







BIBLE  
READINGS 
on the Inner
Life   



J. Penn - Lewis

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P R E F A C E

It will be readily seen that the Bible Readings in this book are not exhaustive of their various subjects. They are simply messages given to me by the Spirit of God as a supply to my own heart's need at different periods of my spiritual life, or else as "seed for sowing" (2 Cor. ix. 10) in His service.

In sending the Bible Readings forth in book form it is my hope that the Eternal Spirit may graciously illuminate the Word of God afresh, and use it again as the portion of "food in due season" to meet the heart-need of the children of God.

The References are taken from the Revised Version except where otherwise stated, and quotations from Conybeare and Howson's translation of the Epistles of St. Paul are indicated by the letters, C.H.

Some of the Bible Readings have already been issued in leaflet form, printed on thin paper for insertion in Bibles, but it is hoped that they will be additionally useful if included in this present volume.

Jessie Penn-Lewis.

June, 1901.

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Jesus Crowned.

“Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour.” Heb. ii. 9.

I. Why He was crowned.

“Because of the suffering of death.” Heb. ii. 9.

“*The sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow them.*” 1 Pet. i. 11.

“*Behoved it not the Christ to suffer . . . and to enter into His glory?*” Luke xxiv. 26.

II. When He was crowned.

“God . . . raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory.” 1 Pet. i. 21.

III. The crowned Victor's work.

“When He had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Heb. i. 3.

IV. The crowned Lord's gifts.

1. *He received the anointing above His fellows.*

“Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever. . . . God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee.” Heb. i. 8.

2. *He received a Name above every name.*

“God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the Name which is above every name.” Phil. ii. 9.

3. *He received the Holy Ghost for His Church.*

“Being . . . by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath poured forth this.” Acts ii. 33.

V. The crowned Lord waiting.

“When He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet.” Heb. x. 12, 13.

VI. The Father's promise to the exalted Son.

“Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet.” Heb. i. 13.

VII. The object of His suffering and crowning.

“That . . . He should taste death for every man.” Heb. ii. 9.

“Bringing many sons unto glory.” Heb. ii. 10.

VIII. The Lord's last will and testament.

“Father, those whom Thou hast given Me, *I will* that, where I am, they also may be with Me; that they may behold My glory.” John xvii. 24. m.

IX. The call from the Exalted Lord to His own.

“He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with Me in My Throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His Throne.” Rev. iii. 21.

X. We may by faith already sit with Him.

"When we were dead . . . quickened . . . and raised us up *with Him*; and made us to sit with Him." Eph. ii. 5, 6.

XI. The conditions of sharing with Christ now.

- | | | |
|--|---|----------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The eyes of your heart enlightened." 2. "That ye may know . . . His calling." 3. "Know . . . the exceeding greatness of His power." <p><i>The one connecting link :—</i>
"To us-ward who believe."</p> | } | Eph. i. 18-21. |
|--|---|----------------|

XII. The experimental path to the Throne.

"Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink?" (See ver. 35-40.) Mark x. 38.

XIII. The practical attitude to earthly things.

"Raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God." Col. iii. 1.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Set your mind on the things . . . above." 2. "Make dead . . . your members which are upon the earth." 3. "Put ye also away all . . . anger, wrath, malice." 4. "Seeing that ye <i>have</i> put off the old . . . and <i>have</i> put on the new." | <p>ver. 2.</p> <p>ver. 5. m.</p> <p>ver. 8.</p> <p>ver. 9.</p> |
|--|--|

"He lifteth up the needy from the dunghill, to make them sit with princes, and inherit the throne of glory." I Sam. ii. 8.

We see Jesus.

Heb. ii. 9-17.

I. The Incarnation.

"We behold Him who hath been made for a little while lower than the angels, even Jesus." Heb. ii. 9. m.

II. The crucifixion at Calvary.

"Because of the suffering of death." ver. 9.

III. The Risen and Ascended Christ.

"Crowned with glory and honour." ver. 9.

IV. The purpose of His death.

"That . . . He should taste death for every man." ver. 9.

V. The fruit of His death.

"Bringing many sons unto glory." ver. 10.

VI. The pathway of suffering.

"The author of their salvation perfect through sufferings." ver. 10.

VII. The travail of His soul satisfied.

"Not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, . . . Behold I and the children." ver. 11-13.

VIII. The victory of His work.

"Bring to nought . . . the devil." ver. 14.

IX. His continual heavenly work.

"A merciful and faithful High Priest." ver. 17.

The Heart of Jesus revealed in John xvii.

"Neither for these only do I make request, but for them also that believe on Me through their word." John xvii. 20. m.

I. His communion with His Father.

"Jesus . . . lifting up His eyes to heaven . . . said, Father." ver. 1.

II. His dependence upon His Father.

"The hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee." ver. 1.

III. His life-work done.

"I glorified Thee on the earth." ver. 4.

"I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do." ver. 4. A. V.

"I manifested Thy Name" (revealed the character of God; compare "seen Me, seen the Father."—John xiv. 9).

"They know that all things . . . are from Thee." ver. 7.

"I have given . . . the words which Thou gavest Me." ver. 8. A. V.

IV. His joy in His own.

"The men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world." ver. 6.

"Thine they were [by creation], and Thou gavest them to Me." ver. 6.

V. The committal to the Father.

"Those whom Thou hast given Me . . . are Thine." ver. 9.

VI. His intercession for His own.

"Holy Father, keep . . . those whom Thou hast given Me." (Gr. keep as a parent a child.) ver. 11. A. V.

"I pray not . . . take them out of the world, but . . . keep them from the evil one." ver. 15. m.

"Sanctify [by Thy possession] them in the truth." ver. 17.

VII. His identification with His own.

In separation. "They are not of the world, *even as I.*" ver. 14, 16.

In service. "As Thou didst send Me . . . *even so* sent I them." ver. 18.

VIII. The acme of His desire.

1. "That they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee." ver. 21.

2. "That they also may be in Us." ver. 21.

3. "That they may be one, even as We are One." ver. 22.

4. "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one." ver. 23.

IX. The object of His desire.

"That *the world may know* that Thou didst send Me, and lovedst them, even as Thou lovedst Me." ver. 23.

X. The union in the glory.

"Father, those whom Thou hast given Me, I will that, where I am, they also may be *with Me*; that they may behold My glory." ver. 24. m.

XI. The manifestation to the world.

"That the world may *believe* that Thou didst send Me." ver. 21.

"That the world may *know* that Thou didst send Me." ver. 23.

XII. The Son's continuous work.

"I made known unto them Thy Name, and *will make it known* . . . I in them." ver. 26.

Jesus as Lord!

“Lord,” a word of authority, signifying a ruler or governor. *Cruden.*

- I. **The glad tidings at the birth of the Christ.**
 “To you this day . . . a Saviour, which is *Anointed Lord.*” Luke ii. 11. m.
- II. **The purpose of His death and resurrection.**
 “To this end Christ died and lived again, *that He might be Lord.*” Rom. xiv. 9.
- III. **The Pentecostal message through Peter.**
 “God hath made Him both *Lord* and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.” Acts ii. 36.
- IV. **The work of the Holy Spirit.**
 “No man can say Jesus is *Lord*, but in the Holy Spirit.” I Cor. xii. 3.
- V. **The way of salvation.**
 “If thou shalt confess . . . Jesus *as Lord*, and . . . believe . . . God raised Him from the dead [i.e. the evidence of His finished work of redemption], thou shalt be saved.” Rom. x. 9.
Note that all who came to Christ for help on earth acknowledged Him as Lord. The cavillers called Him “Teacher,” “Master.” See Matt. xxii. 16, 24, 36, and the Lord’s words following in Matt. xxiii. 10.
- VI. **The way of holiness (or continuous salvation).**
 “Sanctify in your hearts Christ *as Lord.*” I Pet. iii. 15.
- VII. **Heart obedience the evidence of enshrining Him as Lord.**
 “Many will say . . . Lord, Lord.” Matt. vii. 22.
 “Not every one that saith . . . Lord, Lord, shall enter . . . but he that doeth the will.” Matt. vii. 21.
 “Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and *do* not the things which I say?” Luke vi. 46.
- VIII. **What the Lordship of Christ involves.**
 1. *Sharing His path.*
 “It is enough for the . . . servant [to be] as his Lord.” Matt. x. 24, 25.
 2. *Taking Him as the Pattern.*
 “If I then, the *Lord* . . . have washed your feet . . . ye also,” etc. John xiii. 13, 14.
 3. *Rendering Him a final account.*
 “The *Lord* . . . cometh, and maketh a reckoning.” Matt. xxv. 19.
 4. *Accepting His right to act as He wills.*
 “The *Lord* of the vineyard saith . . . Is it not lawful for Me to do what I will with Mine own.” Matt. xx. 8, 15.
 5. *Recognising His right to determine the work.*
 “[The] servant, whom *his Lord* hath set over His household.” Matt. xxiv. 45.
 Note I Pet. v. 3; 2 Cor. i. 24, and contrast Mark x. 42.
- IX. **The joy of a faithful servant.**
 “We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus *as Lord.*” 2 Cor. iv. 5.
- X. **God’s eternal purpose toward His Son.**
 “Every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is Lord.*” Phil. ii. 11.
 “*He is thy Lord, worship thou Him.*”—Ps. xlv. 11.

“First things first.”

I. “First,” judgment must begin at the house of God.

“Judgment must begin at the house of God : and if it first begin at us.” I Pet. iv. 17.*

God deals with His children first. They are anxious about the world ! God is concerned about the state of His church. We lose the souls we seek because we do not put “first things first.”

II. “First,” reconciliation with others ere God accepts us.

“Leave there thy gift before the altar . . . first be reconciled . . . then come and offer thy gift.” Matt. v. 24.

Again we lose what we seek if we do not put “first things first.” We seek God, we must get right with others first, if we mean to know Him.

III. “First,” the inward cleansing, then the outer life.

“Cleanse first that which is within . . . that the outside . . . may be clean also.” Matt. xxiii. 26.

God begins inside with the heart. How often we reverse it and try to work from without to within ! Let us put “first things first.”

IV. “First,” Christ and His claims, and other claims second.

“Lord, suffer me first . . . Lord, I will follow Thee ; but let me first go bid them farewell.” Luke ix. 59-61.

God will not take a second place. Christ’s claims are absolute. To go “bid farewell,” whatever our friends may think, must be left undone when He says “Go.”

V. “First,” count the cost of following Christ, then we shall endure.

“Sitteth . . . down first, and counteth the cost.” Luke xiv. 28.

Many start to follow without doing this, and shrink back dismayed when the following leads them to the judgment hall and Calvary. Had they first sat down and faced what it meant, they would not have been surprised when it came. Compare Moses and his choice, in Heb. xi. 24-27.

VI. “First,” the Kingdom, then all things added.

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God . . . and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matt. vi. 33.

How many put the “all things” first and lose them, and the kingdom too. If we reverse God’s order, He cannot fulfil His word.

SOME “FIRST” THINGS.

I. “First,” the blade, then the ear.

“First the blade, then the ear ; after that, the full corn in the ear.” Mark iv. 28.

This is God’s order of growth. How many forget this and are disappointed because they are not “golden grain” all at once !

* References from A.V.

2. "First" show piety at home.
 "Let them learn first to show piety (m. 'kindness') at home." 1 Tim. v. 4.
Again God's order—"First" at home. When we have learnt to "be subject" and live His life there, He will widen our sphere, and send us forth into the world.
3. "First" yourself and then your goods.
 "They . . . first gave their own selves to the Lord." 2 Cor. viii. 5.
How many give their goods to escape giving themselves! It is a question how much is acceptable to God when the person is withheld. God knoweth.
4. "First" your will then your deed.
 "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath." 2 Cor. viii. 12.
"God reckons according to the intention, not the amount" (Pierson). See the woman who cast in a farthing. Christ said, "more than they all." (Luke xxi. 3.)
5. "First" your love, and then your service.
 "I know thy works." "Thou hast left thy first love." Rev. ii. 2, 4.
It is possible for us to get so absorbed in the service as to lose the fervent love to the Person of Christ. 1 Cor. xiii. 3 shows what God thinks of service without love.
6. "First" yourself as a pattern.
 "In me first . . . for a pattern." 1 Tim. i. 16.
This is the best preparation for preaching—"In me first!" When others see in us the pattern of the wonder-working power of God, they will need no other "Christian evidence" of the truth of God.
7. "First" your vision clear ere you can help others.
 "First cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." Matt. vii. 5.
Let us put "first things first," that Christ, Who is the "First and Last," may be glorified in His people.

"The life which is life indeed."

1 Tim. vi. 19. R.V.

1. The life that was lost.
 "Alienated from the life of God." Eph. iv. 18.*
2. The life regained.
 "The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ." Rom. vi. 23. R.V.
3. The life abundant.
 "I came that they may have life . . . abundantly." John x. 10. R.V.
 (See the basis in Rom. vi. 11. John xii. 25.)
4. The life manifested. 2 Cor. iv. 10.
5. The life hidden with Christ in God. Col. iii. 3.
6. The life overflowing. John vii. 38.

* References from A.V.

What sayest thou of thyself?

John i. 22.

I. Some unveiled "I's!"

1. *The "I" of the careless.*

"Thou that art given to pleasures, that sittest securely, that sayest in
thine heart I am, and there is none else beside me." Isa. xlvii. 8. m.

The awakening:—

"In a moment . . . loss . . . evil . . . upon thee." ver. 9-11.

2. *The "I" of the blind moralist.*

"God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men . . . I . . . I." Luke xviii. 11, 12.

The Contrast:—

"God be merciful to me, the sinner." ver. 13. m.

The Divine verdict:—

"This man . . . justified rather than the other." ver. 14.

3. *The "I" of the haughty.*

"Thou . . . hast said, I am perfect in beauty." Ezek. xxvii. 3.

The dealing of God:—

"Thou art become a destruction." Ezek. xxvii. 36. m.

4. *The "I" of the self-centred rich.*

"What shall I do? . . . I will say to my soul, Soul thou hast much
goods laid up for many years; take thine ease." Luke xii. 17-19.

The Divine message:—

"Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and
the things . . . whose shall they be?" ver. 20.

5. *The "I" of the lukewarm Christian.*

"Thou sayest I am rich . . . and have need of nothing." Rev. iii. 17.

The Divine estimation:—

"Thou art the wretched one . . . poor and blind." ver. 17, 18.

6. *The "I" of the carnal Christian.*

"Ye are yet carnal . . . when one saith, I am of Paul; and
another, I am of Apollos." See I Cor. iii. 1-4.

The serious loss:—

"I fed you . . . not with meat; for ye were not yet able to
bear it." ver. 2.

7. *The "I" of the selfish Christian.*

"These many years do I serve Thee, . . . and yet Thou never
gavest me!" Luke xv. 29, 30.

The unveiling of the Father's heart:—

"Child, thou art ever with Me, and all that is Mine is thine."
(Yet he grumbled over a gift to another!) ver. 31. m.

8 *The "I" of the holy "self."*

"Stand by thyself . . . for I am holier than thou."

Isa. lxxv. 5.

The Lord's abhorrence:—

"I will not keep silence, but will recompense."

ver. 6.

II. **The Spirit of Jesus in contrast.**

1. "The Son can do nothing of Himself." John v. 19.

2. "I can of Myself do nothing; as I hear I judge." John v. 30.

3. "My teaching is not Mine . . . If any man willeth to do His will he shall know . . . whether I speak from Myself." John vii. 16, 17.

4. "I do nothing of Myself, but as the Father taught Me, I speak." John viii. 28.

5. "Neither have I come of Myself." John viii. 42.

6. "I seek not Mine own glory." John viii. 50.

7. "I spake not from Myself." John xii. 49, 50.

See the secret of His humiliation:—

"Christ Jesus . . . emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant . . . becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the Cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him." Phil. ii. 5-9.

III. **The supply of the Spirit of Jesus.**1. *The "I" of the soul in the light of God.*

Abraham :—"I am but dust and ashes." Gen. xviii. 27.

David :—"So brutish was I . . . I was as a beast before Thee." Ps. lxxiii. 22.

Job :—"I am vile." Job xl. 4. A. V.

The Bridal soul :—"I am black." Song of Solomon i. 5.

2. *The "I" of true self-effacement.*

Solomon :—"I know not how." I Kings iii. 7.

Jeremiah :—"Behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." Jer. i. 6.

John :—"I am the voice of one crying." } John i. 23-27.
"I am not worthy."

