

THE  
GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

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

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The Family Portion ;

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

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

SEEKING, REJOICING, LOVING, AND  
MAGNIFYING.

"Let all those that seek Thee rejoice and be glad in Thee : and let such as love Thy salvation say continually, Let GOD be magnified."—PSALM lxx. 4.

THERE are two kinds of seekers in this psalm, godly seekers and ungodly seekers. The godly seekers are those who seek after GOD. The ungodly seekers are those who seek to injure GOD's people. Of the former David says, "Let all those that seek Thee rejoice and be glad in Thee." Of the latter he prays, "Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul : let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt." GOD was David's Helper and Deliverer. He felt keenly the enmity of his persecutors, and he cried unto His Covenant GOD to intervene on his behalf. He Himself was "poor and needy" (verse 5), but there was no limit to the wealth and power of the GOD Whom he worshipped. His case was urgent, and hence his prayer was urgent. "Make haste to help me, O LORD." "Make haste unto me, O GOD : Thou art my help and my Deliverer ; O LORD, make no tarrying" (verses 1, 5). We remember one night when we were going to conduct our weekly prayer meeting at Bath that this prayer specially suited our own circumstances. We felt the need of calling upon GOD to *make haste* to help us. How beautiful to notice that the language of GOD's saints in former times often

suits ourselves. Our LORD teaches us that we may be importunate and persistent in our prayers. We may in all humility cry urgently unto our GOD to make haste to put forth His power on our behalf.

There are four words in the passage which we have selected for the Family Portion, around which its teaching may be gathered. These are *seeking, rejoicing, loving, and magnifying*.

1. First we may notice that GOD's *people are a seeking people*.

They seek after GOD. They want Him. They are unsatisfied without Him. They want His presence, His smile, and His company. With Moses they say, "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (Exod. xxxiii. 15).

It was because the prodigal was not satisfied in the far country, that he said, "I will arise, and go to my father." GOD's children want their heavenly FATHER. Without His presence and companionship their way would indeed be dark and dismal. They want Him to lift up the light of His countenance upon them. If He hides His face from them they are troubled. The language of their hearts is, "O GOD, Thou art my GOD; *early will I seek Thee*: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O GOD" (Ps. xlii. 1; lxiii. 1).

*They want His mercy.* They obtained it when first they were enabled to seek Him, but they daily feel their need of more mercy. Hence they seek Him. They enter the holiest where He is, by the blood of JESUS. They approach His throne through the merits of CHRIST, and under the influence of His SPIRIT, they seek more mercy.

*They want His grace.* Through His grace they have been quickened, regenerated, justified and saved, but they have read that "He giveth more grace," and hence they seek Him. They come to find grace to help in time of need.

*They want His bounty.* They are poor and needy and He alone can enrich them. Hence they seek Him. They have read that, "Everyone that asketh receiveth; *and he that seeketh findeth*; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matt. vii. 8).

Believing this gracious promise, they are daily seekers after GOD. They know that He is gracious and merciful to His people,

that He is able to make all grace abound toward them, and that He is able to supply all their needs according to His riches in glory by CHRIST JESUS, and knowing all this, they seek His mercy, His grace, and His bounty.

There can be no doubt that GOD's people are a seeking people. This is one of their characteristics, and they are assured that "they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing" (Ps. xxxiv. 10).

In this they are a contrast to the world in general. Of them it is said, "There is none that seeketh after GOD" (Rom. iii. 11). This is a very sad fact. Yet it is not to be wondered at. The ungodly world consists of those who are spiritually dead, and the dead have no longing, no thirst, no desire for GOD. The reason the LORD's people seek Him is because He has by His infinite grace quickened and regenerated them. He has saved them by His grace. He has justified them through CHRIST's blood. He has put His fear into them. They have passed from death unto life. Only the living people of GOD seek Him. Their longing for Him is not always as ardent as it should be. Just as they fail in asking, so they fail in seeking. They have not, because they ask not, and so they find not, because they seek not. Yet they are never happy without a consciousness of the LORD's presence, and His seeming absence stirs them to seek Him afresh.

"As pants the hart for cooling streams,  
When heated in the chase,  
So pants my soul, O God, for Thee  
And Thy refreshing grace.

"For Thee, my GOD—the living GOD—  
My thirsty soul doth pine;  
Oh! when shall I behold Thy face,  
Thou Majesty Divine?"

Are we amongst His seeking people?

2. Secondly, GOD's *people should be a rejoicing people.*

The psalmist says, "Let all those that seek Thee rejoice and be glad in Thee." Such a prayer seems to suggest that they do not always rejoice in the LORD. Beyond all doubt they have their sad and depressing experiences, and sadness rather than gladness often expresses their state. But they have always reason to rejoice and

be glad in the LORD. *They* may change, but *He never changes*. He is always the same towards His people. His power, His love, His faithfulness and His mercy endure for ever towards them. Nothing severs them from His love. They have therefore always reason to delight themselves in Him. The psalmist prays that the LORD may dispose and influence them to do this.

Other influences, in a contrary direction, abound, and we need to pray that the LORD Himself would enable us always to encourage ourselves in Him, delight in Him, and rejoice and be glad in Him. We read, "Let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before GOD: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice" (Ps. lxxviii. 3).

The apostle also says, "Rejoice in the LORD alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. iv. 4).

GOD's people have reason to rejoice, because they have a GOD to go to. The ungodly are without hope and without GOD.

They have reason to rejoice, because He is *accessible*. They may come direct to His throne of grace, and He is always near at hand to hear their prayers and to stretch out His hand to defend and keep them. They have reason to rejoice, because *He is ever ready to hear their cries*. He is a GOD full of compassion.

They have reason to rejoice, because *He has clothed them*. Isaiah said, "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my GOD; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Isa. lxi. 10). They have reason to rejoice, because of His *satisfying mercies*. "He satisfieth the longing soul and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Ps. cvii. 9).

They have abundant reason to rejoice for all that He is, and for all that He does, and for all that He has promised to do for His redeemed people. "Be glad (then) in the LORD, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart" (Ps. xxxii. 11).

Let us seek for daily grace to be of good cheer that such a GOD is yours.

3. *Thirdly, GOD's people are a loving people.*

They are ready to say,

"LORD, it is my chief complaint,  
That my love is weak and faint,"

but they feel they can add,

" Yet I love Thee and adore—  
Oh! for grace to love Thee more."

However feeble their love, they are marked definitely and really by this grace. They can say, "*We love Him*, because He first loved us." They can say, however falteringly, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, *because we love the brethren.*" They fully acknowledge that their love is very defective, yet through the indwelling influence of the SPIRIT there is a measure of love to Him Who loved them and gave Himself for them, and a measure of love to all His people. Thus the psalmist rightly describes the LORD'S people as "*such as love Thy salvation.*" They love the Author of this salvation. They love the salvation which He has bestowed on them. They love it, because of its greatness, its gratuitousness, its fulness, and its eternal duration.

They love it, because it saves them from the merited penalty of their sins, secures deliverance from sin's power, and will hereafter issue in eternal deliverance from the very presence of sin. They recognize that it is GOD'S salvation, a salvation from first to last Divine in its origin. They glory in saying, "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).

They rejoice in *His* salvation. Any thought that salvation is partly due to themselves is abhorrent to their minds. They are a people who love *His* salvation.

4. Lastly, *the psalmist suggests that GOD'S people should be a magnifying people.*

"Let such as love Thy salvation say continually, *Let GOD be magnified.*" That is the psalmist's prayer for them. They are prone to *magnify themselves*, but David prays, that they may say continually, "*Let GOD be magnified.*"

To magnify GOD then should be our constant aim and occupation. "Let such as love Thy salvation say, *Let GOD be magnified.*" This includes each individual believer. Let each child of GOD magnify Him Who has saved him. With heart and mind and soul let him praise the LORD. The Virgin Mary loved GOD'S salvation, and consequently she said, "*My soul doth magnify the LORD,*

and my spirit hath rejoiced in GOD my SAVIOUR." She was full of praise for the GOD of her salvation. He had done to her great things. She had experienced His mercy, and she could see that His mercy was on all them that feared Him. His power, His goodness, and His help had been displayed in the past. "He hath showed strength with His arm ; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things ; and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath holpen His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy ; as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever" (Luke i. 46-55).

Mary had a knowledge of the Bible history. She could recall many manifestations of GOD's power, mercy, sovereignty, goodness, help, and faithfulness. Hence her soul magnified the LORD and her spirit rejoiced in Him. Ignorance of our Bibles and of the history of GOD's dealings with His people does not inspire us to magnify the LORD. The more we meditate on His Word and the more we study the evidences of His grace, power, and goodness in the past, the more shall we be constrained to magnify the LORD. We need to remember all the way the LORD has led us, and all His wonderful providences and mercies. They are worth recalling, and the more we recall them, the more we shall say, "Let GOD be magnified."

Moreover, when our hearts are deeply impressed with His goodness to ourselves, we shall be constrained to ask others to join us in magnifying His name. This is what David did. He said, "O magnify the LORD *with me*, and let us exalt His name *together*. I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. . . . This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all His troubles" (Ps. xxxiv. 3-6).

Let us never forget that it is GOD Who is to be magnified, not ourselves. We have nothing that we did not receive, and hence we have no reason or ground to magnify ourselves. "Let GOD be magnified," and let us say continually, "Let GOD be magnified."

"I will bless the LORD *at all times* : His praise shall *continually* be in my mouth." He is to be magnified every hour of the day and every day in the year. Sometimes we may magnify Him in

a minor key, but at all times we have reason to praise and magnify His name. "I will praise the name of GOD with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving" (Ps. lxxix. 30). However much we may be tried, we have always reason to give thanks to our GOD, and when we render thanksgiving to Him we magnify His name.

Years ago we met an aged and faithful minister of the Gospel in a street in Salisbury, and he said he could write a book about GOD's goodness to him. In other words, he could magnify the LORD for the goodness and mercy which had followed him all the days of his life.

"This GOD is the GOD we adore,  
 Our faithful, unchangeable Friend ;  
 Whose love is as large as His power,  
 And neither knows measure nor end.  
 'Tis JESUS the first and the last  
 Whose SPIRIT shall guide us safe home ;  
 We'll praise Him for all that is past,  
 And trust Him for all that's to come.

(Hart.)

Whittington Vicarage,  
 Stoke Ferry, King's Lynn.

THE EDITOR  
 (Thomas Houghton).

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#### MERE OUTWARD PROFESSION.

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"THERE are thousands at the present day who make a great ado about daily services, and keeping Lent, and frequent communion, and turning to the east in churches, and a gorgeous ceremonial, and intoning public prayers—but never get any further. They know little or nothing of the great practical duties of humility, charity, meekness, spiritual-mindedness, Bible reading, private devotion, and separation from the world. They plunge into every gaiety with greediness. They are to be seen at every worldly assembly and revel, at the race, the opera, the theatre, and the ball. They exhibit nothing of the mind of Christ in their daily life. What is all this but walking in the steps of the Pharisees? 'Well,' says the wise man, 'there is no new thing under the sun' (Eccles. i. 9). The generation which tithed mint, but passed over 'judgment and the love of God,' is not yet extinct."—(Bishop J. C. Ryle's "Expository Thoughts on Luke's Gospel," pp. 45, 46.)

## Bayside Notes.

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### GOSPEL READINESS.

“*All things are now ready.*”—LUKE xiv. 17.

THESE words form a part of the parable of the great supper. “A certain man made a great supper, and bade many; and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.” The supper was ready, and those who had previously been invited were reminded that the table was spread, and the feast was fully prepared for all who were ready to partake of it. Without confining ourselves to the teaching of this parable, we propose to draw attention to Gospel readiness in general.

