornsey Rise on July 5th. Gifts for either or both these Sales will be most welcome.

Services in the interest of the Society have been arranged to take place (D.V.) on March 5th, at Grove Chapel, Camberwell, at 7 o'clock, at Zion Chapel, London Road, Norbiton, on the 13th, at 7.30, and at Prittlewell, in the evening of the 20th.

Reviews and Notices of Books.

THE LIVING WORD AND THE WRITTEN WORD. By Alfred Ellis, J.P.
Pp. 8. Price 1d. (G. H. Fromow, 10, Whitehall Gardens,
Chiswick, London, W.4.)

This is an excellent booklet showing that Christ is the theme of the written Word and that the written Word was Christ's theme. The author shows how universally the Lord quoted the Old Testament Scriptures as inspired and authoritative, and he says, "I stake my soul on the Word of Christ every time." The booklet is well worthy of wide circulation.

"PROTESTANT": ITS ORIGIN AND MEANING. Pp. 4. Price 6d. dozen.

THE USE OF THE TERM "PROTESTANT" IN ENGLAND. Pp. 8. Price 9d. per dozen.

IS THE CHURCH PROTESTANT? Pp. 12. Price 10d. per dozen.

The above three tracts are published by the Church Association, 13 and 14, Buckingham Street, Strand, London, W.C.2.

It was on April 19th, 1529, at the Second Diet of Speyer that the name "Protestant" originated as the result of the famous PROTEST then made by the leaders of the Reformation in Germany.

The above three tracts are specially valuable in view of the 400th anniversary of that great Protest.

We have also received from the Church Association:—

DIOCESAN SYNODS: THEIR HISTORY, LEGAL STATUS, AND THREATENED REVIVAL. Pp. 16. Price 9d. per dozen, and

THE BISHOPS AND THE PRAYER BOOK: AN APPEAL TO THE LAITY.

This is an excellent 8-paged tract, and is obtainable at the price of 10d. per dozen.

DID JESUS CHRIST FOUND HIS CHURCH ON ST. PETER? By Mr. W. H. Pearce. Pp. 16. Price 2d., or 2½d. post free. (Protestant Truth Society, 3 and 4, St. Paul's Churchyard, London, E.C.4.)

This pamphlet is the opening statement at a debate at Wimbledon between Father Hugh Pope and Mr. W. H. Pearce. It is an altogether admirable, able and scriptural setting forth of the Protestant position on the question debated. Mr. Pearce is a member of the Council of the Protestant Truth Society, and his pamphlet is well worthy of a wide circulation.