3. *The "I" of the great Apostle to the Gentiles.*

"In nothing was I behind . . . pre-eminent apostles, though I am nothing." 2 Cor. xii. 11. m.

"I am . . . not meet to be called an apostle . . . I laboured . . . yet not I." I Cor. xv. 9, 10.

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints . . . grace." Eph. iii. 8.

IV. **The Master's call to self-renunciation.**

"If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself (not something to himself), and take up his cross, and follow Me."

Matt. xvi. 24.

See also Luke xiv. 25-35.

V. **The secret of self-effacement.**

"The world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Gal. vi. 14.

"I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." Gal. ii. 20.

"Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." Jer. xlv. 5.

Soul—"What sayest thou of Him?" John ix. 17.

The "Own."

"Love . . . seeketh not its own." I Cor. xiii. 5.

I. The seeking of the "own."

- "We have turned every one to *his own* way." Isa. liii. 6.
 "Our lips are our *own*: who is lord over us?" Ps. xii. 4.
 "I let them go after the stubbornness of their heart, that they might walk in their *own* counsels." Ps. lxxxi. 12.

II. The seeking of the "own" and its results.

1. *The "own" as the cause of unanswered prayer.*
 "In the day of your fast ye find your *own* pleasure." Isa. lviii. 3.
2. *The "own" as the cause of withholden blessing.*
 "Mine . . . lieth waste, while ye run every man to his *own* . . . therefore over you the heaven is stayed from dew." Haggai I. 9, 10. m.
3. *The "own" leads to seeking self-glory.*
 "He that speaketh from himself seeketh his *own* glory." John vii. 18.
4. *The "own" hinders our knowledge of God.*
 "Shepherds that cannot understand; they have all turned to their *own* way, each one to his gain." Isa. lvi. 11.
5. *The "own" hinders real service for others.*
 "I have no man . . . who will care genuinely for your state. For they all seek their *own*." Phil. 2. 20, 21. m.
6. *The "own" hinders clear vision in helping others.*
 "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in *thine own* eye?" Matt. vii. 3.

III. The outcome of seeking the "own" in any form or degree.

- "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his *own* flesh shall . . . reap corruption." Gal. vi. 7, 8.

IV. The "own" must be renounced to follow Christ.

1. *The "own" in family relationship, so as to let Christ be first.*
 "If any man cometh unto Me, and hateth not his own . . . he cannot be My disciple." (Explained by Matt. x. 37.) Luke xiv. 26.
2. *The "own" even in clinging to life.*
 "Yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." Luke xiv. 26.
3. *There must be the taking of the Cross.*
 "Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." Luke xiv. 27.

It is in taking the cross of Christ as our very own, so as to be delivered from the seeking of the "own," that we prove ourselves to be true disciples—taught ones—of Christ.

V. The Christ as our Pattern.

- “I am come . . . not to do Mine own will.” John vi. 38.
 “I seek not Mine own glory.” (See also John v. 30.) John viii. 50.

VI. The Spirit of Christ in the Apostles.

- Peter.* “Why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our *own* power
 . . . we had made him to walk !” Acts iii. 12.
Paul. “On *mine own* behalf I will not glory.” 2 Cor. xii. 5.
 “Not seeking mine own profit.” 1 Cor. x. 33.
 “Not having a righteousness of mine own.” Phil. iii. 9.

See too in the Old Testament :—

- Moses.* “I have not done them of mine *own* mind.” Num. xvi. 28.
David. “I will be base in mine *own* sight.” 2 Sam. vi. 22.

How the Lord hates the “own” spirit, we see in His words to Gideon ; “Lest Israel vaunt . . . saying, mine own hand hath saved me.” Judges vii. 2.

VII. The result of renouncing the “own.”

- “If . . . Not doing thine own ways—
 Nor finding thine own pleasure—
 Nor speaking thine own words: *then* shalt thou delight
 thyself in the Lord.” Isa. lviii. 13, 14.

VIII. How to renounce the “own,” in recognizing the “own !”

1. “Let each man *prove his own* work.” Gal. vi. 4.
2. Provide “for his own, and specially his own household.” 1 Tim. v. 8.
(It will be well to study the Lord’s words in Mark vii. 9–13, to interpret this, and to remember how the Lord Jesus acted Himself. See John xix. 26, 27).
3. “To his own lord he standeth or falleth.” Rom. xiv. 4.
 It means real renouncing of the “own,” to walk only to please the Lord, and not as pleasing men.

IX. The Lord’s promise if we seek not the “own.”

- “Peter said, Lo, we have left our own, and followed Thee. And He said . . . there is no man that hath left . . . who shall not receive manifold more in this time.” Luke xviii. 28, 30.

The Exchange.

- “A people for God’s own possession.” 1 Pet. ii. 9. Ephes. i. 13, 14.

The Command.

- “Let no man seek his own.” 1 Cor. x. 24.
 “Not looking each of you to his own things, but . . . to the things of others.” Phil. ii. 4.

-
- “Let us therefore . . . be thus minded: and if in anything ye are otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you.” Phil. iii. 15.

“Nothing.”

“If a man thinketh himself to be *something*, when he is *nothing*, he deceiveth himself. Gal. vi. 3. R.V.

(The words “to make nothing,” according to Bullinger’s Lexicon, mean “to displace, abolish, get rid of, make void, render null,” and in some places it has a strengthened negative in the Greek. All words marked thus †, have this strengthened negative.)

I. What we are before God.

- “All . . . before Him are as *nothing* . . . less than *nothing*.” Isa. xl. 17.*
 “Ye are worse than *nothing*, and your work . . . nought.” Isa. xli. 24. m.
 “Their works are *nothing*.” Isa. xli. 29.

II. God has to show us we are nothing.

1. “Nothing” as regards our wisdom.
 “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to *nothing*.”
 I Cor. i. 19.
2. “Nothing” as regards our knowledge.
 “If any man think that he knoweth anything (intellectually or spiritually) he knoweth *nothing* † yet as he ought to know.”
 I Cor. viii. 2.
3. “Nothing” as regards denominational prejudices.
 “Circumcision is *nothing*, and uncircumcision is *nothing*, but the keeping of the commandments of God.”
 I Cor. vii. 19.
4. “Nothing” as regards the most devoted life apart from LOVE.
 “If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor . . . but have not LOVE it profiteth me *nothing*.”
 I Cor. xiii. 3. R.V.
5. “Nothing” as regards credit, however much we labour.
 “Though I preach the gospel, I have *nothing* to glory of.”
 I Cor. ix. 16.
6. “Nothing” in anything apart from Christ.
 “Without Me ye can do *nothing* †”
 John xv. 5.
7. “Nothing” as regards even power to receive.
 “A man can take unto himself *nothing*, except it be given him from heaven.”
 John iii. 27. m.

*The summing up is that “the flesh profiteth nothing †” (John vi. 63).
 It can do nothing! It knows nothing! Its religion is nothing!
 Its sacrifice is nothing! Its labour is nothing.*

“We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.”
 I Tim. vi. 7.

III. Brought to “nothing”; God can do something for us!

1. In Salvation.
 “When they had *nothing* to pay, He frankly forgave.”
 Luke vii. 42.

* References from A.V.

2. *In Healing.*

When she "was *nothing* bettered, but rather grew worse," the woman sought Christ and was healed. Mark v. 25-29.

3. *In Service.*

When they had "toiled all the night," and "taken *nothing*," the Lord interposed, and gave them a multitude of fish. Luke v. 5.

4. *In Prayer.*

When we have "nothing to set before" the needy ones, we become importunate and receive from *God*. Luke xi. 6.

IV. The perfect example in the Lord Jesus.

The Lord of glory emptied Himself, and took the place of absolute dependence upon His Father. The place of "Nothing" that God might be "All." Hence He said it was :—

1. "Not I" *doing the works.*

"The Son can do *nothing* of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do." John v. 19.

2. "Not I" *in the judgment given.*

"I can of Mine own self do *nothing* † ; as I hear, I judge." John v. 30.

3. "Not I" *in the message given.*

"I do *nothing* of Myself ; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak." John viii. 28.

4. "Not I" *honouring Myself.*

"If I honour Myself, My honour is *nothing* ; it is My Father that honoureth Me." John viii. 54.

V. The Spirit of Christ in the Apostle Paul.

"In nothing was I behind the very chiefest Apostles, though I am *nothing*." 2 Cor. xii. 11. R.V.

VI. God's choice of instruments.

"God hath chosen . . . things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are." 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.

VII. God gives ALL to those who have nothing.

"As having *nothing*, and yet possessing all things." 2 Cor. vi. 10.

Therefore, in Christ, the soul :—

Lacks *nothing*—"When I sent you . . . lacked ye anything? And they said, *nothing*." Luke xxii. 35.

Is careful for nothing—"Be careful ('anxious' R.V.) for *nothing*." Phil. iv. 6.

Is ashamed of nothing—"My earnest expectation . . . that in *nothing* I shall be ashamed." Phil. i. 20.

Is terrified of nothing—"In *nothing* terrified by your adversaries." Phil. i. 28.

Is hurt by *nothing*.†—"Nothing shall by any means hurt you." Luke x. 19.

"All sufficiency in all things." 2 Cor. ix. 8.

The Lord's dealing with His own.

*A picture lesson from Isaiah xviii. 4-7.**

I. The Lord waiting.

"For so the Lord said unto me, I will take My rest." ver. 4.

"The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it." James v. 7.

II. The Lord watching.

"I will consider in My dwelling place" (or regard My set dwelling). ver. 4. m.

III. The Lord working.

"Like a clear heat after rain, and like a cloud of dew." ver. 4. m.

Note the silent working of the patient Lord. Heat is silent. Dew is silent. He knows which to give to His set dwelling. Heat after rain. Dew after heat.

IV. The Lord's dealing.

1. The Knife.

"Afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect . . . He shall both cut off the sprigs . . . cut down the branches." ver. 5.

This will be done "when the bud is perfect." The watching Lord waits the right time ere He uses the pruning hook.

2. The Circumstances.

"They shall be left together unto the ravenous birds . . . and to the beasts of the earth." ver. 6. R.V.

Left apparently to the fowls of the air, the wicked spirits that tempt, and to the pressure of earthly trial! He uses circumstances and permits temptations to carry out His deepest purposes in the soul.

3. The Time.

"The ravenous birds shall summer upon them . . . the beasts . . . shall winter upon them." ver. 6. R.V.

How long it seems! a whole summer the "fowls" are permitted, and during the long, long "winter," the earthly trials press!

V. The Lord's purpose.

"In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of hosts, of a people polished and peeled . . . trodden under foot." ver. 7. m.

This is the purpose of it all. To be for His own possession. A present unto the Lord, of a people peeled! Peeled of all that would hinder the clothing with Himself. The long dark winter is past, "Arise My love and come away." In the time when all is darkest, the stripped soul becomes peculiarly "a present to the Lord" for His "own possession!"

VI. The Lord's abode.

"Brought unto the Lord . . . to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the Mount Zion." ver. 7.

"Ye are come unto Mount Zion . . . to Jesus the Mediator . . . and to the blood of sprinkling." Heb. xii. 22-24. R.V.

Thus are we shown in picture lesson the story of those who follow the Lamb to Mount Zion. Those who passing through the "valley of weeping" make it a place of springs, they go from strength to strength, and appear before God in Zion (Ps. lxxxiv. 6, 7).

* References from A.V.

God's way of Deliverance in Romans vi.

"One died for all, therefore all died." 2 Cor. v. 14.

("All died. The death of all for whom He died, was virtually involved in His death." *Conybeare's note.*)

I. The death position declared.

"We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" ver. 2.

II. The death-fellowship explained.

"Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized *into Christ Jesus* were baptized *into His death*?" ver. 3.

III. The purpose of the death-fellowship.

"We were buried therefore *with Him* . . . that like as Christ was raised . . . so we also . . . newness of life." ver. 4.

IV. The reality of the death-fellowship.

"United with Him by the likeness of His death." ver. 5.

"Literally, have become partakers of a vital union . . . The meaning appears to be, if we have shared the reality of His death, whereof we have undergone the likeness." (Conybeare's note to Romans vi. 5).

V. The attitude to the death-fellowship.

"Knowing this . . . *was crucified.*" ver. 6.

Note the past tenses in R. V.

"We who died." ver. 2.

"Were baptized into Christ." ver. 3.

"Were baptized into His death." ver. 3.

"Were buried therefore with Him." ver. 4.

"He that hath died." ver. 7.

The work of deliverance upon Calvary's Cross was a completed work, therefore we are to stand by faith each moment in identification with Him in His death, whilst it is yet true that it has, in ever deepening measure, to be fulfilled, and made real in us.

VI. The result of a vital death-fellowship.

"Knowing this . . . *was crucified* . . . no longer . . . bondage." ver. 6.
See also Romans vii. 6. "Now . . . discharged . . . having died to that wherein we were holden."

VII. The assured life-fellowship.

"If . . . united with . . . His death, we shall be also . . . His resurrection." ver. 5.

"If we died with Christ . . . shall also live with Him." ver. 8.

VIII. The death and resurrection in Christ.

"The death that He died, He died . . . once."

"The life that He liveth, He liveth unto God."

"Even so . . . ye also."

ver. 10, 11.

There must be a decisive moment when we take our place in Christ as crucified, and henceforth continually live wholly unto God.

IX. The sphere of the life-fellowship.

“Dead unto sin, but alive unto God IN Christ Jesus.” ver. 11.

The little word “in” is important. We are not introduced into a fixed condition of life wherein we are independent of God. Only so far as we abide in Christ Jesus, planted into Him, are we able to account ourselves “dead unto sin” and truly and vitally alive unto God.

X. The result in practical life.

“Let not sin therefore reign.” ver. 12.

Compare I Pet. iv. 1. “Arm ye yourselves.”

XI. The surrender to God of the mortal body.

“Present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as *instruments* of righteousness.” ver. 13.

XII. The condition of maintained deliverance.

“Bondservants unto obedience.” ver. 16. m.

“Obedient from the heart to that pattern . . . whereunto ye were delivered.” ver. 17. m.

XIII. The blessed fruit now, and in eternity.

“Fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life.” ver. 22.

“Joined to Another . . . fruit unto God.” Rom. vii. 4.

Consecration “unto God.”

“Present yourselves unto God.” Rom. vi. 13.

1. Christ the Pattern.

“The death that He died, He died unto sin . . . the life that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Even so . . . ye.” Rom. vi. 10, 11.

2. The command to the believer.

“Even so reckon ye also —” Rom. vi. 11.

3. The sphere of the reckoning.

“IN Christ Jesus.” Rom. vi. 11.

4. The practical attitude of the *will*.

“Let not sin therefore reign . . . that ye should obey.” Rom. vi. 12.

5. The consecration demanded in the new sphere.

“Present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead.” Rom. vi. 13.

6. The new service.

“Your members as weapons of righteousness unto God.” Rom. vi. 13. m.

7. The life of union and its fruit.

“Joined to Another . . . that we might bring forth fruit *unto God*.” Rom. vii. 4.

8. The freedom from the old law to be under law to Christ.

“Now . . . discharged . . . we *serve* . . . not in oldness of the letter.” Rom. vii. 6.

“Sharing” with Christ.

From Conybeare's translation of the Epistles of St. Paul.

I. God's gift of His Son to share our lot.

“Since then the children are *sharers* in flesh and blood, [Christ] . . . partook of the same; that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death . . . and might deliver all . . . subject to bondage.”
Heb. ii. 14, 15, R. V.

II. God's call to the sinner.

“God . . . when we were dead in sin, called us to *share* the life of Christ.”
Eph. ii. 5.

III. What salvation really means.

“Reconciled to God by the death of His Son . . . saved, by *sharing* in His life.”
Rom. v. 10.

We have peace with God through the blood of His Cross, for we are reconciled by His atoning death; but His life imparted is the positive power that saves us from our sins, and gives full assurance and deliverance.

IV. How to share in the life of Christ.

1. *By seeing our share in His death.*

“With Him . . . we were buried by the baptism wherein we *shared* His death.”
Rom. vi. 4.

2. *By appropriating our share in His life.*

“If we have been grafted into the likeness of His death, so shall we also *share* His resurrection.”
Rom. vi. 5.

“Now if we have *shared* the death of Christ, we believe that we shall also *share* His life.”
Rom. vi. 8.