1. *First, let us notice that Gospel blessings are now ready for all who desire to partake of them.*

That is the thought in the parable. The great supper is a figure of the rich provision which God has made for hungry sinners. Gospel blessings are set forth under the figure of a feast. In the parable of the king who made a marriage for his son the same figure is used.

“Tell them which are bidden, Behold I have *prepared* my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are *ready*” (Matt. xxii. 4). In the Old Testament, Gospel blessings are referred to as “a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined,” and the invitation goes forth, “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Isa. xxv. 6; lv. 1).

Such descriptions of Gospel blessings are intended to show what rich provision God has made for hungry and thirsty souls. “Without money and without price,” they are encouraged to partake of the rich bounties which the God of all grace has provided. “He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness” (Ps. cvii. 9). There is every encouragement for every poor sinner who hungers and thirsts after pardon and peace. Is any reader longing for a sweet sense of God’s pardoning and saving

mercy? let him come and partake of the blessings Divinely provided. Christ says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." "I am the Bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; he that believeth on Me shall never thirst" (John vi. 35; vii. 37).

"Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,  
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;  
Jesus *ready* stands to save you,  
Full of pity joined with power;  
He is able,  
He is willing; doubt no more.

"Come, ye needy, come, and welcome,  
God's free bounty glorify;  
True belief and true repentance,  
Every grace that brings you nigh,  
Without money  
Come to Jesus Christ, and buy.

"Let not conscience make you linger,  
Nor of fitness fondly dream;  
All the fitness He requireth  
Is to feel your need of Him:  
This He gives you;  
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam."

A full, free, and eternal forgiveness of sin is ready to be bestowed on every sinner who wants it. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. lv. 7).

Through Christ is preached unto poor sinners the forgiveness of sins: "and by Him all that believe are justified from all things." "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His Name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43; xiii. 38, 39). All believing or trusting sinners "have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. i. 7). "*Through His blood*" this great blessing comes to every believing sinner. He "died for our sins," the apostle says to all believers, and they, taught by the Spirit can say, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace

was upon Him ; and with His stripes we are healed ” (Isa. liii. 5). Yes, “ *with His stripes we are healed.* ” Through His obedience unto death we are justified, and delivered from merited condemnation. His people are redeemed from the curse of the law, because He was made a curse for them. Think of it, all the blessings of redemption are ready for the longing sinner. The Lord is good “ *and ready to forgive ; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Him.* ” He is a God “ *ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness* ” (Neh. ix. 17 ; Ps. lxxxvi. 5).

“ Come unto Me,” Christ says, “ all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ” (Matt. xi. 28). “ Come, for all things are now ready.” There is every encouragement for every awakened sinner, in the Gospel of the grace of God.

2. *Secondly, notice that the hearts of sinners need to be ready to receive the blessings God is ready to bestow.*

By nature they are not ready. Our Lord in the parable of the sower fully illustrates this sad fact. The four kinds of ground into which the seed fell were intended to illustrate the varied conditions of the hearts of those who hear the Word. The hearts of wayside hearers are wholly unready to receive the Word which tells of Gospel blessings. The result is, the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts.

The hearts of rocky-ground hearers are ready to give a temporary welcome to Gospel truth, but the seed does not take root in them, and in time of persecution and temptation they fall away. The hearts of thorny-ground hearers are so occupied with cares, riches, and pleasures, that the word is choked, and no lasting fruit follows.

How different all this to the hearts of those represented by the good ground. They hear the Word, “ in an honest and good heart,” they “ keep it and bring forth fruit with patience ” (Luke viii. 11-15).

The good-ground hearers have experienced the operations of another agent besides the sower of the seed. The ground has been ploughed up and made ready for the seed. So the hearts of those who are ready for Gospel blessings have been prepared and made ready by the Holy Spirit. No heart is ready by nature. A new heart must be given. The dead sinner must be quickened or

regenerated. Then he is convinced of his sin and need, and is ready to welcome the saving truths of the Gospel, and to partake of the blessings of the Gospel feast.

Those who began to make excuses in the parable of the great supper were so preoccupied with business or domestic pleasure that they had no appetite for the great supper graciously provided. The supper was ready, but they were not ready to partake of it, and, solemn fact to relate, it was afterwards said, "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."

This unreadiness to receive Gospel blessings is an awfully general characteristic of men in general. There is little or no hunger for spiritual things. Whole-hearted zeal is manifested to amass wealth. The pleasures of the world and the flesh attract the larger number, but few desire to enter the narrow way. Even where the pure Gospel is preached there are often few hearers. Bibles are unread, the Lord's day is desecrated and Gospel truth is rejected. The hearts of faithful ministers are often made sad by the growing indifference to heavenly things prevalent on all sides.

There is comparatively but small readiness to welcome the Gospel blessings which have been made ready through the infinite mercy and grace of God. Yet for our comfort it is written, "My word . . . shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. lv. 11).

Hence there are those who from time to time display a Spirit-inspired readiness to welcome saving truth. We read of the Bereans "that they received the Word with *all readiness of mind*, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few" (Acts xvii. 11, 12). The Bereans readily welcomed the precious truths which they heard from the Apostle Paul, but they also tested their truth by daily searching the Scriptures. "Therefore many of them believed." All were not ready in apostolic times. "Some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not" (Acts xxviii. 24). In greater or less degree it is the same to-day. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." There may be much weeping, sadness, and disappointment experienced by the bearers of the precious

seed, but they are assured that they "shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them" (Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6).

3. *Thirdly, let us think of the readiness which should characterize the saints.*

Having received the Word with all readiness of mind they need to be *ready to suffer for Christ's sake.*

Suffering for Christ's sake is the appointed portion of all Christ's people. As the world persecuted Him, so they will persecute His followers. It is not easy to face such suffering. Naturally we shrink from the loneliness and unpopularity which rejection by the world involves. But we are bidden to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. We are to "stand fast in the Lord." He can enable His people to stand steadfast. What strength did He give to His servant Paul. "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?" said that courageous servant of God, "I *am ready* not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts xxi. 13). What need there is that we should pray for grace to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Let the example of Moses stimulate us to be firm and faithful at all costs. Of him it is written that he chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward" (Heb. xi. 25, 26).

Let us, however, beware of the self-confidence of Peter who said, "Lord, *I am ready* to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death" (Luke xxii. 33).

Only Divine grace can enable us to "go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. xiii. 13). The saints need also "*to be ready to every good work*" (Titus iii. 1). They are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. Idleness is no mark of grace. To abound in the work of the Lord should characterize all the saints of God. The Lord will guide the willing and ready heart to its appropriate work. The life of the saint should not be wholly occupied in obtaining food for his own soul. He should be concerned for the souls of others. He should remember his Lord's command that the Gospel is to be preached to *every*

*creature.* Think, O saint of God, of the millions who have never heard the joyful sound of the Gospel. Have a care for the immense multitudes who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death. Beware of selfish ease in regard to Gospel blessings.

“ Can we, whose souls are lighted  
With wisdom from on high,  
Can we to men benighted  
The lamp of life deny ? ”

There is need for readiness in the work of the Lord, and readiness to minister to His poor and afflicted or tried saints. The household of faith needs the sympathy of those who have obtained like precious faith.

Paul said, “ I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also ” (Rom. i. 15).

The saints need *to be ready to answer questions about their hope.* The Apostle Peter says, “ *Be ready always* to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear ” (1 Peter iii. 15). Readiness always to answer questions about our hope involves regular and prayerful study of our Bibles. Only thus can we aptly and readily reply to questions about the hope set before us. The saints need to be *ready to give* of their means for the Lord’s work and for the Lord’s poor. The apostle told Timothy to charge rich believers “ that they be rich in good works, *ready to distribute*, willing to communicate ” (1 Tim. vi. 17, 18). It sometimes happens that a saint may be stingy, unwilling to give cheerfully and liberally to the Lord’s cause at home and abroad, and unready to help liberally the Lord’s poor. Here they are enjoined to be “ ready to distribute.” Such readiness to give should not be confined to the rich.

The apostle addressing the whole Church at Corinth—the poor as well as the rich—says, “ *Every man* according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver ” (2 Cor. ix. 7). Elsewhere he says, “ Let *every one* of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come ” (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2). Thus there should be a readiness to give spontaneously, cheerfully and in proportion to the prosperity which God has bestowed upon us.

4. *Fourthly, readiness is enjoined in reference to the Lord's coming.*

The coming of the Lord is the great hope of His people. They do not know when He is coming, but they should always be in a state of readiness for that great and glorious event, inasmuch as their walk and conversation should always be in harmony with their high calling in Him. "Be ye also ready," the Lord says, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh" (Matt. xxiv. 44). In other words, we are to be spiritually awake and alert at all times. Our loins are to be girded, and our lights burning, as is the case with men who wait for their lord. In view of our Lord's coming, we are to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus ii. 12, 13).

We read of the wise virgins, "They that were *ready* went in with him to the marriage" (Matt. xxv. 10). They represent those who are wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Such are anointed with the Holy Ghost, they have Christ's Spirit. They are sealed with the Spirit unto the day of full and complete redemption. Their lives demonstrate that they are the subjects of His regenerating and saving power. What a mercy to be found amongst the Lord's true people when He comes to bring them to the heavenly mansions.

"Ye servants of the Lord  
Each in his office wait,  
Observant of His heavenly word,  
And watchful at His gate.

"Let all your lamps be bright,  
And trim the golden flame:  
Gird up your loins as in His sight,  
For holy is His name.

"Watch, 'tis your Lord's command;  
And while we speak He's near:  
Mark the first signal of His hand,  
And *ready* all appear."

(Doddridge.)

THE EDITOR.

## Pilgrim Papers.

### WELLSPRINGS.

A REMINISCENCE OF THE GREAT WAR, 1914 TO 1918.

*“And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.”—*  
GENESIS xxviii. 15.

“THERE was a soldier asking for you last Thursday evening, and I told him you couldn't be well as nothing else kept you away!” said the kind sextoness as I entered St. Mary-le-Port Church one week-night during the Great War. “He asked where you sat, and would I point you out to him,” she went on, but as he had already arrived on this evening, I made my way down the aisle and addressed him: “Are you the soldier who was inquiring for me last week?” The warm handshake, and the face lighted up with joy at once betokened we were members together of the One Family and rejoicing in love to the brethren which comes through that gift of God, even His dear Son. Many a soldier, weary with his surroundings and uncongenial company, turned into that sacred little House of Prayer in those distressful days, and found it a haven of rest and refreshing on his way. And it was truly so with my newly-found friend. After service, which he had much enjoyed, and was cheered by, we made our way through the busy noisy streets to the Centre, talking of the ways of our God and encouraging one another in Him Who is the Alone Refuge and Stay of His people, and who proved Him thus in those dark and grievous days. That was the first of many sweet and Christ-exalting meetings, either in the Church or in the home, which Private — and I were privileged to enjoy together. It was his one bright ray to look forward to all the week; to get away from all the ungodly, uncongenial surroundings to his “own company,” and forget for that one hour the miseries of war in fellowship with His people. He had come over from Canada; given up a nice little farm there, to prove his patriotism for the old country. He was seen to be suitable for the training of horses, and was set over them in a camp not far from our port. Oh! how diligently he sought the Lord that he might be preserved in integrity and uprightness of life and not bring a reproach upon the Name of Him Whom he professed to serve. What close dealings must a man of God have had in those terrible days of ordeal and temptation when, as another dear young soldier of Jesus Christ said, “I am afraid of the tar around me lest I touch and am defiled by it.”

But my friend through grace was preserved, and who can tell what may have been his influence on others, just as it is said of the disciples, “They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.”

My soldier friend would tell me, although all so uncomplainingly, of how the men around him would scoff and ridicule and try their hardest

to trip him up. Things were stolen from his locker, brushes thrown at the young colt upon which he sat, if not to throw him, at least to make him speak unadvisedly with his lips, and oh! how he cried unto his God to keep him from any inconsistency before them and from an unwary word.

One evening, as we walked away after service, I soon perceived my friend was very disturbed in mind, and before we reached the Centre, where we ordinarily parted, he had disclosed to me a very real trouble, and which at once solicited sympathy, so that I got into the omnibus by which he was travelling instead of parting for my ordinary route. He told me to his dismay there had just been posted up in the camp: "No week-end permits given!" This spelt sorrowful disappointment and great difficulties to him. He knew the order was to be for overseas shortly, and how *that* made it more than ever necessary for him to go and settle his dear wife and little sons comfortably in a home, make his will, and bid them farewell! But there was this order facing him, and all requests for leave of absence were to be resolutely refused. As we rode along, his feelings (and very natural ones, too) were getting the master of him, and he said with emotion, "I feel as though I shall take leave and go if they don't give it me. I *must* see my dear wife and children." "Nay, Private —, you wont do that. You are a soldier of King George V. You swore allegiance to him, your earthly Sovereign. How much more are you called to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and you have prayed often against bringing a reproach upon the Name you bear. What would the men around you now say? etc." It was tender ground, and one could not but feel deeply for the poor dear exercised man, and what a test of faith he was going through!

Just as *our* end of the journey was to part us, *it was given me to say*, "If you *do* obtain 'leave of absence' to-morrow, look out for me at the C. D. station. I pass through that way every Friday afternoon to conduct a war prayer meeting, and it will gladden me to know. We will unite in prayer." And that night season was a witness that prayer did indeed enter the ears of Israel's faithful Watcher and Keeper and Answerer! The following afternoon I made my way through the station, and sure enough as the train came in, there was the glad face of my soldier friend! He essayed to get out, and I urged him he must remain in the train and proceed. But he persisted in getting out and the train went on its journey, whilst I learned the cause of his alighting. He told me that he had put up his small belongings, made his way to the officer's hut, and there begged for leave of absence. The officer in command said, "Well, you seemed to have made up your mind to go," looking at the bundle under his arm—"Well, be off, you've only *just* time to catch the train," and off rushed the dear man, glad at heart, but having to explain to me on alighting that he only had a few coppers in his pocket, and which had conveyed him thus far—could I lend him sufficient for the rest of the journey? We made our way to the waiting-room, and on the table I emptied my purse to find *just sufficient* and *nothing over*, for the amount required. How wonderful

are the ways of our God! How as truly as He was in Abraham's days, so is He not still the Jehovah Jireh of His poor and needy people! Nor is this all in the links of that wonderful Providence. Together we now made our way to the ticket office, and the moment the clerk saw a man in khaki he shouted out, "No bookings here for soldiers—you must go and book whence you started." One could scarcely imagine what the feelings must have been to the dear man of God! What must have been the exercise of his heart at this critical moment! We often sing and remind our hearts,

"Brought safely by Thy hand thus far,  
Why wilt Thou now give place to fear?  
How canst thou want while He provide,  
Or lose thy way with such a Guide?"

but the exercise and trial of faith in action proves how we need the Strong Deliverer *every moment* of our pilgrimage. My soldier friend pleaded his cause at the ticket box; but the clerk remained obdurate and persisted that he must go back to camp and book thence, and for a moment the case seemed hopeless. Yet "He Who hath helped us hitherto *will* help us all our journey through," was true and would yet be proved. Then I drew near and pleaded the case, explained the acute circumstances and how, under them, the soldier had been unable to borrow at camp, and that I had just been privileged to lend him the money on the spot. And our God is still full of compassion and mercy. He knows how to deliver His people. The ticket was thrown across the counter and we bade farewell! "This is my parting word for you, Private —," I said, "And behold I am with thee and will keep thee in all places whithersoever thou goest, and I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen. xxviii. 15).

Reverently my friend said, "Say it again," and it was repeated and we parted—he to await his train, I to proceed to the prayer-meeting and to gladden the hearts of the little company with yet another testimony of the wonderful ways of our God.

Another sacred visit or two subsequently and Private — parted. My friend was drafted overseas and finally settled in Salonika, and *there* he oft-times realized very sweetly in his soul the blessed promise spoken at that station ticket office. It lives with him to-day. It has been tried and proved as spoken by a Covenant-keeping God Who *never* fails to keep His word!

He was enabled to gather a few around the precious Word and hold little Gospel meetings with the "two or three" in that far-off land. The GOSPEL MAGAZINE, which he so loved, was his means of grace, next to the precious Word of God. In one of his letters written thence in the long ago days, he said what blessing he had received from the perusal of the esteemed Editor's "Family Portion," and "Wayside Notes," and how he was circulating the GOSPEL MAGAZINE. "I have more readers now. I lend a copy to a corporal in another camp, and he has lent it to someone else and came to me for another." And thus with all the adverse surroundings, "The winding and turnings and ups and

downs, He has led me through," as he wrote, our dear friend was held on his way, a faithful witness to the truths of the everlasting Gospel, and as then, so he is now, "instant in season and out of season," sowing beside all waters, and standing firm and fast by the fundamental truths of the Word of God.

His life was eminently preserved. The Ninety-first Psalm is still marked in his Bible, memorializing a great deliverance from danger and death during a bombing raid. And as he says, "When one looks back how utterly unworthy one is made to feel of all the great and tender mercies so graciously received. I am still rejoicing in sound doctrine, in the truths as set forth in the GOSPEL MAGAZINE, which have been my blessing and means of establishing me in the truth of God for the last thirty-six years, and in all those years I have not once read a single word therein that I would not heartily subscribe to in those things that are all the unfoldings of God's providence and grace given to us in Christ Jesus."

And although those days of "active service" are long since past, my friend is nevertheless a good soldier of King Jesus; and as he goes—preaches, drops a word for the Master, circulates the GOSPEL MAGAZINE, is a great reader of the old Divines, and a man of much prayer. He is still proving, and will continue to do so, the truth of the unailing Promiser to the end of his pilgrimage. "And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places, whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land, for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

Oh, what have not the children of God in their Portion, Who is the *I AM* of all their pilgrim days, and Who has pledged Himself never to leave nor forsake them! If and since the faithful Promiser Himself says: "Behold," take particular notice of WHO is speaking and the glorious declaration He is making. "Behold, *I AM*, the eternal God, the *I AM* of all the promises, with *you*, yes, you, poor, needy, down-cast soul, and have pledged myself to be thy Divine Keeper all through thy life; in far-distant lands or in the peaceful home country, wherever thy lot is cast, and into whatever trial of faith thou art to be placed. *I AM with thee and will keep thee*. I will not leave thee nor forsake thee, until I have done all in my purposes of love, mercy, and grace to thee, and gathered thee Home to Myself, that "where I AM, there ye may be also." Faithful is He Who hath spoken and Who also will do it. R.

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"ALL worship of man's device is repudiated by the Holy Spirit as degenerate."—*Calvin*.

"WE are placed under His tuition alone, and commanded from Him alone to seek the doctrine of salvation, to depend upon and listen to One—to adhere to One—in a word, as the terms import, to hearken to One only."—*Calvin*. He was referring to the words "*Hear ye Him*."

## Sermons and Notes of Sermons.

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### INTERPRETATIONS BELONG TO GOD.

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

*“And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you.”—GENESIS xl. 8.*

THIS, dear friends, is another most instructive incident in the history of Joseph, recorded for our instruction by the Holy Spirit. What an example it affords us of the deep counsels of God. Truly, we exclaim, “Thy ways are past finding out.” How much better it is for the Lord’s exercised people to betake themselves unto Him Who knows all things from the beginning to the end and Who not only knows all things, but for His dear trusting people arranges all things and links together the incidents of their lives, incidents great and small, and some of the small incidents apparently so small, so trivial, as to reckon for nothing in our judgment, but the smallest incident the Lord our God has arranged in the history of His people is a *necessary incident*. God’s small things are all of them necessary things, and not one of them can be dispensed with without violence done to the golden chain of His purposes. Not a sparrow falls to the ground, Jesus teaches us, without our Heavenly Father. The hairs of our head are numbered. There is nothing too small for the Lord when He chooses to employ small things. May He give us an intelligent understanding of His ways, and where they pass our comprehension then is it our privilege to turn to the Lord for explanation and interpretation.

Now at this time Joseph, God’s dear faithful servant, was in prison under an unjust accusation; you find the reference to this in the thirty-ninth chapter. “And Joseph’s master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king’s prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison. But the Lord was with Joseph (in the prison) and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.” The Lord was with His imprisoned servant. This was a testing time for Joseph. The visions, the promises, which God had granted him when he was in Canaan had yet to be fulfilled and to all outward appearances circumstances were opposed, hopelessly opposed, to the accomplishment of those visions. But the Lord was with Joseph to sustain his faith, his trust, in the word that had been Divinely spoken. The Lord was with His servant in the prison to comfort him, to speak to his heart words in season, and when all things appeared against him to assure him that He, his God, had not left him. And a tried heart need fear little though all things appear to be against him having the Lord engaged in promise, and able to perform, taking His poor, tried servant’s part. “Thou maintainest

my lot." Child of God, that is always true, always true. The Lord Jesus Christ is the one Mediator between God and men, their Advocate with the Father, their wise Counsellor, their Divine Ruler. He is Head over all things great and small to them that hope in His mercy and that rely upon His faithfulness. Jesus is the Brother born for His people's adversity. Jesus is the Great High Priest of His people, a High Priest Who can be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, and we must believe it was Jesus Who was with Joseph in the Egyptian prison—"the Lord was with Joseph." Jesus has always been the Mediator between the Father and His children, and frequently in the Old Testament Scriptures we have references made to His appearing in their behalf, sometimes visibly, sometimes in angelic form, sometimes in human form, at other times equally present with them but invisible as now He is with His people. Since the Canon of Scripture has been closed with God's emphatic and authoritative Amen we have only what God has written, under the interpretation of the Holy Ghost, given us for our guidance. The Lord with Joseph in the prison, the Lord with His saints to-night! Whatever their condition, whatever their case, whatever their need—the Lord with us. His name shall be called Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, *God with us.*"