3. *By faith in the working of God.*

“With Him you were buried . . . you were made partakers of His resurrection, through the faith wrought in you by God . . . and you also, when you were dead in the transgressions and uncircumcision of your flesh, God raised to *share* His life.”
Col. ii. 12, 13.

V. The practical experience.

1. *The sharing of His sufferings.*

“The fellowship of His sufferings, *sharing* the likeness of His death.”
Phil. iii. 10.

2. *The sharing of His weakness.*

“I, too, *share* the weakness of His body; yet I shall *share* also the power of God, whereby He lives.”
2 Cor. xiii. 4.

VI. The future sharing of His glory.

“If children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; that if now we *share* His sufferings, we should hereafter *share* His glory.”
Rom. viii. 17.

“Giving thanks to the Father who has fitted us to *share* the portion of the saints in the light.”
Col. i. 12.

The Power of His Resurrection.

“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death.” Phil. iii. 10.

I. The Power of the Resurrection is exercised by the Father.

“The Father of glory . . . the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead.”

Eph. i. 17, 19, 20.

“Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father.” Rom. vi. 4.

“Him that raised Jesus our Lord.” Rom. iv. 24.

“The Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead.” Rom. viii. 11.

“The God of Peace who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep.” Heb. xiii. 20.

II. The Resurrection an example of the mighty power of God.

“The exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to that working . . . which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead.” Eph. i. 19, 20.

The “strength of His might” manifested in the raising of the Lord Jesus, is the pattern of the power He will exercise in us to raise us up out of the death of sin into a new life; and is the measure of the power He will *continually* exercise in us as He leads us to death to all our resources, a death to which we are *always delivered*, and therefore always needing the “power of the resurrection.”

III. What the Resurrection did for Christ.

1. He was lifted to the place of triumph.

“He raised Him . . . and made Him to sit . . . far above all rule, and authority, and power.” Eph. i. 20, 21.

Through death He conquered him who had the power of death; and He was then lifted by the Father to the place of victory, above the powers He had conquered.

2. He was freed from the earthward life.

“The life that He liveth, He liveth unto God.” Rom. vi. 10.

3. He was freed from the dominion of death.

“Christ being raised . . . death no more hath dominion over Him.” Rom. vi. 9.

4. He entered into His glory.

“God . . . raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory.” I Pet. i. 21.

IV. The Resurrection a pattern of our spiritual resurrection now.

“Like as Christ was raised . . . so we also might walk in newness of life.” Rom. vi. 4.

His death was accounted to be our death, as He was not only the propitiation for our sins, but He died as our representative. As He was raised by the energy of God, so, as we yield to the working of that mighty power, we are energized to walk in a new

life. Not the old life improved, but a new life, life from above, a *new* life in which we are being continually empowered to walk day by day.

V. **The Resurrection union with Christ is based upon fellowship in His death.**

“If we have become united with the likeness of His death, we shall be . . . [with] His resurrection.” Rom. vi. 5. m.

We cannot know one without the other. Many try to “draw upon” the life of the Living Lord, without admitting into their lives a vital fellowship with His death.

Note the word is “likeness.” Not the actual nailing of the body upon a cross, but a spiritual acceptance of, and *yielding* to, the power of His death which separates us from all that He was separated from when He died on Calvary.

VI. **The one condition for sharing Christ’s Resurrection.**

“Ye were also raised with Him *through faith* in the working of God, Who raised Him.” Col. ii. 12.

“Through your faith in the operation” (Lightfoot). Faith fixes its eye upon the pattern of Christ raised by the Father, and in utter abandonment casts itself upon the same mighty operation of God. But the soul is only able thus to cast itself upon God when it has come to an end of its own resources!

VII. **The characteristics of the Resurrection union with Christ.**

1. *It is a life of assured sonship.*

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who . . . begat us again . . . by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance.” I Pet. i. 3, 4.

Christ was the First-born from the dead, the First-born of many brethren, and He brings us into the church of the First-born (Heb. xii. 23) as we are joined to Him in His resurrection.

2. *It is a life of union with the Risen One.*

“Joined to Another, even to Him Who was raised from the dead.” Rom. vii. 4.

There is no resurrection life apart from the Living Lord. Joined in one life to One Who Himself was raised, He raises us with Him into His own sphere, to fulfil His own purposes, by His own power.

3. *It is a life of absolute surrender for service.*

“Present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments.” Rom. vi. 13.

This is the place for consecration in the Christian life. Only those who have been planted into His death, and are truly joined to Him in His risen life, can “present” the body and its members to be wholly at His disposal.

Note the members are presented unto *God*; God is the Worker, *God* is the user of eyes, hands, and feet. These are simply to be His weapons of righteousness (i.e. right doing!).

4. *It is a life with the whole mind set upon God.*

“If then ye were raised together with Christ . . . set your mind on the things that are above.” Col. iii. 1, 2.

The real mark of separation from the old life is to be seen in the attitude of the mind. Just so far as we have actually surrendered ourselves to the Cross will our whole mind be set upon heavenly realities, and the things of time take the subordinate place.

VIII. **What the Resurrection power can do in us.**1. *It can enable us to triumph in extremity.*

“Despaired even of life . . . death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead.” 2 Cor. i. 8, 9.

Too often we have thought the resurrection life to be a state into which we are brought consciously once for all, but the life of Paul shows us a continual handing over to death, for a continual appropriation of the life of the Risen Lord.

2. *It can triumph through us in others.*

“We also are weak with Him, but we shall live with Him through the power of God toward you.” 2 Cor. xiii. 4. m.

Again we see that the condition for the manifestation of the resurrection life through us to others, is an increasing helplessness and weakness in ourselves.

3. *It can bring forth fruit unto God.*

“Joined to . . . Him who was raised from the dead . . . fruit unto God.” Rom. vii. 4.

“Fruit is the overflow of sap.” As the life matures and deepens it must result in fruit.

4. *It can adjust us into His will.*

“God . . . who brought again from the dead . . . our Lord Jesus make you perfect . . . to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight.” Heb. xiii. 20, 21. m.

This simply means being adjusted into the will of God in every department of life. Once He has thus quickened us and adjusted our lives we realize the pain, as of a bone out of joint, when we get out of His will.

IX. **Illustrations of the proving of the Resurrection power of God.**1. *The example of Abraham.*

“Abraham . . . was offering up his . . . son . . . accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead.” Heb. xi. 17, 19.

This is the experimental way. Faith surrenders all, accounting that God is able to restore in resurrection power. When we have learnt God's principle of continuous life, based upon a continuous attitude of death, we shall understand that when we *yield all to God* we can *receive all from God*.

2. *The example of Lazarus.*

“Thy brother shall rise again . . . I am the Resurrection, and the Life . . . Believest thou this? She saith unto Him, Yea Lord.” John xi. 23-27.

Briefly the manifestation of the resurrection power of God toward others is dependent upon our faith in Him Who is Himself the Resurrection.

Christ had to obtain from Martha this confession of faith ere He went to the tomb and cried "Lazarus, come forth." God needs the link of our faith to work out His mighty power in other souls.

X. **The increasing knowledge of the Resurrection power depends upon deepening conformity to Christ's death.**

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death." Phil. iii. 10.

In Rom. vi. Paul speaks of the appropriation of our death with Christ as a crisis in our spiritual history, and places it as a basis for the union with Christ in His resurrection. In Phil. iii. 10 we see that the actual knowledge of the resurrection power depends again upon deepening fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, and increasing conformity to His death.

"Henceforth."

I. **The "henceforth" of crucifixion with Christ.**

"Our old man (*was*, R.V.) crucified with Him . . . that *henceforth* we should not serve sin." Rom. vi. 6.*

II. **The "henceforth" of the new life.**

"He died for all, that they which live should not *henceforth* live unto themselves, but *unto Him*." 2 Cor. v. 15.

III. **The "henceforth" attitude to the past.**

"Wherefore *henceforth* know we no man after the flesh . . . old things are passed away." 2 Cor. v. 16, 17.

IV. **The "henceforth" of the daily walk.**

"*Henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, . . . *henceforth* walk not as other Gentiles walk." Eph. iv. 14, 17.

V. **The "henceforth" of fellowship with Christ.**

"*Henceforth* I call you . . . friends." John xv. 15.

VI. **The "henceforth" of service.**

"From *henceforth* thou shalt catch men unto life." (Syriac.) Luke v. 10.

VII. **The "henceforth" of reward.**

"*Henceforth* . . . laid up for me a crown." 2 Tim. iv. 8.

VIII. **The "henceforth" of the Ascended Lord.**

"After He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from *henceforth* expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." Heb. x. 12, 13.

* References from A.V.

“All things new.”

“Behold I make all things new.” Rev. xxi. 5.

I. God's estimate of the old creation.

- “God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.” Gen. vi. 12. A.V.
 “There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one.” Rom. iii. 12.
 “The old man . . . waxeth corrupt.” Eph. iv. 22.

II. God's remedy of a new creation.

- “Neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.” Gal. vi. 15. m.
The Lord's illustration.
 “No man putteth . . . new cloth unto an old garment.” }
 “Neither do men put new wine into old bottles.” } Matt. ix. 16, 17. A.V.

III. God's method of re-creation.

a. Objectively, by the finished work of Christ.

- “The redemption that is IN Christ Jesus.” Rom. iii. 24. A.V.
 “If any man be IN Christ, he is a new creature.” 2 Cor. v. 17. A.V.
 “Our old man was crucified with Him.” Rom. vi. 6.

IN Christ the old creation, condemned as corrupt and without hope, was nailed to the cross, the death sentence carried out; that so “He might create IN HIMSELF . . . one new man.” Eph. ii. 15.

b. Subjectively, by the work of the Holy Ghost.

- “Not by works . . . which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Titus iii. 5.

1. By a new birth, a new life imparted.

- “Ye must be born anew” (from above, m.) John iii. 7.
On our part, practically, receiving Christ!
 “As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God.” John i. 12.

2. By the gift of a new heart and a new spirit.

- “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.” Ezek. xxxvi. 26.
On our part, practically, asking and receiving!
 “For this moreover will I be enquired of . . . to do it for them.” Ezek. xxxvi. 37.

3. By the cleansing from old sins.

- “Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are

unleavened. For our Passover . . . hath been sacrificed, even Christ." I Cor. v. 7.

On our part, practically, "let not sin reign!"
 "Cast away from you all your transgressions, . . . and make you a new heart and a new spirit." Ezek. xviii. 31.

4. By apprehending the crucifixion of the old man.

"Our old man was crucified with Him." Rom. vi. 6.

On our part, appropriating Christ's death as ours!
 "Ye have put off the old man with his doings." Col. iii. 9.

5. By union with Christ in His Risen Life.

"Like as Christ was raised . . . so we also might walk in newness of life." Rom. vi. 4.

On our part, continually assimilating His life.
 "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, which is after God, created in righteousness." Eph. iv. 23, 24. m.

IV. God's pattern life of the new creature.

1. *He lives under a NEW covenant.*

"A new Covenant . . . I will put My laws into their mind, and on their heart also will I write them." Heb. viii. 8, 10.

God working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, making us WANT to do what He wants us to do!

2. *He keeps the NEW commandment.*

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you." John xiii. 34.

Partaking of the Divine nature which is love, the new creation fulfils the law of love spontaneously and freely.

3. *He receives the NEW name.*

"To him that overcometh, . . . I will give him . . . a new name." Rev. ii. 17.

A new name answering to the new nature, and new character, of the new man.

4. *He serves in a NEW spirit.*

"Having died to that wherein we were holden, . . . we serve in newness of the spirit." Rom. vii. 6.

Rendering to God, Who is a Spirit, spiritual service or worship—not merely an exterior obedience producing dead works.

5. *He is used as a NEW instrument.*

"Fear not, . . . worm Jacob, . . . I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument; . . . thou shalt thresh the mountains." Isa. xli. 14, 15.

Energized with the life of God, the new creation can be used by God, though humanly but a worm.

6. *He sings a NEW song.*

"He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Ps. xl. 3.

The new creation can sing the song which no man can learn, save they who have been taught of the Spirit the cost of their redemption, the precious blood of Christ.

7. *He speaks with a NEW tongue.*

“They shall speak with new tongues.” Mark xvi. 17.
A tongue of fire, aglow with Divine love; “As when the melting fire burneth”—speaking as the Spirit gives utterance.

8. *He has access to God by the NEW way.*

“Boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by . . . a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.” Heb. x. 19, 20.
The new creation IN Christ Jesus enters the Father’s presence, hidden in Him, accepted in the Beloved.

V. **The daily renewing of the new life.**

“Our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day.” 2 Cor. iv. 16.

1. He is given new mercies.

“His compassions fail not. They are *new* every morning.” Lam. iii. 22, 23.

2. He is promised *new* strength.

“Let the peoples renew their strength.” Isa. xli. 1.
 “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.” Isa. xl. 31.

3. He needs new knowledge.

“The *new* man, which is being renewed unto knowledge.” Col. iii. 10.

4. His bow is renewed in service.

“My bow is renewed in my hand.” Job xxix. 20.
The Hebrew meaning is that it changed itself, grew as it were a new bow, when other bows by much use grow weak and useless. It changed its strength, and got new force, as the word is used in Isa. xl. 31. (Cruden’s Note.) New mercies encompassing, new force energizing, new knowledge enlightening, new power equipping, will be the portion of the new creation, day by day, in the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

VI. **The future NEW world, for the new creation.**

“According to His promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” 2 Pet. iii. 13.

“The new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord.” Isa. lxvi. 22.

“Behold, I create NEW heavens, and a NEW earth.” Isa. lxv. 17.

“Behold, I will do a NEW thing.” Isa. xliii. 19.

“And I saw a NEW heaven and a NEW earth . . . and He that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things NEW.” Rev. xxi. 1-5.

The "Seeing" of God.

"Zechariah . . . had understanding in the seeing of God." 2 Chron. xxvi. 5. m.*

I. The Lord's promise to the disciples.

"A little while, and ye shall not see Me (that is with their usual sight): again . . . ye shall see Me." John xvi. 16.

"See Me" with a new vision, for their seeing Him would be changed into a new kind of sight.

II. The conditions for seeing the Lord.

1. The new birth.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom" (much less the Lord!) John iii. 3.

2. Purity of heart.

"The pure in heart . . . they shall see God." Matt. v. 8.

"Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14.

3. Victory over habitual sin.

"Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him." 1 John iii. 6.

4. The anointing of the abiding Spirit.

"The Spirit . . . dwelleth with you, and shall be in you . . . the world seeth Me no more; but ye see Me." John xiv. 17-19.

The command to lukewarm Christians.

"Anoint thine eyes . . . that thou mayest see." Rev. iii. 18.

The plain evidence of no vision of God.

"He that doeth evil hath not seen God." 3 John 11.

III. The effect of seeing God.

Illustrated in the lives of others.

Moses: "There shall no man see Me, and live." Exod. xxxiii. 20.

Job: "Mine eye seeth Thee . . . I abhor myself." Job xlii. 5, 6.

Isaiah: "I am undone . . . mine eyes have seen the King." Isa. vi. 5.

John: "I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead." Rev. i. 17.

IV. The conditions of maintained seeing of God.

"He that walketh righteously (the feet or daily walk) . . . speaketh uprightly (the tongue); . . . despiseth . . . gain (the heart); . . . hands from holding of bribes (the touch); . . . stoppeth his ears (listening to evil); . . . shutteth his eyes from seeing evil." Isa. xxxiii. 15.

"He shall dwell on high . . . shall see the King." Isa. xxxiii. 16, 17.

V. Some results of maintained vision.

1. *Endurance*: "Moses . . . endured, . . . seeing Him." Heb. xi. 27.

2. *Utterance*: Isaiah "saw His glory, and spake of Him." John xii. 41.

VI. The Full Vision yet to come.

See Job xix. 27, 1 John iii. 2, Rev. xxii. 4.

* References from A.V.

The Spirit of Revelation.

“What man is there, who knoweth that which is in a man, except it be the spirit of the man which is in him? So also that which is in God . . . now we have received the Spirit which is from God; that we might know the free gifts, which are given to us by God.” 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12. (Syriac.)

The Holy Ghost is given to reveal Divine things, for all that is from God must be revealed to be known. “The world by wisdom knew not God.” God gives the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit reveals God, and the “profound things of God.” (Syriac.)

I. What the Spirit must reveal to us.

1. God's wrath against sin.

“The wrath of God is *revealed* from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness.” Rom. i. 18.

2. God's Holiness.

“Therein is *revealed* a righteousness of God from faith unto faith.” Rom. i. 17. m.

3. God's remedy for sin.

“To whom hath the arm of the Lord been *revealed* . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities . . . with His stripes we are healed.” Isa. liii. 1-6.

4. God's Divine Son must be revealed.

“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God . . . flesh and blood hath not *revealed* it unto thee, but My Father . . . in heaven.” Matt. xvi. 16, 17.

5. God's way of faith.

“Before faith came, we were kept . . . under the law, shut up unto the faith . . . afterwards . . . *revealed*.” Gal. iii. 23.

6. God's will of “no difference” between Jew and Gentile.

“By revelation was made known unto me the mystery . . . Now . . . *revealed* . . . in the Spirit; to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, and fellow members of the body.” Eph. iii. 3-6.

II. The condition of soul in which the Spirit can reveal.

1. A child-like spirit.

“Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst *reveal* them unto babes.” Matt. xi. 25.
Contrast 2 Tim. iii. 7. Those who are “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

2. An obedient heart.

“The *revelation* of the mystery . . . is manifested unto obedience of faith.” Rom. xvi. 25, 26.
Compare John vii. 17. “If any man willeth to do . . . he shall know.”

III. Further revelations of the Spirit to obedient hearts.

1. God's abundant gift of peace.

“I will *reveal* unto them abundance of peace.” Jer. xxxiii. 6,

2. God's prepared blessings freely given.

"Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love Him . . . unto us God *revealed* them through the Spirit." I Cor. ii. 9, 10.

3. God's Divine Son indwelling human hearts.

"It was the good pleasure of God . . . to *reveal* His Son *in me*." Gal. i. 15, 16.

4. God's mind for individual lives.

"If in anything ye are otherwise minded, even this God shall *reveal* unto you." Phil. iii. 15.

5. God's guidance in practical life.

"I went up . . . to Jerusalem . . . I went up by *revelation*." Gal. ii. 1, 2.

6. God's messages through human channels.

"If a *revelation* be made to another sitting by, let the first keep silence." I Cor. xiv. 30.

7. God's secret purposes.

"He *revealeth* His secret unto His servants the prophets." Amos iii. 7.
 "The Lord had *revealed* unto Samuel." (See margin.) I Sam. ix. 15.

8. God's glorious Son in ever fresh revelation.

"Visions and *revelations* of the Lord." 2 Cor. xii. 1.

9. The Son reveals the Father.

"Neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to *reveal* Him." Matt. xi. 27.

IV. The revelation yet to come.

1. *At the judgment seat of believers.*

"Each man's work shall be made manifest . . . it is *revealed* in fire." I Cor. iii. 13.

2. *At the great white throne to the unsaved.*

"There is nothing covered, that shall not be *revealed*." Matt. x. 26.

3. *To the disobedient sinner.*

"The Lord Jesus shall be *revealed* from heaven . . . in flaming fire taking vengeance." 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. A.V.

4. *To the whole world.*

"The glory of the Lord shall be *revealed*, and all flesh shall see it together." Isa. xl. 5.

To those who have had the inward knowledge of the Spirit in this present time, shall be fulfilled the promises:—

"At the *revelation* of His glory . . . exceeding joy." I Pet. iv. 13.

"A partaker of the glory that shall be *revealed*." I Pet. v. 1.

Wherefore, beloved, we reckon that

"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be *revealed* to us-ward." Rom. viii. 18.

Therefore "Hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." I Pet. i. 13. A.V.

“The Message of Light.”

“This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” 1 John i. 5.*

I. The Dark world of sin and hate.

1. *We are in it by nature.*

“Ye were once *darkness*,” i.e., not only in the dark, but the *darkness* itself. Eph. v. 8. R.V.

“If thine eye be evil . . . full of *darkness*.” Matt. vi. 23.

2. *We are unconscious of it.*

“The way of the wicked is as *darkness*: they know not at what they stumble.” Prov. iv. 19.

“He that walketh in *darkness* knoweth not whither he goeth.” John xii. 35.

3. *We deceive ourselves and call darkness light.*

“Take heed, . . . that the light which is in thee be not *darkness*.” Luke xi. 35.

“If . . . the light that is in thee be *darkness*, how great is that *darkness*!” Matt. vi. 23.

4. *The condemnation is the love of the darkness.*

“This is the condemnation, that light is come . . . and men loved *darkness* . . . because their deeds were evil.” John iii. 19.

5. *The darkness blinds us.*

“Darkness hath blinded his eyes.” 1 John ii. 11.

“The god of this world hath blinded the minds . . . lest the light should shine.” 2 Cor. iv. 4.

6. *Satan is the ruler of the darkness.*

“Rulers of the *darkness* of this world.” Eph. vi. 12.

“The power of *darkness*.” Col. i. 13.

7. *The evidence of being in the dark world is hate.*

“He that hateth his brother is in *darkness*, and walketh in *darkness*.” 1 John ii. 11.

“He that saith he is in the light, and hateth . . . is in *darkness*.” 1 John ii. 9.

Unless the light of God shines in and we believe on the light, and yield up our whole being to the power of that light, the end must be “outer darkness.” Matt. xxii. 13.

“The blackness of *darkness* for ever.” Jude 13,

“The mist of *darkness* . . . for ever.” 2 Pet. ii. 17.

II. The Blessed world of light and love.

1. The Ruler of it.

“God is *light*, and in Him is no *darkness* at all.” 1 John i. 5

* References from A.V.

2. God's gift of His Son as the Light.
 "I am come a *light* into the world, that . . . should not abide in darkness."
 John xii. 46.
 "I am the *light* of the world."
 John viii. 12.
 "The dayspring from on high hath visited us. To give *light* to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death."
 Luke i. 78, 79.
3. God's call out of darkness.
 "He who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous *light*."
 I Pet. ii. 9.
4. God's simple condition of deliverance.
 "Believe in the *light*, that ye may be the children of light."
 John xii. 36.
 "Whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness."
 John xii. 46.
5. What God does as we respond.
 "God, who commanded the *light* to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the *light* of the knowledge . . . of Jesus Christ."
 2 Cor. iv. 6.
6. What the deliverance means.
 "Delivered . . . from the power of darkness . . . translated . . . into the Kingdom of His dear Son."
 Col. i. 13.
7. What the light will do.
 "All things . . . are made manifest by the *light*."
 Eph. v. 13.
 "Cometh to the *light*, . . . deeds . . . made manifest."
 John iii. 21.
8. God's provision for what the light reveals.
 "If we walk in the *light*, as He is in the light, . . . the blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin."
 I John i. 7.
9. The condition of abiding in the light.
 (a) *Separation from works of darkness* :—
 "Have no fellowship with . . . works of darkness."
 Eph. v. 11.
 "What communion hath light with darkness?"
 2 Cor. vi. 14.
 (b) *Single aim to please God* :—
 "If . . . thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of *light*."
 Matt. vi. 22.
 (c) *Following Christ only* :—
 "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the *light* of life."
 John viii. 12.
 (d) *Feeding on His Words* :—
 "The entrance of Thy Words giveth *light*."
 Ps. cxix. 130.
10. The evidence of abiding in light.
 "He that loveth . . . abideth in the *light*."
 I John ii. 10.
 "Fruit of the *light* . . . goodness and righteousness and truth."
 Eph. v. 9. R.V.
- "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in *light*."
 Col. i. 12.
11. The promise of increasing light.
 "The path of the just is as the shining *light*, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."
 Prov. iv. 18.
 "In Thy light shall we see light."
 Ps. xxxvi. 9.
12. The future of those who walk in the light.
 "Her *light* was . . . clear as crystal."
 Rev. xxi. 11.
 "The Lamb is the *light* thereof."
 Rev. xxi. 23.

13. The children of light in the darkness of trial.

“Who is among you that feareth the Lord, . . . that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust . . . and stay.” Isa. l. 10.

“By His *light* I walked through darkness.” Job xxix. 3.

“The darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.” Ps. cxxxix. 12.

14. The message in times of darkness.

“If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted . . . then shall thy *light* rise . . . and thy darkness be as the noonday.” Isa. lviii. 10.

III. The Light in the dark world.

Christ, the Light of God, revealed in the fallen souls of men as the “new-born Man from above,” will make them lights in the darkness.

1. *Christ's word to His disciples.*

“Ye are the *light* of the world . . . Let your light so shine . . . that they . . . glorify your Father . . . in heaven.” Matt. v. 14-16.

2. *A living object-lesson.*

John “was a burning and a shining *light*.” John v. 35.

3. *Paul's message to the Ephesians.*

“Now are ye *light* in the Lord (not in themselves) walk as children of *light*.” Eph. v. 8.

4. *Where the lights are to shine.*

“In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, . . . shine ye as *lights* in the world.” Phil. ii. 15. m.

5. *Light-born souls know God's purposes.*

“Ye . . . are not in darkness, that that day (i.e., the day of Christ's glorious appearing) should overtake you as a thief. Ye are . . . the children of *light*, . . . we are not of the night, nor of darkness.” I Thess. v. 4-6.

6. What God does through children of light.

“To open . . . eyes, and to turn them from darkness to *light*, . . . from the power of Satan unto God.” Acts xxvi. 18.

IV. God's call to His children.

“It is high time to awake . . . cast off the works of darkness, . . . put on the armour of *light*.” Rom. xiii. 11, 12.

“Arise, shine; for thy *light* is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee . . . Thy sun shall no more go down; . . . for the Lord shall be thine everlasting *light*, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.” Isa. lx. 1, 20.

“The *light* of the sun shall be sevenfold . . . in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.” Isa. xxx. 26.

“Come ye, and let us walk in the *light* of the Lord.” Isa. ii. 5.

The Disciples before Pentecost.

A PICTURE OF CARNAL CHRISTIANS.

I. They were true followers of Christ at heart.

They had been called by Christ and made disciples.

John i. 37-43*

They had left all to follow Him.

Luke xviii. 28.

They loved Him and would lay down their lives for Him.

John xiii. 37.

So they thought, and so we think, until tested!

II. Their knowledge of Christ was "after the flesh."

They lived with Him,

They walked with Him,

They talked with Him,

They heard His words,

They saw His works,

They bore His name,

} for three years.

Mark iii. 16-19 m.

Luke viii. 1.

Mark iv. 34.

Mark iv. 33.

Luke ix. 43.

John xviii. 17.

} but did not really
know Him.

III. They were in His service, although carnal.

They were "called," "appointed," "sent forth," and "given power."

Mark iii. 13-15.

But the power was intermittent. At times they were useless. See Matt. xvii. 16.

IV. They failed Him in fellowship in suffering.

"Could ye not watch with Me one hour?"

Matt. xxvi. 40.

"All . . . forsook Him and fled."

Matt. xxvi. 56.

They failed Him at every point. The carnal Christian will follow Christ, short of Gethsemane, the judgment-hall and Calvary. Christ without His cross is popular to-day.

V. They took all He said in the letter of the Word.

Jesus said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of."

They said, "Hath any man brought Him aught to eat?"

} John iv. 32, 33.

Jesus said, "Beware of the leaven."

They said, "It is because we have no bread."

} Mark viii. 14-21.

R.V. m.

No wonder He replied, "Do ye not YET understand?"

Jesus said, "Lazarus sleepeth."

They thought He spoke of taking "rest in sleep!"

} John xi. 11-13.

Jesus said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man."

They said, "This is an hard saying," and many went back.

} John vi. 53-66.

The carnal mind could not bear the deep truths of God; they were "earthly," "natural." James iii. 15. m.

VI. Their natural characteristics were unchanged.

1. Their fighting spirit.

"Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire?"

Luke ix. 54.

The Divine reply, "Ye know not what . . . spirit ye are of."

Luke ix. 55.

* References from A.V.

2. Their meanness of spirit.

"His disciples . . . had indignation, saying, to what purpose is this waste?" }
The Divine reply, "She hath wrought a good work!" } Matt. xxvi. 8, 10.
They did not understand that there is no "waste" in giving to Christ.

3. Their ambitious spirit.

"Grant unto us that we may sit, one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand, in Thy glory." }
The Divine reply, "Ye know not what ye ask." } Mark x. 37, 38.
Note their self-confidence, "We can," and the indignation of the others (ver. 41), as much as to say "We would not have presumed so!"

4. Their narrowness of spirit.

"He followeth not us; and we forbade him!" }
The Divine reply, "Forbid him not . . . he that is not } Mark ix. 38, 39, 40.
 against us, is on our part."

5. Their unsympathetic spirit.

"Send her away; for she crieth after us!" Matt. xv. 23.
The Divine reply, "I am . . . sent . . . unto the lost sheep." Matt. xv. 24.

Furthermore, see Peter's word to the Lord, "Pity Thyself" (Matt. xvi. 22. m.) savouring of man, not of God. Note the absorption in their petty interests as to who should be greatest, when their Lord was facing His Gethsemane (Luke xxii. 24, 39); their utter ignorance of themselves as they said, "Though all be offended, yet not I" (Mark xiv. 29, 31); and how full they were of questions, "Lord, how?" "Lord, why?" (John xiii. 37, John xiv. 22.)

We see that the teaching of the NATURAL man is ineffective, even by Christ, and why He said—

"It is expedient for you that I go away [or] the Comforter will not come." John xvi. 7.

The Disciples individually.

1. Judas Iscariot, with the heart wrong.
The exit of the traitor before Christ opened *His* heart. John xiii. 31.
2. Peter, revealing the impetuosity of the flesh.
"Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now?" John xiii. 37.
The Lord's promise, "Thou shalt follow Me afterward." John xiii. 36.
3. Thomas, reveals the blindness of the flesh.
"Lord, we know not whither . . . and how can we?" John xiv. 5.
The Lord's reply, "I am the Way." John xiv. 6.
4. Philip, the "wanting to see" of the flesh.
"Lord, show us . . . and it sufficeth us!" John xiv. 8.
The Lord's reply, "Seen Me, hath seen the Father." John xiv. 9.
5. Judas (not Iscariot), the questions of the flesh.
"Lord, how is it?" John xiv. 22.
The Lord's reply, "We will come . . . and make Our abode." John xiv. 23.
6. The disciples together, and the puzzle of the flesh!
"We cannot tell what He saith." John xvi. 17, 18.

See the reply, John xvi. 20-22; and their anchor, John xvi. 30.

The "Promise of the Father."

THE DISCIPLES AFTER PENTECOST.

I. The Lord's command.

- He "commanded them that they should . . . wait." Acts i. 4.*
 "Tarry . . . until ye be endued with power." Luke xxiv. 49.
*Five hundred believers heard this command (I Cor. xv. 6), but only
 120 men and women obeyed (Acts i. 14, 15).*

II. How the promised Spirit of power came.

- As a "rushing mighty wind." Acts ii. 2.
*The Holy Spirit is the breath of God. It is the same word as used in
 Acts xvii. 25. He is the outbreathing of the life of God.
 (Dr. Elder Cumming.)*
 "Tongues like as of fire, . . . sat upon each of them." Acts ii. 3.
*The tongue of fire symbolized that the world would be won for God
 "by the foolishness of preaching," yet preaching under the melting
 fire of the Spirit.*

III. The effect of His coming.

- "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost."
 "All . . . began to speak . . . the wonderful works of God." } Acts ii. 4, 11.
*His coming was soon "noised abroad" (ver. 6), and there were many
 mockers and doubters who did not recognise the Holy Ghost
 (verses 12, 13), and attributed His working to another cause.*

IV. The purpose of His coming.

- "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you :
 and ye shall be witnesses unto Me." Acts i. 8.
He came to give them power to witness with lip and life.

V. The witness with the lip.

- a. Under the energizing of the Spirit.
 "As the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts ii. 4.
 b. With supernatural boldness.
 "They saw the boldness of Peter and John." Acts iv. 13.
 "They spake the Word of God with boldness." Acts iv. 31.
 c. They pressed home the truth of the Cross and the Resurrection.
 "Ye have taken, and . . . have crucified and slain : Whom God
 hath raised up." Acts ii. 23, 24.
 "Jesus, Whom ye have crucified." Acts ii. 36.
 d. The message through the Spirit had sure effect.
 "Pricked in their heart . . . said . . . what shall we do?" Acts ii. 37.
 "Cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them." Acts v. 33.
 "Divers were hardened and . . . spake evil." Acts xix. 9.
 e. They always preached Christ.
 "There is none other Name." Acts iv. 12.
 f. They could not be silent.
 "We cannot but speak the things . . . we have seen." Acts iv. 20.
*Utterance under the Spirit's power always bears these marks, bold
 clear convincing testimony to Christ alone.*

* References from A.V.