How happy the Lord's people ought always to be! Alas, we are not always happy; why are we not? Why are we not always rejoicing exceedingly in the Lord our God? Because, alas, we are plagued with the presence of a body of sin and death, and oft-times find the fittest words of expression for our case in the language of the tried Apostle Paul: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Joseph no doubt had his times of downcastings as well as his times of uplifting, we do not suppose otherwise, but the Lord being with him was ordering all things for his good. Now we have been hearing to-night that the Lord gave His servant favour in the eyes of the keeper of the prison, and that he committed very much of his own responsibility to Joseph and trusted him with the king's prisoners. Among these were two of the king's officers, his butler and his baker, and Joseph went in one morning and was very much surprised by the sad faces of these two men. I think it is very touching and instructive that Joseph took note of these two men and their sad countenances and spoke a kindly word to them; it shows the heart that beat in the breast of Joseph; he knew that he himself was in an evil case, that he had done no man wrong, that he was imprisoned, his liberty taken from him without any due cause—he was never brought to trial. In those Eastern countries it is frequently the case that the trial of prisoners is postponed for many years. When I was at Damascus many years ago I heard of a number of prisoners who had been lying for years in the prison there without trial, and the officers, the state officers, had a personal interest in postponing the trial of these prisoners because it was their custom to exact from the relatives of the prisoners

money and property under the promise of the prisoners being brought to trial, and as long as the friends and the relatives of prisoners have any property there is little hope of the prisoners being brought to trial. Those Eastern countries which are but in part reformed in their methods of government are very guilty of the sin of oppression and tyranny. Perhaps that is why frequently in the Old Testament Scriptures we have a reference made to oppression, because it was so common among the governments of the East. Now Joseph knew himself to be innocent of the charge laid against him. He did not know but what these two men—fellow-prisoners—had been unjustly incarcerated and therefore, among other reasons, he felt touched when he looked upon these two sad countenances and he asked sympathetically why these men were sad—"Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?" And then the answer came in the words of our text. During the night they had each dreamed a dream. The morning came and they were in difficulty to understand the purport of their dreams. In Egypt there was a class of officials called magicians and wise men who pretended to possess the art of interpreting visions and dreams, but these two men had no longer access to these magicians and therefore they said, "There is no interpreter," little knowing who was taking an interest in their case—this godly man with whom the secret of the Lord was, whom the Lord had favoured also with dreams not a few, prophetic dreams substantial in truth, not idle dreams but Heavenly and Divine dreams. In those days no Scriptures had been written, and God's dealings with His people, as I have already observed, were by direct communication; sometimes, as I have said, the Speaker was visible but at other times invisible, and so one of God's methods was to speak to His servants in visions and dreams. Here were these two men then in perplexity. And this leads us to think of the perplexities in which the Lord's people are often found, perplexities neither few nor small, sometimes creating painful anxieties in the mind, and they also say among themselves, or secretly in their own hearts, There is no interpreter. I cannot understand these present dealings in the Divine providence. All things seem to be against me. Unjust accusations are brought against me. I am deprived of my rights. I know not which way to turn. There is no helper; no one seems able to enter into my case and I cannot myself understand it. There is no interpreter. I am shut up in prison, my feet are hindered. I cannot seek redress. My position is a passive one, I can do nothing. I say the Lord's people are more or less thus exercised as they pass through this present time-state. Their infirmities often blind them to the blessed fact that there is an Interpreter, an infallible Interpreter, One Who never yet was perplexed when the difficulties of His people were brought to Him for explanation and exposition and interpretation. I say this is our infirmity, children of God. When the thought arises in our hearts and we give place to it, "There is no interpreter," let us always, or seek always, to have in our minds the lines of the precious hymn, "God is His own Interpreter," and if He puts perplexities,

and difficulties, and causes of exercise in our minds it is, among other things, to bring us to Himself to rely more entirely upon His Fatherly wisdom and His unerring judgment. "Thy judgments are right," says the Psalmist; that is, the exercises of Thy judgments. In Psalm cxix. the expression "judgment" is very frequently found, reference is made again and again to the judgments of God in behalf of His people. We make mistakes in judging God's ways. "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense," let Him be the Judge and Arbiter of all circumstances. Only His hand can unravel these tangles for us, and He delights in exercising His wisdom in behalf of those who have none. "Commit" therefore "thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

"Do not interpretations belong to God?" That was faithful testimony borne on the part of Joseph. Whether those two men understood his words, we cannot say. We are not to wait, dear friends, till men can understand the truth before we testify it. "Faith cometh by hearing" the truth, and therefore it is ours who know the preciousness of the truth of the Gospel of the grace of God to testify it indeed, whether men hear or whether they forbear to hear. "Faith cometh by hearing," and if we who know the truth in the love of it remain silent because we appear to be speaking to unbelievers or to characters affording us no hope of satisfactory results—then how shall they hear? How shall they hear without a preacher? And therefore I exhort fellow-believers to-night of all spiritual ages and statures to be faithful to the light that God has been pleased to grant you of the knowledge of Himself. You may say you are but a little one, feeble and unwise, but He giveth wisdom unto the simple, and if any man lack that grace of wisdom he is encouraged to "ask of God, Who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given." With those words I closed my observations in the pulpit last Sunday evening, I think. I hope you have in the week been seeking that wisdom. I hope you have been much at the mercy-seat, asking that inasmuch as you are simple He would grant you the greater wisdom. He giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not for the lack of wisdom.

And so Joseph honoured his God by claiming for his God wisdom all-sufficient to explain mysteries and expound difficulties and interpret His ways, His own ways, with His people. "Do not interpretations belong to God?" You may remember that when Joseph's brethren came down from Canaan to buy food and were introduced to Joseph, who recognized them although they recognized not him, he spake to them through an interpreter. We find this in one of the succeeding chapters, the forty-second. "They knew not that Joseph understood them"; they were talking to one another, the subject of their conversation in the presence of their unknown friend being specially their treatment of him when they persecuted him, when they sought to shed his blood, and finally decided to spare his life and to sell him into the hands of strangers. They recalled under these circumstances the anguish

of his soul, and "they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore," said they, "is this distress come upon us." Joseph quite understood their language but he kept silence so far as speaking to them in the tongue they understood was concerned; he therefore spoke in the language of Egypt to the interpreter, and the interpreter translated and spoke to Joseph's brethren in the language that they understood. This furnishes the key to our text; the interpretations and explanations of things that are as difficult to us as an unknown language belong to God.

God can help, and God delights to help, His people when they confess their ignorance in understanding Him. When Jesus had that interview with Nicodemus and spake spiritual words, spake in a spiritual tongue, to that dear man, Nicodemus could not understand. "How can these things be? Do I rightly understand what you say?" Jesus said, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not"—or understand not—"how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" that is, "unless I interpret?" Now the Lord Jesus interprets the Scriptures to teachable hearts and meek minds. "The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way." He interprets the Word of truth to them. We need such an Interpreter, for until Jesus teach us by the Holy Spirit the Word of God it remains an unknown language, an unknown tongue, for "the natural man *receiveth not* the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

But let us, dear fellow-believers and dear hearers all, seek to honour the Lord Jesus as the great Interpreter of the truth. Let us put honour on Him as the Prophet of the Church. "Who teacheth like Him?" His wisdom is infinite, His knowledge is unlimited. The Father has committed to Him, the one Mediator, all authority in heaven and earth, has entrusted to Him all the counsels of eternity, all His eternal plans and everlasting purposes, that they may be unerringly accomplished: So that in coming to Jesus, the meek and the lowly, and asking Him, "Teach Thou me that which I know not," we are coming to One Who is able to interpret the darkest parables both in the Scriptures and in the providence of God, and in the sphere of the Holy Ghost. And yet how slow of heart are we to understand. "O fools," said Jesus, "and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ—the Christ—to have suffered?" Oh, might He not well and often address our poor slow hearts in the like language, fellow-believers? But He deals with us forbearingly and compassionately. Joseph had much of the mind of Jesus, possessed much of his Master's spirit in his dealing with these two perplexed fellow-prisoners of his. He said, "Tell me, I pray you," that is, "tell me what your difficulties are, tell me the whole matter, tell me the visions; the interpretations

belong to God and I am God's servant. He has spoken to me in visions, wondrous visions, and has given me the interpretations of them, I doubt not that He can help you through your difficulties. Tell me them." And that is the mind of Jesus to-night. Thus He addresses our poor hearts. In all our difficulties and distresses and mental exercises He says to us, Tell Me them. Keep nothing from Me, tell Me all. Interpretations belong to God, they belong to Me." And we tell them—do we? I ask, do we always tell Him our difficulties and *all* our difficulties? Oh, we need increasingly the grace of simplicity—in these our dealings with the Lord. We need become more like very little children, very little children, who confess themselves ignorant, fully and only dependent on Him to teach, to lead, to expound, and to interpret. Thus waiting on Him He will make it all plain for us. Joseph interpreted fully the two dreams of these two men. It must have been a great joy to him to be able to tell the imprisoned butler of Pharaoh that his deliverance was not far off, and it must have been a very sad duty to speak as he had to do to the other prisoner and tell him it was only a question of days for him to see the end of his imprisonment by a sorer visitation, and therefore I say Joseph would speak *feelingly*. And so does the Lord Jesus, for "we have not an High Priest Who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." And so when we go to Him with our dark difficulties and do just what He tells us—"tell Me them"—then He feelingly enters into our case and gives us light in our darkness, and joy in our sorrow. And yet we go but rarely, yet we go but fitfully. When the burden becomes intolerable and the darkness dense then we betake ourselves to the great Interpreter, One amongst a thousand, and in our extremity tell Him our case. May God give us grace to go to the Blessed One about all things, great and small. He will never send us away and say the case is too difficult, the case is beyond His wisdom and knowledge and His understanding, for He is perfect in understanding. More than that, in the book of the Proverbs He says, "*I am understanding.*" That is much more than to have understanding. None but He could thus speak, perfect in understanding. *He is* understanding and therefore we go to Him—do we?—in confidence of His ability to make crooked things straight, the mysterious things plain, and the darkness the light of noonday. He is able—"the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation," that is, out of distresses and trials and fears and doubts. From all these and all such like things the Lord is able to deliver His people. He is able. Let us dwell by meditation, dear friends, more habitually on the ability of Jesus to meet all our condition and all our case; whether it be our temporal condition or not, our spiritual condition or not, "*He is able.*" He is able to do far beyond anything we ask, however much we ask, beyond anything we think, however lofty our thoughts of His ability. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask, all that we think—*interpretations belong to Him.*

## THE THIEF ON THE CROSS.

## PART I.

SERMON BY THE LATE DR. ADOLPH SAPHIR.

LUKE xxiii. 39-43.

THE three crosses on Golgotha present to us a view of sinners in their relation to Jesus, the Holy One of Israel, the Saviour and Redeemer of the lost. According to the prophetic Word, the Messiah was numbered among transgressors, and crucified between two malefactors. His innocence sheds clear light on their guilt. But though they were alike in sin and transgression, deserving equal punishment, grace visited one of them, and plucked him as a brand out of the fire. He is saved now by grace through faith; and behold what an awful difference subsists now between the two companions! The one an unbeliever—he doubts, he mocks, he perishes: the other a believer—he adores, he supplicates, he lives. Jesus remains silent to the one; to the other He utters words of grace and life.

Is not this a picture of the world of sinners? We are all guilty and under sentence of righteous judgment. Christ's innocence and holiness only show more clearly and distinctly our unworthiness and pollution. Only grace can save us. Grace saves through faith; it chooses not according to merit (for is there such?) but according to the good pleasure of His will. It creates within us faith; and looking unto Jesus we are translated from darkness into light, out of death into light. We hear His voice, and are at peace. Unbelief can see no glory, beauty, or comeliness in the crucified One why it should desire Him; no prayer of true repentance ascends from its lips, no word of life enters its heart. Jesus the Saviour, while He opens the kingdom of heaven even to the chief of sinners, is also the Judge of all who die in their transgression.

The narrative leads us—

I. Into the heart of the sinner—it is revealed in his confession and prayer.

II. Into the heart of the Saviour—it is revealed in His word of peace and promise.

I. Jesus had just uttered the wonderful word of compassion, long-suffering, and mercy, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" Would not such a word from such lips at such a time break even the hardest and most selfish hearts? Would it not prove to them the innocence and purity of Jesus—the ingratitude, cruelty, and injustice of their conduct? But the people stood beholding! They could look at the crucified Saviour with dry, tearless eyes—without mourning and lamentation, confession, and cries for mercy. The rulers also with them derided Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself, if He be Christ, the chosen of God." They were anxious to deaden the voice of conscience—which testified that Jesus had saved others, and had performed miracles of grace and

life among them—by inferring from His present state of suffering and helplessness, that He was not the true Redeemer and King of Israel. See how they blaspheme their whole past history—how they who built the sepulchres of the prophets, are crucifying them afresh! Was Abraham the chosen of God? and yet he lived a stranger and pilgrim in Canaan, and had no possession in the land except the cave of Machpelah, which he bought for Sarah's burial. Was Joseph the chosen of God? and yet he languished in prison, after having been cruelly treated and betrayed by his own brothers. Was Israel the chosen of God? and yet were they four hundred years in Egypt, the house of bondage, the furnace of affliction. What say ye to Father David, your glory and pride, when he fled from before Saul, and was as a partridge among the mountains, and when he wept and passed over the brook Kidron, and when he said, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Have you forgotten the history of Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and of all the prophets? Do you not know that if ye speak thus, you offend against the generation of God's children? (Ps. lxxiii.) But not merely do ye blaspheme the children, you blaspheme the Father—"He hath trusted in God; let Him deliver him." They cannot deny that He had trusted always and exclusively in the Lord; often they wished Him to avail Himself of ordinary means, public opinion, the expectation of the day, the enthusiasm of the nation, the complicated interests of political parties, the miraculous powers in His possession; but Jesus only availed Himself of one thing—the guidance of God; He had not where to lay His head, except on His Father's bosom; truth, faith, prayer, love, patience—behold, these were His whole armour and policy. "He trusted in God" as no one else even professed to do; let Him see now, they said, the result of His exaggerated sanctity, His contempt of worldly wisdom and power. Oh, how the heart of Christ was wounded when He saw His people Israel converting the precious jewel of their Messianic hope into worldly, heathen, carnal, God-blaspheming selfishness! He beheld their ingratitude, their hatred, their bitterness, but above all, their utter godlessness. "Corruption of the best is the worst." God's Messiah changed into man's Messiah is a fearful manifestation of what is in man.

It was an ocean where wave upon wave beat angrily against that calm Rock—firm and immovable, yet infinitely sensitive and tender. And even the malefactors on His right and left joined in the mockery. They at least, one would have thought, would have remained silent in shame and in fear—only a few hours were before them, how was it possible to spend them in inflicting pain on a fellow-sufferer? had they not enough to think, to suffer, to dread in the fearful nearness of death? But while they were mocking, one of them was arrested—he felt the falsehood, the baseness, the wretchedness of his words—he was enlightened, and he beheld his sin.

Now it dawned on his mind—rapidly the events of the last days and hours passed before him. He had heard the testimony of Pilate,

who declared that he had found no fault in Christ, and of that great company of people, and of women that bewailed and lamented Jesus; many had spoken of the Saviour's innocence, and of the works of love and kindness which He had done among them for three years. He had seen Christ's countenance, in which a pure, calm conscience was so unmistakably visible; he had seen Him dignified, fearless, composed, yet meek, lowly, gentle; he had heard His words to the daughters of Jerusalem, so solemn, and yet so tender, so majestic and Divine, "Weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and your children"; he had heard His prayer, revealing a love, a holiness, a strength more than human: "Father forgive them!" And while he remembered all this—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, even while he was joining his sinful companion in words of mockery—he was arrested—it flashed across his mind—Jesus is holy, I am guilty. And now see the extent and the depth of his confession; for,

1, It was confession of sin *before God*. He rebuked the other malefactor, and said, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing that thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds." Not merely did he acknowledge that the punishment which they were now suffering was a just reward of their deeds, of their transgression of the law, but he realized their relation to the supreme Lawgiver and Judge, and felt that it was not enough to fear him who could kill the body, but that there was another tribunal before which they had to appear, and another sentence which they had to await. "Dost thou not *fear God*?" Had he ever asked this question before? Had he not forgotten, ignored, buried it, in order to continue in sin and transgression? For to fear God is the fountain of all obedience and the source of light. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: "I am the Lord thy God," the foundation and root of all commandments. And as forgetfulness of God's existence and character is the source of all sin, so to realize God is the source of all knowledge of sin, it is the quickening principle of the conscience. Once this centre is gained all things take their true place: sin is seen as exceeding sinful, the commandment recognized as true and just, condemnation and punishment as righteous and deserved; we feel it is a bitter thing to sin against God, for the wages of sin is death. See also,

2, His self-abasement and self-condemnation. Already, in God's estimation, he is infinitely different from the malefactor to whom he is now speaking, but he regards himself only in the light of his past life and wickedness, and, seeing no difference between himself and his companion in crime, describes his whole past conduct, the result and fruit of his whole earthly existence, as deserved shame, ignominy and destruction: "We receive the due reward of our deeds." Oh, what a summing up of life is here! The end of the whole pilgrimage, the prize of the struggle, the harvest of the whole year, the reward of a life's toil, the goal reached after a life's exertion of mind, body, and soul—here it is: condemnation! And that it is so is just.

Clearly he sees it, emphatically he acknowledges it: "We indeed justly." It is one thing not to be able to deny it, it is quite another thing to be able to affirm and confess it. He might have buried the bitter thought within his soul; but notice,

3, His boldness and zeal for truth, and his compassion and love for his sinful companion. Though he is an outcast, yet he cannot but testify that Christ is innocent. The mockery, the unbelief, the rage of Pharisees and rulers, can neither intimidate nor blind him. They ought to judge righteous judgment, and to defend the good, and holy, and innocent—but as these are silent, the very stones cry out; even a crucified malefactor must raise up his voice and testify, "This Man hath done nothing amiss!" It would perhaps do no good—they would despise and mock him likewise, and perhaps treat him with greater severity and cruelty, now that he had ventured to question their wisdom, and to condemn their conduct—but the sin-convinced soul loveth righteousness, seeks God's glory, cannot but speak the truth, for it is born of the truth. And as for the malefactor, perhaps it may be a warning to him, opening his eyes to his fearful state of sin and danger, for the sin-convinced soul is no longer selfish, it has begun to love, to have compassion, to seek the good of others, for it is born of love. Such knowledge of sin, we notice,

4, Is the work of Divine grace; it is the result of a sight of Christ's holiness and love. It was the purity, the unselfishness, the mercy of Jesus which had opened his eyes and melted his heart. It was when he saw Him, that he felt he was a sinner and undone. And while thus convinced of Christ's holiness and glory, and of his own guilt and condemnation, the Spirit had turned him from darkness, and death, and self, to light, and life, and God. For in his confession of sin was faith—that faith which immediately afterwards expressed itself in the prayer, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Wonderful words! He calls Him *Lord*! If it is true at all times that none can call Jesus Lord, save by the Holy Ghost, it was most emphatically true at that moment, when Jesus was seen in His lowest humiliation and sorrow. It was the work of the Spirit that Simon was able to recognize in Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God; but notice how the very mention of Christ's sufferings and death makes this rock tremble. (Matt. xvi.) And when the Shepherd was smitten, the sheep were scattered; they were in grief, mourning, doubt, and fear; and even on the third day the two disciples, on their way to Emmaus, described their timid, melancholy, lonely state of mind by saying, "He was condemned to death and crucified; but we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." What a narrative of grace have we here! When all is dark around Jesus—when He is crowned with a crown of thorns—when no power of glory and strength declares His Divine authority and dignity—when all the scribes, and Pharisees, and rulers deride and mock Him—when His very disciples are full of fear and unbelief, without light and strength—behold this thief! He is not offended in His cross, but

through cross and death, ignominy and reproach, he beholds Christ as the Lord. He recognizes Him as the King, he trusts in Him as the Divine Redeemer, he adores Him as the Son of glory. He saw divinity in His marred visage, the crown of crowns on His bruised and wounded head, a throne of majesty and grace in the accursed tree. "Lord!" It sounded as folly in the ears of unbelieving Israel; but God and the angels, and the blessed Saviour Himself heard in it heavenly music. "Lord!" Truly this is faith; for he looked at the things which are not seen—the Spirit testified to him, and, taught by Him, he called Jesus Lord with his lips and with his heart. "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," but verily he who in faith adores the crucified Saviour as his King, hath already entered, for he is taught of God.

"Lord, remember me!" Who am I to speak to Thee, Thou Holy One of Israel? I have no claim on Thy mercy, on Thy favour. My past life, Thou knowest it. Sinful and black it appears to me; what must it be in Thy sight, the spotless and pure Son of God? I have nothing to pay, Lord, Thou knowest. But a few hours, and payment shall be asked of me. And now what shall I say? Lord, remember me! Think of me, and then do what seemeth good in Thy sight. When Thou comest in Thy kingdom, when, after Thy agony and death, the Father will give unto Thee the kingdom, the throne of Thy father David—when Thou shalt return a glorious King, and the inscription over the cross shall be the inscription over a throne of majesty and honour, then remember me!

See in this petition his humility—simply appealing to Christ's mercy, to Christ's good pleasure. See in it his feeling of helplessness, his longing after a Mediator. He knows that he needs an Intercessor, a Reconciler, an Advocate and Daysman. He chooses Jesus as his Defender and Pleader. He commits his cause into His hands. To be remembered by this High Priest, Who is undefiled, and separate from sinners, and about to enter into the holy of holies, this is all his desire and hope. And thus God has raised this poor outcast high above all his contemporaries—the last has become the first. His was not merely knowledge and faith, but clear knowledge and gigantic faith. Better than even the apostles he understood the two kingdoms of Christ—the relation between the cross and the crown, the sufferings and the glory. Stronger than even their faith was his confidence and adoring trust in the Saviour, even in His humiliation and shame. More loyal and faithful than even the chosen ambassadors and pillars of the Church, did he confess his heavenly Master, testify of His righteousness, and share His reproach. And more than all, on that cross of loneliest agony and bitterest suffering, our poor earth offered no consolation, no sympathy, no cordial to the Son of Man; but this poor thief, behold, he was a lily among thorns; the beauty and fragrance of this flower, planted by His heavenly Father, was the last joy of Jesus upon earth. Oh, for a heart to praise God and

to adore Him! How manifold is His wisdom! how unsearchable His ways! He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. The disciples are afraid and silenced, He openeth the mouth of a malefactor to show forth His praise.

Faith, in spite of sin and guilt, can rely on Jesus and Jesus alone, and run into His arms—trusting in His love, and risking all on the good pleasure of His will. This is not man's doing, but the Father's gift. A Judas may be three years with the Saviour, enjoying His instruction, witnessing His miracles, beholding His life of holiness, and yet betray Him, and end a thief and robber; but this thief in a few moments is changed into a believer, a saint, a confessor, and apostle. "Have we not Abraham for our father?" was the secret hope of Christ's enemies; but, behold, the criminal whom they despised was a true son of him who staggered not at the apparent and visible difficulties, but relied on the word and promise.

Time doth not exist for God: His Spirit can create in a moment what in others is effected only gradually and slowly. For who can reach a higher point than this sinner, who was so suddenly converted? To fear God, to acknowledge our sin, to submit to the justice of our condemnation, to turn to Christ, to call Him Lord, to surrender ourselves entirely to Him, to cry for His mercy and mediation, to believe, to love, to hope, to confess and suffer Christ's reproach—verily these are the fruits of the Spirit, against such there is no law. Thus, although no time was given him to go and bring forth fruit on earth, to verify his profession by his godly life, and to prove the genuineness of his conversion by a holy and pure walk, yet are we clearly taught in this case also that to believe is to be born again, that faith purifies the heart. No terrors of Sinai could effect what the love of Golgotha effected; and, in receiving Jesus, this transgressor of the law had been delivered not merely from its curse, but also from the spirit of hatred and opposition to God's commandment, and from his former inability to keep and cherish it. The other malefactor had desired to be delivered from pain and death, and, doubtless, if Christ or someone else had taken him from the cross, he would have returned to his former sins and pleasures. This man desired not life, but God's favour, not deliverance from pain, but from guilt; his heart was renewed and enlarged, and thus, in God's estimation, he honoured and loved the law.