VI. The witness with the life.

Steadfastness in the faith.	Acts ii. 42.
Fellowship with God's children in prayer.	Acts ii. 42.
Mighty signs and wonders in other souls.	Acts ii. 43.
Abounding love, no "I" and "my" to cause division.	Acts ii. 44.
Largeness of heart and sympathy with others.	Acts ii. 45.
Worship in the Spirit; no "meeting too long!"	Acts ii. 46.
Spirit of praise over food, etc.; no grumbling!	Acts ii. 46.
The people attracted by the heavenly life.	Acts ii. 47.
No pride of position; rich and poor were all one.	Acts iv. 34.
No pride of poverty; the poor were willing to share.	Acts iv. 35.
<i>Under the control of the Blessed Spirit, lip and life cannot be separated. There is no division of "secular" and sacred.</i>	

VII. Further results of the Spirit's coming.

Power in prayer. (Acts iv. 31.)	Clear guidance. (Acts viii. 26.)
Joy in suffering. (Acts v. 41.)	Fixity of purpose. (Acts v. 42.)
The vessels contemptible. (Acts iv. 13.)	All the glory God's. (Acts iii. 12.)
All private interests merged in "Glorify Thy Son." (Acts iv. 24-30.)	

VIII. The Reception of the Holy Ghost.

A necessity for *all* (Acts viii. 14-17), even for *business!* (Acts vi. 3.)

The conditions for receiving:—

1. Pure motives (not for our success or glory!)	Acts viii. 21.
2. Absolute surrender (see the judgment on reserves!)	Acts v. 3, 4.
3. Implicit obedience to the Spirit—	
Unquestioning, even in face of danger.	Acts v. 20, 21.
However contrary to human ideas.	Acts viii. 26, 27.
Whatever our prejudices.	Acts x. 20, 21.
4. Purified hearts.	Acts xv. 9.

There is no Pentecost without a Calvary. Absolute utter abandonment to God, for the fullest fellowship with Christ in His death and resurrection, is the secret of "making room" for the Holy Ghost.

A Pentecostal Prayer Meeting.

Acts iv. 24-31.

1. <i>They met with one accord.</i>	
"They lifted up their voice to God with <i>one accord.</i> "	ver. 24.
2. <i>They rested upon the omnipotence of God.</i>	
"Lord, Thou art God."	ver. 24.
3. <i>Pleading the written Word.</i>	
"Who by the mouth of . . . David <i>hast said.</i> "	ver. 25.
4. <i>The recognition of the battle as against God Himself.</i>	
"The king's . . . rulers . . . against <i>His Christ.</i> "	ver. 26.
5. <i>The recognition of the fore-counsel of God.</i>	
"To do whatsoever . . . <i>Thy counsel determined . . . to be done.</i> "	ver. 28.
6. <i>The appeal to bear witness to Christ.</i>	
"Signs and wonders may be done by the Name of Thy Holy child Jesus."	ver. 30.
7. <i>The immediate response of God.</i>	
"When they had prayed, the place was shaken."	ver. 31.

See what took place in *heaven.* Rev. viii. 1-5.

The Power of Pentecost.

“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” Acts i. 8.

I. Power for Pentecostal preaching.

- “Power” to speak as the Spirit gives utterance. Acts ii. 4.
 “Power” to press home the truth, “Ye . . . crucified.” Acts ii. 23.
 “Power” to wield the sword of the Spirit. Acts ii. 16-21.
 “Power” to convict of sin, “pricked in their heart.” Acts ii. 37.
 “Power” to apply God’s remedy—“Repent,” “Remission,”
 “Receive.” Acts ii. 38.

II. Pentecostal fruits of Pentecostal preaching.

- The converts, and their bold confession of Christ. Acts ii. 41.
 Their instant obedience to God. Acts ii. 41.
 Their faithfulness to the light. Acts ii. 42.
 The “fear” upon all who saw them. Acts ii. 43.
 Their unity with the children of God. Acts ii. 44.
 Their “converted pockets.” Acts ii. 45.
 Their gladness, and singleness of heart. Acts ii. 46.
 The daily conversions as they testified. Acts ii. 47.

III. Pentecostal preaching illustrated in a Pentecostal sermon.

- Nothing in “us”—their self-estimation. Acts iii. 12.
 The lifting up of the Glorified Jesus. Acts iii. 13.
 The personal character of the preaching—“Ye,” not “we!” Acts iii. 14.
 The appeal to God’s “object lesson” in the healed man. Acts iii. 16.
 The recognition of their blindness of heart. Acts iii. 17.
 The simple Gospel (1) “Repent,” (2) “Be converted,” (3) “Sins
 blotted out,” and the appeal to the Scriptures. Acts iii. 18-22.
 The plain statement of “judgment to come.” Acts iii. 23.
 The full Gospel proclaimed as turning away souls from sin. Acts iii. 26.

Contrast this with much twentieth century preaching! We say there is something in us—intellectual power, etc. We fear to say “Ye,” lest we offend, for we are not sure of the power of God with us to burn the message into the souls of the hearers. We gloss over the “judgment to come,” and try to save the people in, rather than from, their sins.

IV. Further results of Pentecostal Power.

- “Power” to wield the name of Jesus, sure of God’s response to it. Acts iii. 6.
 “Power” to see opportunities, and to use them. Acts iii. 12.
 “Power” to speak fearlessly irrespective of the audience. Acts iv. 8.
 “Power” to refuse to be fettered by men. Acts iv. 19, 20.
 “Power” to call sin by its right name. Acts v. 3.
 “Power” to meet the need of all who came for help. Acts v. 16.
 “Power” to obey God regardless of consequences. Acts v. 20, 21.
 “Power” to endure, and rejoice in reproach. Acts v. 41.
 “Power” to go on, and not faint. Acts v. 42.
 “Power” to use their “reason” under the control of the Spirit. Acts vi. 2.

“Tarry until ye be endued with power.” Luke xxiv. 49.

“The promise is unto you.” Acts ii. 39.

A Great Revival.

*A picture for to-day from the book of directions for
Christian service.*

I. The Workers and their spiritual position.

1. They had been to Calvary, and knew Christ crucified.
(Calvary was intensely real to them.) Luke xxiii. 49.
2. They knew the Risen Christ.
(The resurrection was also intensely real to them.) Luke xxiv. 36.
3. They had received their commission from the Risen Christ.
"As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." John xx. 21.
4. They had received the Holy Ghost.
"He breathed on them, and saith . . . Receive ye the Holy Ghost."
John xx. 22.
5. They were given definite directions for service.
"Ye are witnesses . . . but tarry . . . until ye be clothed with
power from on high." Luke xxiv. 48, 49.
*It is the work of the Eternal Spirit to make Calvary and the Living
Lord as real to believers now as they were to the disciples. We can-
not be witnesses to "Jesus and the resurrection" unless it is so.*

II. The Workers were given a definite command.

- "He charged them . . . to wait for the promise . . . ye shall be
baptized in the Holy Ghost." Acts i. 4, 5. m.
*They had received the Spirit as well as their commission, but they
were to know the Holy Ghost in still fuller measure, not only as
indwelling but as clothing them for aggressive witnessing.
Experimentally (not dispensationally) we may be in the same posi-
tion; knowing the Spirit as indwelling, and not as clothing with
power.*

III. How the Workers obeyed the command.

- "All with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer, with the women
and Mary . . . and with His brethren." Acts i. 14.
*All, that is to say, who gathered; one hundred and twenty out of
five hundred (1 Cor. xv. 6).
No revival ever breaks out unless the workers are of one accord, con-
tinuing stedfastly in prayer for the windows of heaven to be
opened.*

IV. How the Lord fulfilled His promise.

- "They were all together . . . suddenly . . . a mighty breath * . . .
filled all the house." Acts ii. 1, 2.
*The revival began with the workers. The Spirit filled the place
where they were gathered. They were in the Spirit, as well as the
Spirit in them. The Spirit desires to fill our buildings as well as
the workers, but He cannot do so if they are used for worldly
purposes.*

* Same word as in Acts xvii. 25. *Dr. Elder Cumming.*

V. How the Workers were set free for service.

- “They were all filled . . . and began to speak . . . as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts ii. 4.
The tongues were loosed, each one to tell what he knew of God (Acts ii. 11). The gift of utterance is for every redeemed soul. Other gifts may be distributed to each as God wills, but utterance is a necessity for all. Every babe is expected to be able to speak, though all may not have the gift of prophecy.

VI. How the revival broke out.

1. No trouble to gather the people.
 “The multitude came together.” Acts. ii. 6.
There is nothing that “draws” like the Spirit-power.
2. No trouble in giving the message.
 “Peter, standing up . . . lifted up his voice.” Acts ii. 14.
He spoke so that all could hear! The human voice is God’s trumpet. How shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they hear if the preacher will not lift up his voice?
3. The preacher had only to be a witness.
 “This Jesus did God raise up of Whom we all are witnesses.” Acts ii. 32. m.
4. The Holy Ghost did the work.
 “They were pricked in their heart.” Acts ii. 37.
The Spirit bore witness to the word of God, as Peter wielded the sword of the Spirit.

VII. How God had prepared the Workers for the work.

- “They then that received his word were baptized . . . about three thousand souls.” Acts ii. 41.
Peter could not have dealt with such a multitude alone. The one hundred and nineteen Spirit-prepared workers were ready for the work. What use to have three thousand souls in the enquiry rooms if Spirit-filled workers are not there to meet them?

VIII. How the devil tried to stop the work.

1. He stirred up the authorities.
 “They . . . put [Peter and John] . . . in ward.” Acts iv. 3.
But the revival went on, five thousand more souls! (ver. 4).
2. He stirred up the religious formalists.
 “Rulers, and elders . . . they set them in the midst . . . they charged them not to speak.” Acts iv. 5-22.
But they found no way of punishing them because of the people. The work went on.
3. He got into one of the Christians.
 “Ananias, with Sapphira . . . kept back part of the price.” Acts v. 1-6.
But the Holy Spirit unveiled the devil (ver. 3) and God dealt severely with the hinderers. It is an awful thing to sin against God when His Presence is as consuming fire, and He is working mightily.
4. He tried slander, and false witness.
 Stephen—“seized him and brought him into the council, and set up false witnesses.” Acts vi. 12, 13.
But God shone through Stephen, and gave him opportunity to testify and proclaim the message.

5. He tried stones, and martyrdom.

"They stoned Stephen."

Acts vii. 58, 59.

But his death resulted in the conviction of one of the leading Pharisees, and a fresh and more mighty witness was raised up.

6. He tried persecution.

"There arose on that day a great persecution . . . and they were all scattered abroad."

Acts viii. 1.

There were no Missionary Societies, and this was God's way of spreading the blessing from Jerusalem into Samaria (Acts viii. 5), and to the uttermost parts of the earth. This method required no organization, no great meeting, no raising of funds. This may yet be God's way for the twentieth century!

IX. The various departments of the work.

1. Who directed the workers.

Individually. "The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near . . . and Philip ran."

Acts viii. 29, 30.

Collectively. "As they ministered to the Lord . . . the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

Acts xiii. 2.

2. Note a council to deal with finances.

"Seven men . . . full of the Holy Ghost . . . appoint over this business."

Acts vi. 3. A.V.

3. How a young converts' meeting was conducted.

"When the Apostles . . . heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who . . . prayed for them that *they might receive the Holy Ghost*: for as yet He was fallen upon none of them."

Acts viii. 14-17.

4. A prayer meeting and its results.

"When they had prayed, the place was shaken." See Acts iv. 23-31.

X. Other characteristics of the work.

1. No trouble about finances.

Acts iv. 34, 35.

2. Sectarian prejudices swept away.

Acts x. 14, 15. Acts x. 28.

3. Ordinances kept subservient to the spiritual reality.

Acts x. 44-48.

Although it is recorded that they of the circumcision were amazed at this! The Holy Ghost poured out on uncircumcized souls!!

The Holy Spirit of God has never changed. He has given us in this record of Pentecost, the conditions and principles upon which He works, and we shall never obtain His mighty working until we fall into line with His methods, and give Him His right place.

"Give to the Spirit as Chief Administrator, men after His own mind to carry out His divine policy, and you give the Head competent instruments to do His bidding. He can then work unhindered." (Pierson.)

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. . . . There are diversities of workings, but the same God, Who worketh all things in all."

I Cor. 12, 4, 6.

Soul Winning.

“*He that is wise winneth souls.*” Prov. xi. 30.

I. Winning souls.

1. *The love of Christ the winning power.*
 “I drew them . . . with bands of love.” Hosea xi. 4.
 “With loving kindness have I drawn thee.” Jer. xxxi. 3.
2. *The heavenly wisdom the tactful power.*
 “The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle,
 easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without
 partiality.” Jas. iii. 17. m.
 “Given through the Spirit the word of wisdom.” 1 Cor. xii. 8.
3. *The heavenly life the confirming power.*
 “Won by the manner of life.” 1 Pet. iii. 1. A.V. and R.V. m.
4. *The word of the Cross the drawing power.*
 “I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw.” John xii. 32.

II. Delivering souls.

- “A true witness *delivereth* souls.” Prov. xiv. 25.
1. *What a witness is.*
 “We speak that we do know, and bear witness of that we have seen.”
 John iii. 11.
 2. *Power to witness.*
 “Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and
 ye shall be My witnesses.” Acts i. 8.
 3. *The co-witness of God.*
 “God also bearing witness with them . . . by distributions of the
 Holy Ghost.” Heb. ii. 4. m.
 See Acts ii. 36-41 as a picture of a faithful witness and delivered
 souls.

III. Watching for souls.

- “They watch in behalf of your souls as they that shall give account.”
 Heb. xiii. 17.
1. *The commission to watch.*
 “I have set thee a watchman . . . give . . . warning from Me.”
 Ezek. xxxiii. 7.
 2. *Watching souls for God.*
 “I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” Acts xx. 31. A.V.
 “Warning every man . . . that we may present every man perfect in
 Christ.” Col. i. 28. A.V.
 3. *Watching God for souls.*
 “I have set watchmen . . . they shall never hold their peace day
 nor night.” Isa. lxii. 6.
 “I watch and am become like a sparrow that is alone upon the house-
 top.” Ps. cii. 7.

IV. Pleading for souls.

- “If any man see his brother sinning . . . he shall ask, and God will give him life for them.” (See conditions, 1 John v. 14, 15.)
I John v. 16.
- “What things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven . . . If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done.”
Matt. xviii. 18, 19.

V. Spending for souls.

- “We were well pleased to impart . . . not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls.”
1 Thess. ii. 8.
1. *Spent out with no return.*
“I will very gladly spend and be spent out for your souls, though the more abundantly I love you the less I be loved.”
2 Cor. xii. 15. A. V. m.
2. *Spent out without reserve.*
“If I am poured out upon the sacrifice . . . of your faith, I joy.”
Phil. ii. 17. m.
3. *Spent out of our own necessity.*
“If thou bestow on the hungry that which thy soul desireth.”
Isa. lviii. 10. m.
4. *The Christ as the pattern.*
“He poured out His soul unto death.”
Isa. liii. 12.
See 1 John iii. 16. Rev. xii. 11.

VI. Selflessness for souls.

- “Not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of the many that they may be saved.”
1 Cor. x. 33.
1. *Selflessness for their present gain.*
“Not that we may appear approved, but that ye may do that which is honourable, though we be as reprobate.”
2 Cor. xiii. 7.
2. *Selflessness even as regards life.*
“I hold not my life of any account.”
Acts xx. 24.
3. *Selflessness for their future reward.*
“I seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account.”
Phil. iv. 17.

VII. The rendering account of souls.

- “They watch in behalf of your souls as they that shall give account.”
Heb. xiii. 17.
1. *Two accounts may be rendered.*
“That they may do this with joy and not with groaning.”
Heb. xiii. 17. m.
2. *The two results to the souls.*
(a) “With groaning ; for this were unprofitable for you.”
Heb. xiii. 17. m.
(b) “That ye might suffer loss by us in nothing.”
2 Cor. vii. 9.
3. *The two results to the soul winner.*
(a) Because thou hast not given him warning . . . his blood will I require at thine hand.”
Ezek. iii. 20.
“If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss : but he himself shall be saved.”
1 Cor. iii. 15.
(b) “If thou warn . . . thou hast delivered thy soul.”
Ezek. iii. 21
“Our hope . . . crown of glorying. Are not even ye ?”
1 Thess. ii. 19.
“They that turn many to righteousness . . . stars.”
Dan. xii. 3.