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"THE kingdom of Christ has no sacerdotal system. It introduces no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man, by whose intervention alone God is reconciled and man forgiven."—(*Bishop Lightfoot on Philipians*, p. 181.)

"WE cannot prevent dreadful thoughts from arising in our hearts, but we should be cautious of giving them vent, by speaking unadvisedly. This is like letting in wind upon a smothering fire, which will make it burn more fiercely."—*John Newton's Letters*.

## THE WARS OF THE LORD.

"THE Lord is a man of war, the Lord is His Name." That being so, it is no surprise that the earliest conflict which is given in the Divine record is one in which "the friend of God" figures: fighting and conquering. When Abraham heard that Lot was carried off by Chedorlaomer, i.e., that "his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen," and pursued the aggressor. It was a very small army, and they had had no public or approved training. But is there under the sun any place better as a training ground for "the battle of life," as it is called, than the "own house" of a good man? There the head rules as a king, ordering in justice and in strength, "the queen also sitting by" (as it says in Nehemiah) in gentleness, firmness, loyalty, and sympathy. We may be sure that those born in Abraham's house and "instructed by him," as the margin has it, knew that truth, honour, and kindness must be the law at home: then obedience, courage, and endurance would support them outside it. Abraham divided his company into three parts—a military measure, I suppose, which has been followed on countless occasions since, and God, Whose he was, body, soul, and spirit, gave him the day. He brought back all that he cared for: of Lot's goods nothing was missing, and God crowned His saving mercies with a gracious visitation, opening to him a further knowledge of the mystery and love of His Name.

It might be noticed that when Abraham took up arms on behalf of Lot, he did not stay to wonder whether his "brother" was only getting his deserts in being carried away from his home in Sodom. It was enough for him that he was of his own family, and he must show the mercy to Lot that he himself had received at the hands of God, Who had of free kindness gone to the place where he was with salvation in His hands. It was not the *deserts* of the Gibeonites that appealed to Joshua. Their deceivings did not merit a return of help. But Joshua was sworn to protect them, and they cast themselves on his promise, when the five kings made war on them. I am sure that when Joshua was so called upon to save them, his cogitations had much troubled him, and brought his error to remembrance in not asking counsel of God when first these strangers presented themselves with their false statements. But God Who deals with us not after our sin, nor rewards us after our iniquity, said to him, "Fear not." The five kings were all to be delivered into his hands. The word that gave the four kings into Abraham's hand was as potent to command five to their overthrow by Joshua.

In a sense, both Abraham and Joshua took up the cause of those who had wronged them: perhaps to show the children of faith and the seed of Israel, who learn "the wars of the Lord," that it was when they were yet enemies Christ took their cause upon Himself, waged the war which would infallibly have vanquished and ruined them, and saved them. No doubt David knew as much of war as any other: and he knew too that his victories were gifts, that the battle

was not essentially to those who were strong in the righteousness of their cause. When he said, at the end of Psalm cviii., "Through God we shall do valiantly, for it is He that shall tread down our enemies," he had just been lamenting that God had cast him off. God had not cast off His David whom he foreknew, but David was not afraid to speak as he felt, and his laments encourage his younger brethren who fight the good fight of faith. Sauls, Doegs, Absalom, and Goliaths are not the only enemies.

Paul spoke of fighting with "wild beasts at Ephesus"; but he spoke also of a warfare waged against unseen and spiritual enemies. In a way, all that opposes the absolute rule of God in us and with us is to be regarded as inimical to the peace which is the portion of Christ's disciples. If they counted all their diffidence and distrust of the past, questionings about the present, apprehension as to the future as active foes, it may be they would but be looking their enemies in the face, and would be more disposed in simplicity to cry to the Strong for help. And who knows how constant and virile the reinforcements from beneath are: and how implacably levelled against "The Lamb with His fair army"? But the Lord knows better than they do. The battle is His. He is kind as well as strong. On several occasions in the Old Testament, the enemies of Israel destroyed each other, and no doubt it is the same in the field of grace. A sense of weakness destroys a "confidence in the flesh" which is not of Christ. A conviction of unworthiness destroys an obnoxious self-righteousness. A weakening diffidence is a match for presumption. When Joshua took possession of Canaan, God said that He was leaving a certain number of enemies alive, because if all were destroyed at once the wild beasts would have it too much their own way. God could have as easily rid the place of the ravaging animals as of the inhabitants, but absolute *peace* and immediate conquest were not to be desired. And so the "soldiers of Christ arise and put their armour on" not once but again and again. There is a verse which says that "the land had rest forty years." How reviving. The "Israelites indeed" among them would be glad and rejoice if the land within them had rest for forty days, or for forty minutes: if Christ drew them to Himself and to His victorious embrace.

But unbelief is like King Ahab. Although he was wounded by an arrow that pierced his armour, yet he was stayed up in his chariot until the evening, when he died. He had been disguised as our unbelief is under all sorts of names. But a bow is bent against it. The arrow of the Lord's deliverance is shot not at a venture. Unbelief may hold on in its stricken way, but at evening time it will die, and "every man" will go to his tent and enter into peace.

FOLLOWER-ON.

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"HAVE you ever stood on the same plot of ground with the publican, crying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'"—*W. Tiptaft.*

## THE PRAYER OF JABEZ.

I CHRONICLES iv. 9, 10.

THE early chapters of the first Book of the Chronicles contain much that is instructive and helpful. One thing to be noticed is the sovereignty of God as displayed in the life-histories of persons named ; some had "many children," some "no children," and others had daughters but no sons. Then we have the short but comprehensive prayer of Jabez, very familiar in its petitions, and frequently breathed from the troubled heart of a child of God. It became in a very special manner the prayer of the writer on a well-remembered Lord's day in February, 1871 ; and how many times since is registered in heaven.

It is very common, in listening to a sermon on the prayer of Jabez, to hear that nothing is known as to his identity. But in chapter ii. 55 we read of a locality bearing the name Jabez, inhabited by Kenites ; and if this has any connection with the Jabez of chapter iv, it would follow that he was descended from Hobab, the brother-in-law of Moses. This is traceable from Numbers x. 29 through Judges i. 15. This thought may receive some confirmation from the fact that foreigners who came under the influence of Divine favour were always incorporated into the royal tribe of Judah, as Hobab, Rahab, Ruth, and others. Thus here also we find Jabez in the tribe of Judah.

There are several notable features in this beautiful prayer. First, it is addressed to "the God of Israel." Here is one who is conscious of being descended from a Midianite addressing the God of a chosen nation, and virtually asking that he may share the privileges granted to Israel. The same fact of belonging to Israel is recorded of Rahab (Josh. vi. 24), and beautifully of Ruth (ii. 12). We are by this reminded of the purpose of God, only partly revealed in the Old Testament, of bringing Gentiles into all the privileges of the Gospel. This is the dominant teaching of the Epistle to the Ephesians, wherein "the mystery" is opened that they who once were "far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Once aliens, strangers, foreigners, now by grace partakers of the heavenly calling and all the privileges attaching thereto.

Another special feature manifest in this prayer is its brevity, earnestness, and comprehensiveness. Everything that can contribute to the truest prosperity of a believer is present in each petition. And then we have the fact that "God granted him that which he requested."

The first petition in this prayer is that God "would bless him indeed," literally, "in blessing bless him." Here we have verbally expressed exactly God's promise to Abraham in Genesis xx. 17, confirmed in Hebrews vi. 14. The blessings promised to Abraham are typical of those flowing from union with Christ : "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." It would be well for such a prayer as this to rise "without ceasing" from our inmost being.

The second petition is that God would "enlarge his coast." Here

again the petitioner is using the exact words of the repeated promise of the God of Israel. "The Lord thy God shall *enlarge thy border*, as He hath promised thee" (Deut. xii. 20). "If the Lord thy God *enlarge thy coast*, as He hath sworn unto thy fathers" (Deut. xix. 8). Surely here again we have the Ephesian thought expressed by God in typical terms, and turned into prayer by one who earnestly desired to share all that God had promised. This is the prayer of Paul for the Ephesians: "that ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height" (Eph. iii. 17-19), and this is the essence of many a cry that rises from the hearts of God's sorrowful people.

The third petition of Jabez is that the hand of God might be with him. We need all that is implied by the hand of God. We need the power wielded by His hand to enable us to fight against our enemies and to grant us victory over them. We need the safety of the hand in which all our times are resting. We need the guidance of the hand that led Israel through the desert and brought them into the land of promise. And we need the security of that hand from which none can pluck one of the sheep.

The fourth and final petition is that God "would keep him from evil, that it might not grieve him." All evil in a child of God grieves the Holy Spirit of God, but this petition has a further foundation and outlook. It is only as the conscience is kept clear in our daily walk that evil is a grief to ourselves. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil"; and the more tender our conscience is in that fear the more susceptible shall we be of the very presence and nearness of evil. Herein Jabez and Jude are in the most perfect harmony. "Praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

The prayer of Jabez had an emphatic answer. "And God granted him that which he requested." The word *that* very certainly means that God granted him *all* that he requested. And does He not grant all, and more than all, that we desire of Him? "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Wimbledon.

WILLIAM WILEMAN.

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## Correspondence.

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

MR. R. E. BRIDER, who carries on the work of this Mission, finds himself still unable to write his usual letter. He hopes to write one for the December issue (D.V.). Meanwhile the work still goes on, and he will be grateful for the continued prayerful sympathy and help which have enabled him to persevere in past years.

## A STIRRING UP.

A most beautiful, graphic, and perfect description of the above expression is found in the Word of God.

Moses was inspired to clothe in poetic language his impressions of a sight which he had gazed upon with admiration and thankfulness. Admiration at the wonderful instinct which God has bestowed upon the eagle, and thankfulness for the lesson taught him by the eagle concerning God's care of His people.

Moses wrote, "as an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead him" (that is Israel) (Deut. xxxii. 11, 12). As Moses stood on some high and lofty position upon the mountain range, he had seen this precise incident. And let it be remembered he had often been summoned to the mountain to commune with God, and as his whole being was thus drawn out in holy contemplation he had had his attention drawn to an eagle's rough nest, filled with young and the parent bird instructing and encouraging its offspring to leave the barren rock and soar on high. The Holy Spirit applied the lesson, and led Moses to grasp the truth that God watches over His people and would have them leave the barren and profitless things of earth and ascend on the wings of faith to the contemplation of Himself and enjoy those delights and privileges to which He calls His people.

Those who are in a position to speak with knowledge state that the eagle breaks up the nest that it may free its young from encumbrances, it flutters over them that they may have the desire to fly upwards, it takes them on its wings and then rapidly descending drops below them that they may learn to put forth their own wings and fly. The parent bird is still beneath the young, to catch them if they fail to expand their wings to fly, or if they become weary and exhausted the parent bird is ready to receive them on its back as they fall, and thus the parent bird continues to act until the young are old enough and experienced enough to take care of themselves. Oh! what a beautiful picture of the manner in which God stirs up and excites His people to rise above the things of this world and ascend where He is, and where they are bidden to follow the Lord Jesus.

Often does God have to break up the things of earth, upon which men and women set their affections, else they would never soar upwards and lay hold of those precious joys set before them. God said to Israel, "I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto Myself" (Exodus xix. 4).

May God in His mercy deliver each reader from resting content with the barren hopes and joys of this world and "stir" each one up to press forward after those blessed hopes which are set before the believer as the objects after which all who are wise should aspire.