SUMMARY.

- To *win* souls, we must have Christ's love and heavenly wisdom.
 To *deliver* souls, we must be true witnesses of that which we have *proved* for ourselves.
 To *watch* for souls, we must faithfully watch with God to warn at His command.
 To *plead* for souls, we must know how to prevail in prayer.
 To *spend* for souls, we must have the Spirit of Jesus that led Him to Calvary.
 To be *selfless* for souls, we must know the life of Jesus in abundant measure.
 Then shall we render account with joy, and not with groaning.

"Watchman, what hour?"

Isa. xxi. 11. m.

1. *The commission of a God appointed watchman.*
 "Hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning." Ezek. iii. 17.
 "When he seeth the sword come . . . blow the trumpet, and warn the people." Ezek. xxxiii. 3.
 "Let him declare what he seeth." Isa. xxi. 6.
 ("Watchers . . . give out their voice." Jer. iv. 16.)
 2. *The responsibility of a watchman.*
 "If the watchman see . . . and blow not the trumpet, [their] blood will I require at the watchman's hand." Ezek. xxxiii. 6.
 See also Ezek. iii. 18-21.
 3. *A faithful watchman's heart.*
 "I am pained at my very heart . . . I cannot hold my peace." Jer. iv. 19.
 4. *The faithful watchman's duty.*
 "I will stand upon my watch . . . and will look forth to see what He will speak by me." Hab. ii. 1. m.
 "O Lord, I stand continually upon the watch-tower in the day time, and . . . whole nights." Isa. xxi. 8.
 5. *The useless watchmen.*
 "His watchmen are blind . . . dreaming, talking in their sleep, lying down, loving to slumber." Isa. lvi. 10. A. V. m.
 6. *The faithful watchmen.*
 "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence." Isa. lxii. 6. m.
 "The voice of thy watchmen! they lift up the voice, together . . . for they shall see . . . how the Lord returneth." Isa. lii. 8. m.
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- "Watchman, what hour?"
 "The watchman said, the morning cometh and also the night." Isa. xxi. 12.
 "Watch . . . lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping." Mark xiii. 35, 36.

The Apostle Paul as a Soul Winner.

I. The spirit of a soul winner.

“Necessity is laid upon me ; for woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.” 1 Cor. ix. 16.
He preached because he could not help it !

II. His willingness to give himself.

“We were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls.” 1 Thess. ii. 8.
“Yea, and if I am poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice.” Phil. ii. 17. m.
It is easier to give the “gospel” than to give ourselves ! It was a joy to Paul to be poured forth for others, and he did not wish them to feel “under obligation” to him, but to rejoice with him in his privilege.

III. His surrender of all his “rights.”

“We did not use this right ; but we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance.” 1 Cor. ix. 12.
It is easy to lay aside our “rights” when we have hearts burning with the love of Christ.

IV. His way of winning souls.

“Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.” 1 Cor. ix. 19. A.V.
We must lift up souls by going beneath them, not preaching from above them.

V. His abundant love to his converts.

“I long after you all in the tender heart of Jesus Christ.” Phil. i. 8. (*Alford.*)
“I will very gladly . . . be spent for you ; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.” 2 Cor. xii. 15. A.V.
“If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye ? do not even the publicans the same.” (*Matt. v. 46.*)

VI. His yearning over their spiritual growth.

“My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you.” Gal. iv. 19.
Paul was not content with simply leading them to Christ. His heart was burdened until he saw Christ truly manifested in them.

VII. His desire for each one.

“That we may present every man perfect in Christ, whereunto I labour.” Col. i. 28, 29.
This was the end for which he laboured. To present to the Father “full-grown” sons, conformed to the image of Christ.

VIII. His watchful care of them.

“I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God . . . I fear, lest by any means . . . your minds should be corrupted from . . . the purity that is toward Christ.” 2 Cor. xi. 2, 3. m.
How he longed for Christ to be satisfied, and to see the faithful bride-spirit in every child of God!

IX. His method of dealing with them.

“We were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children.” 1 Thess. ii. 7.
He had the tact of a soul winner, and, like his Lord, knew how to “bear gently with the ignorant and erring.” (Heb. v. 2.)

X. His way of rebuking them.

“Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears.” 2 Cor. ii. 4.
This is the only spirit in which we may venture to rebuke sin in others, remembering that it is written “looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” (Gal. vi. 1.)

XI. His wise teaching of them.

“I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it.” 1 Cor. iii. 2.
It is as injurious to choke the babies as to starve them!

XII. His joy in the Day of Christ.

“What is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus at His coming?” 1 Thess. ii. 19.
They who watch for souls will have to give account of them, “with joy” or “with groaning.” (Heb. xiii. 17. m.) The Thessalonians would be his joy in that Day.

THE SECRET OF IT ALL.

“The love of Christ constraineth us.” 2 Cor. v. 14.
 “By the grace of God I am what I am . . . I laboured . . . abundantly . . . Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” 1 Cor. xv. 10.
 “I labour . . . according to His working, which worketh in me mightily.” Col. i. 29.

Soldiers of Christ.

“A good soldier of Christ Jesus.” 2 Tim. ii. 3.

I. THE HISTORY OF THE WAR.

This may be traced back to a certain day when a rebel angel took the form of a serpent, and beguiled an innocent subject of the King, bringing her and all her descendants into slavery. The Lord God justly declared war against him, and promised to send His Own Son to fight the battle, and deliver the captives.

“The Lord God said unto the serpent . . . I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Gen. iii. 14, 15.

See Rev. xii. 9 for a fuller description of the enemy.

I. The Deliverer and His zeal.

“The Lord saw it . . . and He put on righteousness as a coat of mail, and . . . was clad with zeal as a cloke.” Isa. lix. 15-17. m.

“Who is this that cometh . . . with crimsoned garments . . . marching in the greatness of His strength?” Isa. lxiii. 1. m.

II. The Deliverer's words on the eve of victory.

“Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men unto Myself.” John xii. 31, 32.

III. The triumph at Calvary.

“Having put off from Himself His body, He made a show of the principalities and the powers . . . triumphing over them.” Col. ii. 15. m.

“That through death He might bring to nought . . . the devil; and might deliver all . . . subject to bondage.” Heb. ii. 14, 15.

IV. The Conqueror's welcome in heaven.

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates . . . and the King of glory shall come in . . . the Lord mighty in battle.” Ps. xxiv. 7, 8.

“Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive.” Ps. lxviii. 18.

V. The result of the victory.

“He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He poured out His soul unto death.” Isa. liiii. 12.

Having conquered the foe the Triumphant Lord now waits for the fruit of the conquest. (See Heb. x. 13.) Each captive must learn that he is free, and be translated out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of the Conqueror.

VI. The way of victory for the captives.

“Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John viii. 32.

“The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free.” Rom. viii. 2.

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The "word of the Cross" is the "dunamis" of God to the captive as it tells of the believer and his sins carried up to the tree with the Deliverer; thus the believer may pass out of the realm of the enemy, and be joined to the Risen Lord so that he shares His life, and is hidden in Him from the raging foe. Although the enemy has been conquered, he is left at large for a period that the Deliverer may prove who, among the captives, really desire freedom. He has decided that all who choose to accept His deliverance shall share His throne, and see with Him the final judgment of their bitter foe.

II. THE SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS.

Those who accept the "word of the Cross," and in Christ Jesus pass to the heavenly places, are joined to the Conquering Christ, and are formed into ranks under His leadership to cast down the strongholds of the enemy.

1. Their Captain.

- "As Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." Josh. v. 14.
 "The Captain of their salvation." Heb. ii. 10. m.
 "Jesus the Captain and perfecter of our faith." Heb. xii. 2. m.

2. Their commission.

- "A good soldier of Christ Jesus . . . Who enrolled him as a soldier." 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4.

3. Their loyalty to His service.

- "No soldier on service entangleth himself." 2 Tim. ii. 4.
 "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." Jas. iv. 4.

4. Their single aim.

- "That he may please Him who enrolled him." 2 Tim. ii. 4.

5. Their banner.

- "The Lord is my banner." (See Isa. xi. 12. Ps. xx. 5.) Exod. xvii. 15. m.

6. Their armour.

- "The whole armour of God." (In detail see Eph. vi. 13-17). Eph. vi. 13.

7. Their weapons.

- "The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh." 2 Cor. x. 4.
 "The Sword of the Spirit . . . the Word of God." (See Heb. iv. 12.
 1 John ii. 14.) Ephes. vi. 17.
 "The prophecies . . . by them . . . war the good warfare." 1 Tim. i. 18.

8. Their equipment.

- "Clothed with power ("dunamis") from on high." Luke xxiv. 49.

9. Their endurance.

- "Suffer hardship . . . as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." (See 2 Tim. iv. 5.) 2 Tim. ii. 3.

10. Their fearlessness of death.

- "I hold not my life of any account . . . in comparison of accomplishing my course." Acts xx. 24. m.

11. Their unity.

- "Stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving." Phil. i. 27.
 "Beholding your order, and . . . stedfastness." Col. ii. 5.

III. THE WARFARE.

"We do not war according to the flesh." 2 Cor. x. 3.

I. The place of the battle.

"Our wrestling is . . . in the heavenly places." Eph. vi. 12.

II. The way to the battle field.

"Together with Christ . . . raised . . . with Him . . . in the heavenly places." Eph. ii. 5, 6.

Many who think they are fighting the good fight of faith are in the wrong place, fighting the wrong enemy! They stay in the earthlies, and seek to conquer what has been already conquered by Christ.

III. The enemy and his hosts.

"Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the . . . world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness." Eph. vi. 12.

IV. The Fight (which is mainly defensive).

STAND your ground.

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand . . . withstand . . . stand." Eph. vi. 11, 13.

RESIST with your will.

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Jas. iv. 7.

ABSTAIN from self indulgence.

"Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Pet. ii. 11.

LAY HOLD of Divine power.

"Fight the good fight . . . lay hold on the life eternal." 1 Tim. vi. 12.

As you stand steadfast in the faith that you are in the victorious Christ, lay hold of fresh supplies of His life. "War the good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience." 1 Tim. i. 18, 19.

BELIEVE you have the victory.

"This is the victory that hath overcome . . . even our faith." 1 John v. 4.

V. Some attacks of the enemy.

1. By the "rush" of a host.

"When the adversary shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Isa. lix. 19. m.

2. By a slow siege.

"Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear." Ps. xxvii. 3.

"His place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; his bread . . . his waters shall be sure." Isa. xxxiii. 16.

The enemy delights in isolating a soldier from his comrades; and sometimes a group of soldiers fall into a snare of the enemy, and are only saved from sore defeat by the direct interposition of the Commander-in-chief.

3. *By attacking a sentry or "picket."*

See the lonely warrior Paul, "All forsook me . . . But the Lord stood by me . . . and I was delivered." 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.

The Captain's rally.

"Fear not . . . be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." Rev. ii. 10.

IV. THE AGGRESSIVE WARFARE.

I. The enemy in defenced positions.

"The strong man fully armed guardeth his own court." Luke xi. 21.

"The casting down of strongholds." 2 Cor. x. 4.

The enemy entrenches himself in the city of Mansoul. These strongholds have to be taken one by one.

II. The Captain leads the attack.

"A stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him." Luke xi. 22.

"God shall shoot . . . with an arrow suddenly shall they be wounded." Ps. lxiv. 7.

III. The Captain wields the weapon.

"Out of *His* mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword." Rev. i. 16.

"Thine arrows are sharp; the peoples fall under Thee." Ps. xlv. 5.

See "Thou shalt be *as my* mouth." Jer. xv. 19. "He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword." Isa. xlix. 2.

Only soldiers of the King in full strength ("dunamis"), and in the whole armour are able for aggressive work. If wounded by a fiery dart or shaken by the attack of the enemy's hosts, they must retire to camp for healing, renewal of courage, and fresh equipment.

The faithful soldiers are energized by the Spirit of their Triumphant Leader, Who bears the scars of His own lonely conflict unto death, even the death of the Cross. They perform feats of daring under terrible fire as they rescue souls, and snatch many brands from the burning. (Jude 23.)

IV. A dying warrior and his reward.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth . . . the CROWN." 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

Some noble warriors fall, spent out in the service, but as there is no real death to the King's overcomers, they only put off the corruptible, and pass to the ranks of reserves to come forth with the Conqueror to the final triumph. (See Rev. xix. 11, 14.)

V. The Lamb and His victorious army.

"These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them . . . they also shall overcome that are with Him, called and chosen and faithful." Rev. xvii. 14.

"Behold, a white horse, and He that sat thereon . . . in righteousness He doth judge and make war . . . the armies which are in heaven followed Him." Rev. xix. 11, 14.

The Tempter and the Tempted.*

"Lest by any means the tempter had tempted you, and our labour should be in vain." 1 Thess. iii. 5.

I. The Tempter: whence he came and his kingdom.

"Fallen from heaven, O day star, son of the morning . . . thou saidst in thine heart, 'I.'" Isa. xiv. 12, 13.

"God spared not angels when they sinned." 2 Pet. ii. 4.

1. His name.

"The great dragon . . . the old serpent . . . called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole inhabited earth." Rev. xii. 9 m.

"The accuser of our brethren," (*i.e.* the children of God). Rev. xii. 10.

"The prince of the power of the air." Eph. ii. 2.

See also 1 Thess. iii. 5; 2 Cor. iv. 4.

2. His Kingdom.

"The whole world lieth in the evil one." 1 John v. 19.

"He . . . shewed Him all the kingdoms of the inhabited earth . . . and the devil said . . . to Thee will I give all this authority . . . for it hath been delivered unto me." Luke iv. 5, 6. m.

See individually Luke xi. 14, 18, 20-24.

3. His organized government.

His throne. Rev. ii. 13. His principalities and powers. Dan. x. 13, 20.

His hosts. Eph. vi. 12. His messengers. 2 Cor. xii. 7.

4. His religion.

"A synagogue of Satan." Rev. ii. 9.

"They sacrifice to demons." } See 1 Cor. x. 20, 21. m.

"Communion with demons." }

The doctrines of "demons" described in 1 Tim. iv. 1-4. The

"deep things of Satan" are shown in religion covering sin. Rev. ii. 20, 24.

5. His subjects.

(a) He works in them without their knowledge.
"The spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience." Eph. ii. 2.

(b) He blinds their minds.
"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving." 2 Cor. iv. 4.

(c) He keeps them in a false peace.
"When the strong man fully armed guardeth his own court, his goods are in peace." Luke xi. 21.

(d) He secretly incites them to oppose the truth.
"Them that oppose . . . they may recover . . . out of the snare of the devil . . . taken captive by him." 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. m.

* Part of this Bible Reading is extracted from "Conflict in the Heavens."

II. The Tempter and his Conqueror.

1. *The Conqueror.*

"To this end was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." I John iii. 8.

See also Mark i. 24; Mark iii. 11; Mark i. 27.

2. *The place of triumph.*

"The Cross; having put off from Himself His body, He made a show of the principalities and the powers . . . triumphing over them in it." Col. ii. 14, 15. m.

"Through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." Heb. ii. 14. A.V.

Compare John xii. 31, for the Lord's words on the way to Calvary.

3. *The conquest proclaimed by messengers.*

"I send thee . . . to turn them . . . from the power of Satan unto God." Acts xxvi. 17, 18. m.

4. *The captives set free.*

"Delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated . . . into the kingdom of the Son of His love." Col. i. 13.

5. *The victory in Christ.*

"Behold, I have given you authority . . . over ALL the power of the enemy . . . the spirits are subject unto you." Luke x. 19, 20.

"In My Name shall they cast out demons." Mark xvi. 17. m.

See illustrated in Acts xvi. 18. Note Acts xix. 15.

III. The Tempter's devices.

"We are not ignorant of his devices." 2 Cor. ii. 11.

"In vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird." Prov. i. 17. m.

1. HIS TACTICS WITH THE UNSAVED.

"They that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the Word . . . lest they should believe and be saved." Luke viii. 12. A.V.

"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light . . . should shine." 2 Cor. iv. 4. A.V.

2. HIS DEVICES WITH THE BELIEVER.

a. He seeks to keep from full surrender from God.

"Why hath Satan filled thy heart . . . to keep back part?" Acts v. 3.

b. He resists the removal of the filthy garments.

"Satan . . . his adversary. Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments." Zech. iii. 1-3. m.

c. He works through fleshly jealousy and strife.

"Bitter jealousy and faction . . . earthly, natural, *devilish*." Jas. iii. 14, 15. m.

d. He uses others to keep us back from the Cross.

"Peter . . . began to rebuke Him, saying, Pity Thyself, Lord." Matt. xvi. 22. A.V. m.

e. He "roars" like a lion to frighten.

"The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." I Pet. v. 8.

f. He seeks to puff up with pride.

“Lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil.”

1 Tim. iii. 6.

g. He pushes us to some step not of God.

“Satan moved David . . . to say, Go, number Israel.”

2 Sam. xxiv. 1. A. V. m.

3. HIS DEVICES WITH THE SOUL POSSESSED OF GOD.

“*The Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou set thine heart on My servant Job . . . an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*”

Job i. 8. A. V. m.

a. He shoots his “fiery darts.”

“The fiery darts of the evil one.”

Eph. vi. 16.

Met by faith in the faithfulness of God.

“Taking up the shield of faith . . . able to quench ALL.”

Eph. vi. 16.

b. He lays subtle snares in the practical “walk.”

“The snare of the devil.”

1 Tim. iii. 7.

Met by not looking for the snares, but at the Lord.

“Mine eyes . . . toward the Lord . . . He shall pluck my feet out of the net.”

Ps. xxv. 15.

c. He seeks to beguile us out of our place in Christ.

“The wiles of the devil.”

Eph. vi. 11.

Met by hiding in Christ continuously.

“Take up the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to . . . stand.”

Eph. vi. 13.

d. He ceaselessly tries to get us under “condemnation.”

“The accuser of our brethren.”

Rev. xii. 10.

Met by shelter under the sprinkled blood.

“They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.”

Rev. xii. 11. A. V.

e. He tries to corrupt our simple faith in God.

“As the serpent beguiled Eve . . . your thoughts should be corrupted from . . . simplicity.”

2 Cor. xi. 3. m.

Met by the Word of God dwelling in us richly.

“The Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one.”

1 John ii. 14.

f. He fashions himself as an angel of light.

“Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light.”

2 Cor. xi. 14.

Met by the Indwelling Spirit giving victory.

“Prove the spirits . . . ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you.”

1 John iv. 1. 4.

g. He stirs up persecution whenever possible.

“The devil shall cast some of you into prison.”

Rev. ii. 10. A. V.

Met by the triumph of faith.

“This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.”

1 John v. 4.

IV. How to defeat the Tempter.

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things.”

Rev. xxi. 7. A. V.

I. By recognising the battle as between God and the devil.

“The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet.”

Rom. xvi. 20.

2. By sheltering under the blood from all condemnation.
"They overcame . . . by the blood of the Lamb." Rev. xii. 11. A.V.
3. By being saturated with the Word of God.
"The Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome." I John ii. 14.
4. By the active resistance of the *will*.
"Be subject (submit) . . . unto God ; but *resist* the devil, and he will flee from you." (Compare Matt. xvi. 23.) Jas. iv. 7.
5. By appeal to God rather than by argument with the enemy.
"Michael . . . contending with the devil . . . said, The Lord rebuke thee." Jude 9.
6. By giving him no foothold in the smallest thing.
"Neither give place to the devil."
"Give none occasion to the adversary." Eph. iv. 27.
I Tim. v. 14.
7. By carefully maintaining the spirit of love.
"Whom ye forgive . . . I forgive also . . . that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan." 2 Cor. ii. 10, 11.
8. By taking special heed to the use of the tongue.
"Let your speech be, Yea, yea ; Nay, nay ; and whatsoever is more than these is of the *evil one*." Matt. v. 37.
9. By watchful dealings with others.
"Looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Gal. vi. 1.

V. The Tempter's limit.

1. *He cannot attack without permission.*
Illus: Job. "The Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy hand ; only—" Job i. 12. m.
Illus: Peter. "Simon, behold, Satan *asked* to have you, that he might sift you as wheat." Luke xxii. 31.
 2. *The object of the permission.*
"A messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch." 2 Cor. xii. 7.
(In some cases I Cor. v. 5. In others Job ii. 3.)
 3. *The extent of the attack carefully measured by God.*
"There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear ; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." I Cor. x. 13.
 4. *The Almighty Keeper.*
"He that was begotten of God keepeth him, and the evil one toucheth him not." I John v. 18.
"The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and guard you from the evil one." 2 Thess. iii. 3.
 5. *The children's prayer.*
"Our Father . . . deliver us from the evil one." Matt. vi. 9, 13.
 6. *The Heavenly High Priest's intercession.*
"I pray not that Thou shouldest take them from the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil one." John xvii. 15.
- The final end of the Adversary. Jude 6. Rev. xx. 2, 3, 10.

The Victory of Submission.

*Isaac and his wells. Gen. xxvi.**

I. The place of victory.

“And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines, unto Gerar.” ver. 1.

“The Lord appeared unto him, and said . . . dwell in the land . . . and I will be with thee, and will bless thee.” ver. 2, 3.

*We may count upon the power of God working for us anywhere, if we are there by the express will of God.
Note the sevenfold covenant of Jehovah.*

II. The seal of God, and His promised blessing.

“Isaac sowed in that land, and received . . . an hundredfold.” ver. 12.
(Compare Matt. xviii. 29.)

“The man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great.” ver. 13.

III. How the trouble began.

“The Philistines envied him.” ver. 14.

Oftimes envy lies at the back of persecution. The devil is like a “dog in the manger.”

IV. The tactics of the envious.

They stopped up the wells.

“All the wells . . . the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.” ver. 15.

If they could not have the wells, then Isaac should not! They would make the land impossible to him, so as to get rid of him.

At last they used plain language.

“Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us!” ver. 16.

V. How Isaac acted.

“And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar . . . and Isaac digged again the wells . . . and found there a well of springing (*living* m.) water.” ver. 17-19.

He did not resist, and say, God had placed him there, therefore he could not move. Notice, too, that no extraordinary guidance was given him at this time. So long as Isaac was walking in the way of God, there was no need for “special revelations.” Isaac was guided by sanctified judgment, and the spirit that makes for peace. He had the spirit of Matt. v. 39.

VI. Further persecutions, and how he was driven about.

“The herdmen of Gerar did strive . . . saying, The water is ours.” ver. 20.
Isaac was still too near the envious Philistines; they could not leave him in peace. He called the name of this well “Contention,” and moved on! (ver. 20. m.)

* References from the A.V.

"They digged another well, and [the Philistines] strove for that also ; and he called the name of it ' Sitnah ' ['hatred']." ver. 21. m.

"*Sitnah*" comes from the Hebrew "*Satan*," to lie in wait for as an adversary. Isaac recognised the devil at work in all this, and called it the "*devil's well*."

VII. The patience of true submission.

"He removed from thence, and digged another well ; and for that they strove not : and he called the name of it ' Room ' ; and he said, For now the *Lord hath made room for us*, and we shall be fruitful in the land. And he went up from thence to Beersheba."

ver. 22, 23. m.

How much better for the Lord to make room for us, than to fight to maintain our ground ! Isaac had every right to these wells, by inheritance (see ver. 15) as well as labour, but he left his "rights" to God.

VIII. The reward of submission.

"The Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said . . . Fear not, for I am with thee." ver. 24.

This was the seal of God to Isaac's past course of action. We might have called it "retreat" before the enemy, but the revelation of God to Isaac immediately afterwards, shows that this course was in the will of God.

It is better not to fight opposition ! Silence is the best course, and a continuance in the path of duty, until we find the place where God makes "room" for us. Is not this what the Lord meant in Matt. x. 23 ?

IX. The victory of submission.

"Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and . . . one of his friends, and . . . the chief captain of his army . . . and they said, We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee : and we said . . . let us make a covenant with thee." ver. 26, 28.

A deputation from the contentious party suing for peace ! This is the way the Lord works ! "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." (Prov. xvi. 7).

How they approached the one they had injured !

"Thou art now the blessed of the Lord," said the deputation, "and we would like to make a covenant with thee." Their testimony was, "We saw certainly that God was with thee !" How much better it is for others to testify to God's blessing upon us, than for us to do it of ourselves.

How they counted up their good deeds, and forgot the bad !

"We have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace." ver. 29.

What convenient memories they had ! They forgot all about those wells !

X. The humility of Isaac.

"He made them a feast . . . and they . . . swear one to another . . . and they departed from him in peace." ver. 30, 31.

This was the highest victory of all—the victory over himself! He never said one word about the wells, nor yielded to the temptation of insisting upon apologies for the past! He did not even ask for “explanations!” He just let the whole thing drop. It was “worthy of God.”

- XI. **“All things added.”** Matt. vi. 33.
 “The same day . . . Isaac’s servants came . . . and said unto him,
 We have found water.” ver. 32.
 “He called it the well of the oath.” ver. 33. m.

The secret of Isaac’s submission may surely be traced to his knowledge of God when a youth. When he was taken by his father up Mount Moriah and laid upon the altar, did he not see a ram slain in his stead? Did Abraham not teach his son the meaning of the Lamb slain? Those who know God as Isaac did, have learned to leave their “rights” with Him, and are content to have His smile.

“Return . . . Submit.”

Gen. xvi. 9.

1. *“Submit”* to the righteousness of God.
 “Going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” Rom. x. 3.
2. *“Submit”* to the will of God.
 “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God.” Jas. iv. 6, 7.
3. *“Submit”* to God-sealed authority in the Spirit.
 Submit yourselves . . . to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth.” I Cor. xvi. 16.
 “Submit . . . for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.” Heb. xiii. 17.
4. *“Submit”* ye younger to the elders.
 “Juniors submit yourselves to your seniors, and clothe yourselves stringently with lowliness of mind one toward another.” I Pet. v. 5. Syr.
5. *“Submit”* ye wives unto your husbands.
 “Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” Eph. v. 22.
6. *“Submit”* even when harshly treated.
 “Return to thy mistress and submit thyself.” Gen. xvi. 9.

Submission is one of the marks of the Spirit-filled life. “Be filled with the Spirit . . . speaking . . . singing . . . giving thanks . . . *submitting.*” Eph. v. 18-21.

The Transformed Life.

"I beseech you therefore . . . by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well-pleasing to God, which is your spiritual worship."
Rom. xii. 1. m.

Note the word "therefore" pointing back to the message of the preceding chapters (omitting chapters ix., x. and xi., which may be read as a parenthesis). Rom. xii. is an appeal following the triumphant finale of Rom. viii.

I. The ground-work of a transformed life.

"I beseech you . . . by the mercies of God." Rom. xii. 1.

The "mercies of God" in brief :—

1. Justification through Christ.

"Justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . . Reconciled to God through the death of His Son."

Rom. v. 1, 10. m.

2. Identification with Christ.

"We who died to sin . . . we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death."

Rom. vi. 2, 3.

3. Union with Christ.

"Joined to another, even to Him Who was raised from the dead." Rom. vii. 4.

4. Freedom in Christ.

"No condemnation . . . in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free . . . ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you."

Rom. viii. 1, 2, 9.

II. The call to present the body.

1. "Therefore . . . present your bodies." Rom. xii. 1.

This corresponds to Rom. vi. 13. "Present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments."

2. The body as a sacrifice.

"Present your bodies a living sacrifice."

Rom. xii. 1.

The body must be under the control of the Spirit of life, that it may be the vehicle for the manifestation of that life. Compare the sacrifice of praise offered through the lips, Heb. xiii. 15, and the "spiritual sacrifices" in 1 Pet. ii. 5.

3. The body set apart for God.

"Your bodies . . . holy, well pleasing to God."

Rom. xii. 1. m.

The earthen vessel is sacred because of the Treasure it holds.

"Your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Ghost which is in you . . . glorify God therefore in your body," 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. m.

"The altar . . . sanctifieth the gift." See Matt. xxiii. 19.

4. The presentation of the body described as worship.

"Present your bodies . . . which is your spiritual worship." Rom. xii. 1. m.

Compare Heb. x. 19, 22. The three departments (1 Thess. v. 23.) of our complex being are so inter-dependent that God does not

separate them. The "body washed with pure water," may be spiritually considered as the body brought into subjection, and its actions into accord, with the Word of God.

III. The transformed life.

1. *Its negative side.*

"Be not conformed to this world." Rom. xii. 2. A. V.

If crucified with Christ, we are not to consider ourselves as now "living in the world" (Col. ii. 20). Gal. vi. 14 must be our attitude to the world spirit. The Cross stands between. See Gal. i. 4.

2. *Its positive side.*

"Be ye transformed." Rom. xii. 2.

"Transfigured!" an earthen vessel so illuminated by the light within, that it is being "transformed continually" into the image of the Lord from heaven.

3. *How the transforming is done.*

"By the renewing of your mind." Rom. xii. 2.

Not from without to the inward, but from within to the outward by the continual renewal of the indwelling Spirit of life. A new mind as well as new desires in the heart.

4. *The key to the practical walk.*

"That ye may prove what is the . . . will of God." Rom. xii. 2.

The mercies of God, the presenting of the body, the transformation of the whole life, are for this end! Simply to fulfil God's purposes, and do His will. Conybeare renders the sentence, "that by an unerring test you may discern the will of God." The same phrase occurs in Phil. i. 9: "discerning what we ought to do, and not to do."

IV. The transformed life in practice.

1. *The attitude towards oneself.*

"Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but . . . soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith." ver. 3.

Be natural and simple, be what you are, and where you are spiritually, mentally, socially; and do not strain to walk by another's light, or faith, or experience.

2. *The attitude towards other children of God.*

"Even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ . . . having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us." ver. 4, 5, 6.

The full revelation of God is not given only to one member of the body. Have respect to God's grace in others; you are only a part of a whole! Read carefully I Cor. xii. and note that the feeble members (ver. 22.) are as necessary as the strong ones.

3. *The exercise of the gifts of grace.*

The grace of prophecy.

"Having gifts differing . . . whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of the faith." ver. 6. m.

If you are entrusted with the Divine message, speak according to the proportion given you, and do not go beyond the measure of your knowledge.

The grace of ministry.

“Or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry.” ver. 7.

The grace of teaching.

“Or he that teacheth, to his teaching.” ver. 7.

The grace of exhorting.

“Or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting.” ver. 8.

Whatever may be your special grace, give your whole being to it; some only give their time. See 1 Thess. ii. 8.

The grace of giving.

“He that giveth, let him do it with liberality.” ver. 8.

This grace needs special care that it is fulfilled with “singleness” (R.V. m.) of heart, with liberality of mind, and “simplicity” (A.V. m.) of purpose, so as to be in accord with Matt. vi. 1.

The grace of ruling.

“He that ruleth, with diligence.” ver. 8.

The Spirit gives special fitness for “ruling.” It must be done with as much diligence and faithfulness as preaching the gospel. The transformed life in men in authority will reach souls who will not listen to the preaching. “Let each man, wherein he was called, therein abide with God.” 1 Cor. vii. 24.

The grace of showing mercy.

“He that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.” ver. 8.

This is also a gift, and there are some to whom it is given as a life work. Channels for the mercy of God, let them show mercy cheerfully, not severely.

V. The transformed life in various details.

“Let love be without hypocrisy.” ver. 9.

Concerning love be genuine.

“Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.” ver. 9.

Hate sin, and don't trifle with it.

“Be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honour preferring one another.” ver. 10.

Give others the first place; be kind and courteous.

“Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.” ver. 11. A.V.

“Let our people also learn to profess honest occupations for necessary wants” (Titus iii. 14. m.), said Paul, and he did not hesitate, Apostle though he was, to work with his own hands that he might not be burdensome to the Corinthians. 2 Cor. xi. 9. This dignifies the “honest occupations,” and shows that the Lord may be served fervently in business, as well as by preaching the gospel.

- “Rejoicing in hope ; patient in tribulation ; continuing stedfastly in prayer.” ver. 12.
This is applicable to business life as well as all other circumstances, and is to be the spirit in which all trials are met. Hopeful, patient, prayerful.
- “Communicating to the necessities of the saints ; given to hospitality.” ver. 13.
Caring for others in the household of faith (see 1 John iii. 17) and generous in hospitality. (See 3 John 6.)
- “Bless them that persecute you ; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that rejoice ; weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another.” ver. 14, 15, 16.
Do not retaliate, but conquer with love. Be sympathetic, glad to see others happy, and tender with their griefs. Seek the unity of the Spirit with all.