The Apostle Peter, having his own death in view (2 Peter i. 14), and therefore writing under a deep sense of his responsibilities, twice

uses this figure of speech. In his last message to believers he says (2 Peter i. 12, 13), "I will not neglect to *stir* you up by putting you in remembrance"; and again, "in both my epistles I *stir* up your pure minds by way of remembrance" (2 Peter iii. 1).

The apostle knew by experience, both from the knowledge he had of himself and that which he had acquired concerning other believers, that each individual does need "stirring up"—that each one does need to be made willing to leave the perishing and deadening things of this world, even as the eagle excites its young to leave the barren and dead twigs and branches forming their nest; and more than this, Peter knew that even the strongest believers are "leaking vessels" (Heb. ii. 1, margin), and therefore he was inspired to write most earnestly exhorting them to remember all the words which God had given them by His holy prophets and apostles, and—let it never be forgotten—the words of the apostles were a record of the doctrines taught by the Lord Jesus, and of the fuller and deeper illumination which the Lord gave them after His resurrection (Luke xxiv. 44-46).

Believers do indeed need to be "stirred" up to realize the importance of the Word of God, especially in face of the fact—which is so evident in this day—that the "scoffers" have come and are doing their deadly work. At the present time there are those in the professing Church who turn every blessing of God to bane. Because God is longsuffering and patient they say His promises are not fulfilled nor His judgments executed. But—and here it is necessary to pause and contemplate the specific declaration of the apostle—"Such are willingly ignorant" of the mighty power of God's Word. Individuals are not competent to make such an assertion concerning others, but the Holy Spirit, Who knows all that is in men's hearts and minds, definitely inspired Peter to declare that there are "some who are wilfully ignorant." The works of Creation declare there is a God, and hence men are "without excuse" (Rom. i. 20, 2 Peter iii. 3-5).

Since God so graciously sends His Word to "stir" men and women up, may many be led to seek for grace to respond.

The apostle very solemnly warns mankind that the same mighty Word which spake creation into being is held in abeyance until such time as the allotted period of man's existence is completed, and then it will be heard once more, and the judgment of perdition will fall upon all ungodly men.

"Seeing that all these things" (which we see around us) "shall be dissolved," "seeing we look for such a dissolution," and "seeing we know these things beforehand" (see 2 Peter iii. 11, 14, 17), how necessary it is for each individual to wait upon God and seek for grace that he or she may be rightly concerned about these matters, and be "stirred up" to be found ready when He, Who is the Lord from heaven, shall come.

"We ought to give the most earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (Heb. ii. 1).

P. I. B.

## THE MORNING POST AND THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

It is announced to-day (Sept. 30th) that the "*Morning Post*, as a separate paper, appears for the last time in the present issue. Henceforth it will be combined with the *Daily Telegraph*, thus closing a life story which has extended continuously for more than a century and a half" (*Morning Post* Editorial).

We are further informed that the reason for the termination of the *Morning Post* as a separate newspaper is of a financial nature; there has been "a steadily increasing annual deficit, culminating in the year ending June 30th last with a loss of over £40,000."

The GOSPEL MAGAZINE is much older than even the *Morning Post*, which is thirteen years older than *The Times*. This Magazine completed the *one hundred and seventy-first* year of its existence in December last. We draw attention to this in order that our readers may unite with us in thanking God for keeping alive its testimony for this prolonged period. It is through His providential mercy that it still goes on its way, and only He can keep it going. Only He, too, can keep it faithful to the great doctrines of grace.

Let us all pray afresh, and keep on praying, that He may preserve the Magazine, and also keep it increasingly faithful to His pure truth in view of increasing apostasy.

If a great secular publication comes to grief for financial reasons, how much more danger is there that a Magazine, loyal, we trust, to the great distinctive truths of God's Word, should collapse for financial reasons.

Thank God it is not collapsing. Thank God, too, for the generous help afforded to the Trustees by our kind readers in regularly subscribing to the GOSPEL MAGAZINE Fund.

We, on behalf of the Trustees, bespeak the continued prayers of our readers for the Lord's continual smile, grace, and blessing on this testimony to His Gospel—"the Gospel of the grace of God."

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 THE NUMBER OF THE SAVED.
 

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"It may be well to remark here, that we have no warrant for supposing that the aggregate number of those who are lost will prove finally to be greater than the number of the saved. When all the infants who die without knowing good from evil, and all the 'nations of the saved' who shall be converted after the calling in of the Jews, are added to the ranks of God's elect under the present dispensation, they shall be a multitude that no man can number. They will probably far exceed in number those who are lost."—*Bishop Ryle's "Expository Thoughts on Luke,"* Vol. II, p. 135.

“FEAR NOT, LITTLE FLOCK.”

“THE Lord Jesus knew well the hearts of His disciples. He knew how ready they were to be filled with fears of every description, fears because of the fewness of their number, fears because of the multitude of their enemies, fears because of their sense of weakness and unworthiness. He answers these many fears with a single golden sentence—‘Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.’

“Believers are a ‘little flock.’ They always have been, ever since the world began. Professing servants of God have sometimes been very many. Baptized people at the present day are a great company. But true Christians are very few. It is foolish to be surprised at this. It is vain to expect it will be otherwise until the Lord comes again. ‘Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it’ (Matt. vii. 14).

“Believers have a glorious kingdom awaiting them. Here upon earth they are often mocked, and ridiculed, and persecuted, and, like their Master, despised and rejected of men. But ‘the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed.’ ‘When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory’ (Rom. viii. 18; Col. iii. 4).

“Believers are tenderly loved by God the Father. It is ‘the Father’s good pleasure’ to give them a kingdom. He does not receive them grudgingly, unwillingly, and coldly. He rejoices over them as members of His beloved Son in Whom He is well pleased. He regards them as His dear children in Christ. He sees no spot in them. Even now, when He looks down on them from heaven, in the midst of their infirmities, He is well pleased, and hereafter, when presented before His glory, He will welcome them with exceeding joy (Jude 24).

“Are we members of Christ’s little flock? Then surely we ought not to be afraid. There are given to us exceeding great and precious promises (2 Peter i. 4). God is ours, and Christ is ours. Greater are those that are for us than all that are against us. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are mighty enemies. But with Christ on our side we have no cause to fear.”—*Bishop J. C. Ryle’s “Expository Thoughts on Luke.”*

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ISOLATED CLERGYMEN.

A COUNTRY clergyman writes, “I am rather isolated spiritually here, and find your Magazine a monthly treat.

“Your account of Mr. Wells at Nottingham is very timely. ‘This is what this land of Bibles has come to.’ It is truly awful! Hence the great need of the faithful banding themselves together in fellowship. ‘They that feared the Lord spake often one to another.’ As distance separates we must speak through correspondence. Hence the value of your Magazine. It speaks to many scattered by distance.”

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS' BATTLE-HYMN, 1631.

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“ FEAR not, O little flock, the foe  
Who madly seeks your overthrow,  
Nor dread his rage and power :  
What though your courage sometimes faints,  
His seeming triumph o'er God's saints  
Lasts but a little hour.

“ Be of good cheer ; your cause belongs  
To Him Who can avenge your wrongs ;  
Then leave it to your Lord ;  
Though hidden yet from all our eyes,  
He sees the Gideon who shall rise  
To save us and His word.

“ As true as God's Own Word is true,  
Nor earth nor hell with all their crew  
Against us shall prevail.  
A jest and by-word are they grown ;  
God is with us, we are His own,  
Our victory cannot fail.

“ Amen, Lord Jesus, grant our prayer :  
Great Captain, now Thine arm make bare :  
Fight for us once again ;  
So shall the saints and martyrs raise  
A mighty chorus to Thy praise.  
World without end. Amen.”

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THE “ GOSPEL MAGAZINE ” FUND.

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

	£	s.	d.
Davies, Mrs. A. M. . . . .	0	4	0
Pitman, Mrs. L. (per Miss L. Ormiston)	0	10	0

**Our Young Folks' Page.**

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## THE BUNCH OF FLOWERS.

On a sunny afternoon this autumn, Rachel Howard went to see a sick woman, who lived in a little cottage on a hillside, overlooking the river valley. Mrs. Hale had only been married a short time, so everything was spick and span, and the bedroom furniture was of the newest. The first thing Rachel noticed was a large bunch of chrysanthemums tied up with string, and laid at the foot of the bed. One corner of the pale green eiderdown was turned back, and the flowers reposed on the matching silk bedspread beneath. "How lovely!" thought Rachel, "but I had better not say so, or she will feel she must offer me some." You see Rachel thought somebody must have brought them as a present. The visit passed pleasantly, and Rachel was saying good-bye, when Mrs. Hale said, "I don't know if you care for flowers. Those have just been cut on purpose for you!" Of course Rachel was delighted, and she bore off her armful of flowers in triumph.

The next day was Sunday. On that date exactly six years before, Rachel had said good-bye to her sister at Southampton, as she started on her way to China. Grace was going eagerly and joyfully, for she was one of those who "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth," and the place of His leading was China. As the sisters talked together for the last time, they spoke of that verse in the thirty-first Psalm, where David says, "Oh, how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee!" and they were wondering what goodness God had laid up in store for each of them. They knew that there was no good thing that He would withhold, and it was a great comfort as they parted to feel that whatever happened, they were in His hands. It was less than a year later that the Lord called Grace to the place He had prepared for her among the many mansions. As Rachel thought of these things on her way to Church, there flashed into her mind the remembrance of the flowers given to her the day before. "Cut on purpose for you!" That is, they were specially prepared and laid up for Rachel. She had been very grateful for the gift, but now she was so thankful, for it seemed as if God had sent the flowers to remind her of the things He had prepared. It seemed as if He was remembering His mercy, and calling to her mind that last happy walk with Grace, just when she was sorrowing afresh over her loss.

Have you ever thought of all the good things God has prepared

for His servants? Isaiah says it is impossible to imagine what He has in store, and Paul quoted from him when he said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." But something has been revealed; we know there is "a *kingdom* prepared from the foundation of the world"; we know it says, "He hath prepared for them a *city*"; and among the many mansions there is a place prepared by the Lord Jesus for each of His disciples, for He said, "I go to prepare a *place* for you." And not only are such good things laid up on the other side of death, but now in this life on earth we are continually being surprised by some good thing that we did not expect at all, just prepared and ready for us.

"Thou, O God, hast prepared of Thy goodness for the poor," said the Psalmist. For the poor! Is it not worth while to be poor—poor in spirit, and contrite of heart—if all this goodness is laid up for such? These poor people are those that fear God, for David said, "Oh, how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for *them that fear Thee!*" They are those that wait for Him; for Isaiah spoke of "what He hath prepared for *him that waiteth for Him.*" They are *strangers and pilgrims* upon earth; for it is for such as they that it says in Hebrews, "He hath prepared for them a *city.*" They are those whom God has blessed; for Christ said, "Come, *ye blessed of My Father*, inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

As if it was not enough to know all these particulars of the goodness prepared, Paul adds yet another glory: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a *crown of righteousness.*" Ah, yes, you may say, there might well be a crown for Paul; how good and great he was, how zealous in the Master's service. But I am of no use to anybody; I am always doing wrong, however much I want to do right; and often I seem so cold and hard that I wonder if my soul can be alive at all. You are quite wrong; Paul did not expect that crown because he deserved it; he said he knew that in him there dwelt no good thing. And so he goes on to say, "And not for me only, but for *all them that love His appearing.*" If Jesus is your Saviour, if He died on the cross instead of you, bearing the punishment of your sins, do you not love His appearing? Do you not long for His presence with you? How sweet those "glimpses of His presence" are when He comes and speaks to your soul! That crown of righteousness is as much for the feeblest of believers as it is for Paul; without it indeed not one of us can enter heaven, for the righteousness is not our own, but His, Who lived and died and rose again.

## Protestant Beacon.

### ANGLO-CATHOLIC VANITIES.

WE have received from a London firm advertisements about "Wafer Breads," "Incense," "Church Candles," "Wicks," and "Sanctuary Lamp Oil." These advertisements show what the Church of our martyred Reformers has come to. The Reformers, "to take away all occasion of dissension and superstition . . . concerning the bread," said, "It shall suffice that the bread be such as is usual to be eaten; but the best and purest wheat bread that conveniently may be gotten" (Rubric at the end of Communion Service). Why then resort to wafers stamped with pictures of the crucifixion?

No mention is made in the Prayer Book of the use of incense in the services of the Church of England, nor is such use prescribed in the New Testament in connection with worship under the New Covenant.

A correspondent writing to this London firm says: "I was pleased with the sample pair altar candles 30 in. by 2 in. which I had from you." But the Reformers abolished altars and put in their place honest tables. The word "altar" is never used in the Prayer Book of the table upon which the bread and wine are placed to be used at the Lord's Supper. An altar is meant to be used by a sacrificing priest who offers a sacrifice. But the Lord's Supper is not a sacrifice, nor is the minister who administers it in the Church of England a sacrificing priest. He is only a presbyter or elder.

Then with regard to the so-called "sanctuary lamp oil." The word "sanctuary" means "holy place." The innermost part of the tabernacle was called "the holy of holies," because there God symbolically dwelt, but the temple in which He now dwells is the Church or called-out people of God. Buildings called Churches or Chapels are not God's dwelling-places. The temple and its priests and sacrifices and its incense and altars are all abolished, and God dwells not in buildings of bricks and mortar, but in the hearts of His people (1 Cor. iii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 16). The chancels of Churches are no more holy than other parts of the building. God's people are His house ("Whose house are we," Heb. iii. 6), not the material building in which His people may worship. The Lord's people are "built up a spiritual house." We all need to beware of the use of the word "altar" for the communion table, and the use of the word "sanctuary" for the building in which we worship.

"For Thou, within no walls confined,  
Inhabitest the humble mind;  
Such ever bring Thee where they come,  
And going, take Thee to their home."

(Cowper.)

It seems to us that what the nation needs is a recall to the great Gospel truths of the New Covenant and to that simplicity of worship which our Lord prescribed when He said, "God is a Spirit: and they

that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "The Father seeketh such to worship Him" (John iv. 23, 24).

There is the need of a tremendous clearing out of altars, candles, images, crosses, crucifixes, incense, altar cloths, and popish vestments. Back to the simplicity of the New Testament! Back to the Word of God!

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### Reviews and Notices of Books.

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THE APPROACHING ADVENT OF CHRIST. By the Rev. Alexander Reese. Price 6s. Pp. 330. (Morgan & Scott, Ltd., Paternoster Buildings, London, E.C.4; also from Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony, 9, Milnthorpe Road, Chiswick, London, W.4; and from all booksellers.)

The author of this well-bound, clearly-printed, and attractive volume, is a missionary of the American Presbyterian Mission, and he labours in Brazil. He hails from New Zealand, and he is evidently an omnivorous reader. He seems to have read all the literature of what he calls the "Darbyist" school of the interpretation of prophecy. The volume shows an acquaintance with the leading English and German commentators on the Scriptures. Dr. Theodore Zahn's *Introduction to the New Testament*, English Translation, three volumes, is a special favourite with him. He has also drawn freely on modern revisions of the New Testament from Darby to Dr. G. W. Wade, including Moffatt's and Weymouth's translations.

When he first entered a Divinity School in New Zealand in preparation for the ministry, he was a convinced follower of Darby in regard to the interpretation of prophecy, and it was a shock to him to discover that "the saintly scholar" who presided over the school, had abandoned the Darbyist theories, and was then a believer in the doctrine that the coming of the Antichrist would precede the coming of Christ. Later on, however, our author was shaken in his convictions by reading Dr. Tregelles on Daniel xii. 1-3, and eventually, after a thorough study of Scripture, he became convinced that the peculiar teachings of Darby were incapable of proof from the Word of God.

This large volume, though largely written years ago, is now published for the first time. It is the fruit of long and careful study of the whole subject of the Lord's coming. We have read the volume through with deep interest, and we feel that it may be regarded as one of the most exhaustive examinations of the doctrines of the extreme futurist school.

Spurgeon, in his *Commenting on Commentaries* (p. 198), divides the futurist interpreters of prophecy into two companies. The first he calls *Simple Futurists*, amongst whom are Maitland, B. W. Newton, Burgh, Tregelles, and such men as the late George Müller and Pastor Frank White. The second company are called *Extreme Futurists*,

such as Darby, Kelly, Dr. Bullinger, Sir Robert Anderson, Dr. Gaebelain, and many others. It is important to remember that there are vast differences between these two schools, and there is danger of attributing to simple futurists the more extreme and unusual views of the extreme futurists.

The doctrine of the coming of the Lord to receive His people unto Himself in the heavenly mansions, is full of comfort to all the Lord's people. It is a painful fact, however, that there are wide differences of opinion amongst the Lord's people as to many details connected with that great and glorious event. These differences have a tendency to make some avoid the subject altogether. Yet the coming of the Lord is one of the subjects which was written for our learning. All the truth about it is found in Scripture, and the believer should humbly study what the Scriptures themselves teach, looking to the Holy Spirit to enable him to arrive at right views on this great subject.

A well-written and exhaustive volume like the book we are reviewing, will at least enable the readers to see what the *extreme futurists* teach on this subject, and also enable them to grasp the more simple views of those teachers who are called *simple futurists*.

On page 295 Mr. Reese mentions that propositions like the following have been sponsored by eminent teachers of the extreme futurist school. These propositions are as follows: "The approaching Advent of Christ will be secret, and all Christians will be secretly snatched away to heaven." "Matthew's Gospel was written for Jews—its unsuitability for Gentile Christians being taken for granted." "The Church is not in Acts before Paul." "The Four Gospels do not contain 'Church' teaching." "The Body of Christ is not in the Apocalypse." "The great commission (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20) refers to the witness of the Jewish Remnant in the End-time, before its own regeneration." "The use of the Lord's prayer for Christians is unchristian." "Israel's deepest blindness will happen *after* the approaching Day of Messiah: after the Glorious Appearing of Jehovah-Jesus in Titus ii. 13." "The First Resurrection is not the first—but the second." "The vision of Revelation vii. 9-17 gives an earthly scene." "The twelve apostles are not in the Body." "The Church cannot be the Bride, because she is the Body." "Antichrist rises and triumphs after the Parousia of Christ." "The New Jerusalem is 'Jewish.'"

The above propositions represent the views more or less of the extreme futurist school. They are all rejected by the simple futurist teachers.

The author of this volume examines carefully and exhaustively the extreme futurist position, and adopts the more simple interpretations of those who may be styled simple futurists.

Whatever view our readers may take, we think this volume is well worthy of a careful perusal.

Unlike most simple futurists, Mr. Reese thinks that when Peter speaks of Babylon (1 Peter v. 13), and that when John in the

Revelation speaks of Babylon, they both mean Rome. Each reader must evidently use his own private judgment.

We regret that the author quotes non-Evangelical authors at times without warning his readers. We also regret his profuse use of many of the modern revisions of the New Testament, including Dr. Moffatt, who is regarded as a Modernist. Spurgeon says, "*Do not needlessly amend our Authorized Version.* It is faulty in many places, but still it is a grand work taking it for all in all, and it is unwise to be making every old lady distrust the only Bible she can get at, or what is more likely, mistrust you for falling out with her cherished treasure. Correct where correction must be for truth's sake, but never for the vainglorious display of your critical ability" (*Commenting on Commentaries*, page 31). Mr. Reese is not guilty of the vainglorious display of his ability, but we feel with the late Dr. C. H. Waller, that for all practical purposes the Authorized Version is sufficient.

In the same volume (page 34) Spurgeon says, "We reverence the teaching of the prophets, and the Apocalypse, but for many of the professed expounders of those inspired books we entertain another feeling."

We cannot find, at present, another remark of Spurgeon's, but it is to this effect: "'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy' (Rev. i. 3), but the like blessing hath not fallen on many of those who pretend to expound it."

Strong language is sometimes used by Christian men of those who differ from them in their exposition of prophecy. Ought we not, however, while holding firmly what we believe is a true exposition, to be thoroughly kind and courteous towards those who differ from us?

In conclusion, we would advise our readers to read this new book. It is an able, exhaustive, and learned study of the whole futurist school of prophetic interpretation.

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#### THE HOLY SPIRIT: HIS DEITY, PERSONALITY, AND OPERATIONS.

By Thomas Houghton (Editor of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE). Price 2s. 6d.; postage 4d. Crown 8vo. Pp. 224. (B. S. Taylor, Gospel Magazine Office, 23, Bedford Street, Strand, London, W.C.2; and of all booksellers.)

As this well-printed and nicely-bound volume is from our own pen, we cannot review it in the way we might review any other book. We can, however, draw our readers' attention to it. The book consists of twenty-seven chapters, and it deals with a very large part of the teaching of the whole Bible on *The Holy Spirit: His Deity, Personality, and Operations*. The book is the outcome of much study, thought, and prayer, and we hope that the Lord may influence *every one of our readers at once to order a copy*. Some may be able to order *many copies* to give away where they think the book might be useful. Many may make use of the book as a birthday present. They might like to send copies to friends abroad as well as in the homeland.

The cost of printing, binding, and publishing books is much heavier

than many people imagine. To meet the cost of this new book we need to sell about two thousand copies. Will all our readers pray that the Lord may dispose two thousand or more to become purchasers, and that he may grant great blessing on the circulation of the volume ?

It is sent forth in reliance upon His power and goodness, and in the belief that there is nothing too hard for the Lord. Many books of this size are published at a higher price. It is issued at a low price in the hope that a very large number will purchase it.

Here is an opportunity for all our readers to be "fellow-helpers to the truth." We say this in the humble hope that the book will be found to be full of Bible truth. Yet it no doubt has its imperfections.

**MY PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES.** By J. A. Kensit. Pp. 80. Price 6d. ; postage 1d. (Protestant Truth Society, 31, Cannon Street, London, E.C.4.)

We are informed that this "is a vivid story of the actual happenings at the famous Roman Catholic shrine, and a fair discussion from the Protestant standpoint of the events which led up to it, and the claims made on its behalf. All who would know the truth about Lourdes should read this book." We have not yet been able to read it ourselves, but we expect uncompromising Protestantism from Mr. Kensit.

**MY POCKET COMPANION, 1938.** Single copy, 2½d. ; 13 for 2s. 4d. ; 100 for 14s. ; all post free. Superior Editions : 7d., 1s. 1d., and 2s. 7d. post free. (Protestant Truth Society, 31, Cannon Street, London, E.C.4.)

This is the twenty-third year of the issue of *My Pocket Companion*, and it seems to be as attractive as ever. The year 1938, being the four hundredth year since the Bible was by Royal Order set up in every Parish Church, many of the pages of *My Pocket Companion* contain important historical information about the Bible, and also many valuable testimonies to its value given by great and famous men.

We have received the FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT of the Calvinistic Protestant Union. Mr. David Catt, the Secretary, says that he would like to "celebrate the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the glorious Reformation" by sending ten thousand shilling Bibles to as many boys and girls. Contributions towards this object may be sent to him at 21, Clapton Square, London, E.5.

We have received HAPPY GREETINGS from the Lord's Day Observance Society, 22, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1. Naturally many of its pages are occupied in emphasizing the due observance of the Lord's day. The need for such emphasis is becoming increasingly great. Those who have used this attractively got up calendar in past years will want to use it again.