VI. The transformed life in true self-effacement.

- “Set not your mind on high things.” ver. 16.
Be willing to be among the “nobodies.”
- “Be contented with mean things.” ver. 16. A.V. m.
Be thankful for everything that comes. Ps. xxxiv. 1.
- “Be not wise in your own conceits.” ver. 16.
Don't think you know everything !
- “Render to no man evil for evil.” ver. 17.
Don't pay people back in “their own coin.”
- “Take thought for things honourable in the sight of all men.” ver. 17.
Think of how things look to others !
- “As much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men.” ver. 18.
Be peace-makers, not peace-breakers. Refuse to touch the “bone of contention” at home, and in the Church.
- “Avenge not yourselves . . . give place unto the wrath of God.” ver. 19. m.
Beware of self-defence. Hush ! not a word. Remember Luke xviii. 7.

TRUE CHRIST LIKENESS !

- “If thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him to drink ; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” ver. 20, 21.
Those who hate you, do the most for, and melt all opposition with the fire of heavenly love. Matt. v. 44, 45.

The "Quiet in the Land."

Ps. xxxv, 20.

Thus said the Lord God . . . quietness. But ye said, NO, for we will flee (i.e., rush!)—Therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious." Isa. xxx. 15-18.

I. The disquietude of the soul out of Christ.

"The wicked are like the troubled sea ; for it cannot rest." Isa. lvii. 20.

"The sea . . . cannot be quiet." Jer. xlix. 23.

*They are restless when alone, when under restraint, when in trouble.
Like the tossing sea they cannot be quiet!*

II. The first effect of peace with God is quietness.

"The work of righteousness shall be peace ; and the effect of righteousness *quietness* and confidence for ever." Isa. xxxii. 17.

"Having made peace through the blood of His Cross." Col. i. 20.

"Justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. v. i. A. V.

III. God's promise of quietness for His own people.

"My people shall abide in a peaceable habitation . . . and in *quiet* resting places." Isa. xxxii. 18.

IV. The conditions of obtaining quietness of heart shown in an Old Testament story. 2 Kings xi. 17-20.

1. *A covenant to be wholly the Lord's.* ver. 17.

2. *The house of Baal broken down.* ("Crucified with Christ" to the world!) ver. 18.

3. *The images broken thoroughly* (heart-idols abolished!) ver. 18.

4. *They slew the priest of Baal before the altar* (self slain at the Cross!) ver. 18.

5. *The King on the throne and quiet.* ver. 20.

Only a thorough work in the heart and life can bring about a permanent inward quiet. Until we enshrine Christ in our hearts as Lord, and let self be kept crucified at the Cross, there must be tumult and "civil war" in the inner realm. The Holy Spirit will do it for us if we abandon ourselves to Him.

V. Our part in the matter is to "take heed, and be quiet" (Isa. vii. 4) when the Holy Spirit is dealing with us.

1. "*Be quiet*" when God is weaning us from the world, the idols and the props.

"Surely I have stilled and quieted my soul ; like a weaned child with his mother." Ps. cxxxii. 2.

2. "*Be quiet*" when God is leading us through the spiritual "valley of the shadow of death." (See Lam. iii. 1-26.)

"Quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." Lam. iii. 26.

3. "*Be quiet*" when God raises the stormy wind to bring us to our "wits' end," for so He bringeth to the desired haven.

"Then are they glad because they be quiet." Ps. cvii. 25-30.

VI. The blessings of inward quiet.

1. A "quiet" heart which nothing can disturb.
"When He giveth quietness, who then can condemn?" Job xxxiv. 29.
2. A "quiet" confidence which gives secret strength.
"In quietness . . . your strength." Isa. xxx. 15.
3. A "quiet" spirit, of rare value to God.
"A meek and quiet spirit . . . in the sight of God of great price." I Pet. iii. 4.
4. A "quiet" power to "quiet" others before God.
"The words of wise men are heard in quiet." Eccles. ix. 17. A.V.
5. A "quiet" rest in times of trouble.
"Whoso hearkeneth unto Me . . . shall be quiet without fear of evil." Prov. i. 33.

VII. How to maintain permanent quiet.

- "Study (mar. "be ambitious") to be *quiet* and to do your own business, and to work with your hands." I Thess. iv. 11.
- "Some . . . are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort . . . that with *quietness* they work, and eat their own bread." 2 Thess. iii. 11, 12.

Inward quiet is deepened by outward quiet. Doing the next thing and only the one thing! Shutting eyes and ears to all but God's will in the present moment. Refusing to yield to idle curiosity, and "wanting to know" so much of others' affairs. Shut up to God and His will, "study" thus to "be quiet" in the outward life (not in circumstances, but in your own heart), if you would know the blessedness of being led by the "still waters," the "waters of quietness" (Ps. xxiii. 2. A.V. m.) and be among His "quiet in the land."

A Purchased People.

"Ye are . . . a *purchased people*." I Pet. ii. 9. A.V. m.

I. The purchase and its outcome.

- "Ye were bought with a price ; glorify God therefore." I Cor. vi. 20.
"Ye were bought with a price ; become not bondservants of men." I Cor. vii. 23.

II. The price that was paid.

- "The Lord . . . *purchased* with His own blood." Acts xx. 28. m.

III. What we are purchased from.

- "*Purchased out of the earth*." Rev. xiv. 3.
"*Purchased from among men*." Rev. xiv. 4.

IV. The present earnest of the future.

- "The Holy Spirit . . . the earnest . . . until the redemption of the *purchased possession*." Eph. i. 13, 14. A.V.

E

The Proving of God.

“Fear not : for God is come to prove you.” Exod. xx. 20.

Prove: to test or try by an experiment in order to ascertain the quality ; to make trial of ; to bring to the test.

I. God chooses the right moment for His proving.

“After these things . . . God did prove Abraham.” Gen. xxii. 1.

“Proof supposes something provable,” and God does not put His children to any test beyond their measure—nor does He put them to the proof before He sees something in them worth proving.

II. The object of the proving.

“That He might prove thee *to do thee good.*” Deut. viii. 16.

“To prove thee, to know what was in thine heart.” Deut. viii. 2.

The devil tempts us to bring us into sin, but the Lord proves us always to do us good.

III. What He puts to the proof in us.

1. *Our love to Him.*

“Prove you to know whether ye love the Lord . . . with all your heart.” Deut. xiii. 3.

2. *Our obedience to His every word.*

“Prove . . . whether they will walk in My law, or no.” Exod. xvi. 4.

“Prove . . . whether thou wouldest keep His commandments.” Deut. viii. 2.

3. *Our loyalty to Him.*

“Prove . . . whether they will keep the way of the Lord.” Judges ii. 22.

4. *Our faith in Him.*

“The proof of your faith . . . proved by fire.” I Pet. i. 7.

IV. How He proves us.

1. *He proves us by permitting temptation.*

“If there arise . . . a prophet, or a ‘dreamer’ . . . saying, let us go after other gods . . . thou shalt not hearken . . . the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord . . . with all your heart.” Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3.

The context of this passage seems to be specially applicable to the present day, when “prophets” and “dreamers” are arising with “doctrines of demons” (I Tim. iv. 1), and giving signs and wonders to emphasize their claim.

The professing Christians are being tested to-day as Israel was tested. God says that these claimants were allowed by Him so as to prove His people, and to test whether they genuinely loved Him or not. The true sheep “know not [respond not to] the

voice of strangers." (John x. 5.) The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, will be our safeguard. The spirit of anti-christ has no charm for those who know the Christ Himself.

2. *He proves us by testing our obedience.*

"I will rain bread from heaven for you . . . Go out and gather a day's portion *every day*, that I may *prove* them whether they will walk in My law, or no." Exod. xvi. 4.

He proves the extent of our desire to walk in His path, by our obedience to His command to gather the bread for our souls day by day, and thus be filled with the knowledge of His will. If we are keenly desirous of living only to the will of God, we shall diligently observe to do according to all that is written.

3. *He proves us through others.*

"The nations . . . by them I may *prove* Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord . . . or not." Judges ii. 21, 22.

The Lord places His children in the midst of those who know Him not, that He may prove if they will be true to His way wherever they may be. In the midst of heathen customs and lower standards of morality, will the child of God become lax also? In other lands, away from outward restraints of home, will they keep the "way of the Lord," and be loyal to Him with no other eye upon them but His?

4. *He proves us by testing our faith.*

"The proof of your faith . . . proved by fire." I Pet. i. 7.

Our faith is more precious to God than gold, and He tests it like gold by placing it in the fire. The greater the furnace the purer and brighter it comes forth unto His glory. "The proof of your faith worketh patience." Jas. i. 3.

5. *He proves us in a path of humiliation.*

"Thou, O God, hast proved us: Thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; Thou layedst a sore burden . . . Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; but Thou broughtest us out into abundance." Ps. lxvi. 10-12. m.

V. Some of the ways in which He proved Israel.

1. *At Marah.* "There He proved them." Exod. xv. 25.

Proved them by testing them physically. They were thirsty and they found naught but bitter waters to drink—then they murmured.

He brings us to bitter waters, that He may prove if we will prove Him, and the power of the tree to make bitter things sweet.

2. *In the wilderness.* "That I may prove them." Exod. xvi. 4.

Again a physical proving. They were hungry and they wanted bread. They murmured instead of casting themselves upon God, and proving Him that He would not fail to supply all their need.

3. *At Rephidim.* "I proved thee at the waters of Meribah." Ps. lxxxi. 7.

"He called the name of the place Massah (mar. Proving)." Exod. xvii. 7. m.

Here there was no water. After the proving of God at Marah and in the wilderness of Sin, surely they could stand His testing now? Nay—their cry was “Is the Lord among us or not?” and they sorely tempted Him to leave them.

4. *There were some who stood the proof.*

“Of Levi He said, Thy Thummim and Thy Urim are with Thy godly one whom Thou didst prove at Massah.” Deut. xxxiii. 8.

VI. God alone proves His own children.

“The Lord trieth the righteous.” Ps. xi. 5.

“I will bring the third part through the fire . . . and will try them as gold is tried.” Zech. xiii. 9.

“Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial . . . which cometh . . . to *prove* you.” I Pet. iv. 12.

VII. God’s children may also, in a sense, prove themselves.

“Try your own selves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.” 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

“Let each man prove his own work.” Gal. vi. 4.

“Let a man prove himself . . . if we discriminated ourselves, we should not be judged.” I Cor. xi. 28, 31. m.

If we are without God’s testings, we may question whether He sees any faith to test. When we are willing to know the truth about ourselves we shall be given such a power of discrimination as will enable us to often see the meaning of God’s dealings, and prove ourselves by the measure of His word.

Moreover if we will prove our work now, we shall be saved the sorrow of the proving at the judgment seat of Christ. “Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he butteth to the test.” Rom. xiv. 22. m.

Happy the soul able to say as David did:—

“Thou hast *proved* mine heart . . . Thou hast tried me, and findest no *evil purpose* in me.” Ps. xvii. 3. m.

VIII. God will prove our work at the judgment seat.

“The fire itself shall prove each man’s work of what sort it is.” I Cor. iii. 13.

IX. The proving is coming for all the world.

“I will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole inhabited earth, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” Rev. iii. 10. m.

“What is man . . . that Thou shouldst set Thine heart upon him . . . and try him every moment?” Job vii. 17, 18.

“Blessed is the man that endureth . . . for when . . . *approved* . . . shall receive the crown of life.” Jas. i. 12.

Tribulation

Or the Lord's "threshing=sledge."

The origin of the word "tribulation" is the Latin *tribulum*, a threshing-sledge. (Neil.)

I. The Lord's threshing-floor.

"Whose fan is in His hand, and He will throughly cleanse His threshing-floor; and He will gather His wheat into the garner, but the chaff He will burn up." Matt. iii. 12.

The Lord has charge of His threshing-floor, into which all the corn is brought as soon as it is fit for the threshing. The "fan" represents the Blessed Spirit, Whose special work is the cleansing and separating of the chaff from the real corn of wheat.

II. The Lord's careful dealing with His own.

"Is bread-corn crushed? Nay, He will not ever be threshing it, and driving His cart wheels and His horses over it; He doth not crush it." Isa. xxviii. 28. m.

Horses are still used in threshing in Asia Minor. In Syria oxen tread out the corn which, as it is detached from the ear, being heavier than the straw, either falls below it or is pressed into it, thus escaping bruising. (*Palestine Explored.* Rev. J. Neil.)

When the Lord brings His corn to the threshing-floor, and bids the oxen and cart wheels of sorrow and trial pass over His precious wheat, the straw, or outward man, alone is bruised and broken. The true grain is protected. Nay, He will not *ever* be threshing, and in the day of threshing He will see that His grain is not crushed, but simply purified to be for His use alone.

III. The individual dealing of the Lord.

"In that day . . . the Lord shall beat out His corn . . . and ye shall be gleaned one by one, O ye children." Isa. xxvii. 12. m.

In the day when God's judgments are abroad in the earth, He is simply "beating out His corn," separating and detaching His true grains of wheat from their surroundings, and gleaning them "one by one" into His garner.

IV. The way God sometimes does His threshing.

"He hath gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing-floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples." Micah iv. 12, 13.

Although this is primarily spoken of Israel's triumph over their enemies, yet spiritually it portrays the way in which the Spirit

does His work now in preparing the people of God for the Lord's return. He uses Spirit-equipped instruments in the work of threshing, and if we yield to the "sharp threshing instrument" (Isa. xli. 15) wielded by God, He will not need to use more painful means in circumstances.

V. The threshing inevitable in the last days.

"Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe . . . multitudes, multitudes in the valley of threshing." Joel iii. 13, 14. A.V. m.

VI. Tribulation is always God's threshing-sledge.

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many *tribulations* we must enter into the kingdom of God." Acts xiv. 22.

1. The world is God's threshing-floor for His people.

"In Me ye may have peace. In the world ye have *tribulation*." John xvi. 33.

2. Knowing the object of the threshing, let us rejoice.

"Let us also rejoice in our *tribulations*: knowing that *tribulation* worketh patience." Rom. v. 3.

"Rejoicing in hope; patient in *tribulation*." Rom. xii. 12.

3. The Christ is with His children in the threshing time.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall *tribulation* or anguish? . . . Nay" — Rom. viii. 35, 37.

4. The Father's comfort abounds.

"The God of all comfort, Who comforteth us in all our *tribulation*." 2 Cor. i. 3, 4, A.V.

5. The Risen Lord limits the time of the threshing.

"I know thy *tribulation* . . . ye shall have a *tribulation* of ten days. Be thou faithful." Rev. ii. 9, 10. m.

VII. The description of the time of the end.

"All these things are the beginning of travail. Then shall they deliver you up unto *tribulation* . . . for then shall be great *tribulation* . . . for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matt. xxiv. 8, 9, 21, 22.

VIII. The promise to the faithful ones.

"Because thou didst keep the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole inhabited earth." Rev. iii. 10. m.

The vision in the glory.

"These are they which come out of the great tribulation." Rev. vii. 14.

"Thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman; let him declare what he seeth:—

O thou my threshing, and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard from the Lord . . . have I declared unto you." Isa. xxi. 6-10.

“Not Offended.”

“Blessed is he . . . not . . . offended in Me.” Matt. xi. 6.*

I. The occasion and circumstances.

1. John the Baptist in prison. Matt. xi. 2.
2. John’s question, “Art Thou He?” ver. 3.
3. Christ’s reply, “Go . . . tell . . . things . . . see.” ver. 4. R.V.
4. The proof of the Anointed Christ.
The blind, lame, lepers, deaf, dead, poor, all have their need met by Him. ver. 5.
5. The message to the questioning prophet.
“Blessed . . . not . . . offended [stumbled] in Me.” ver. 6.

II. The Christ was foretold as an “offence.”

“He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a . . . rock of offence to . . . Israel . . . and many shall stumble thereon.” Isa. viii. 14, 15. R.V.

III. The fulfilment of the prophecy.

1. The “offended” converts.
“Hearth . . . with joy receiveth . . . persecution ariseth . . . offended.” Matt. xiii. 20, 21.
Happiness, prosperity; all this expected, but when the testing comes, they cast away their confidence and lose their reward.
2. The “offended” fellow citizens.
“His own country . . . is not this the carpenter? . . . and they were offended . . . and He could there do no mighty work.” Mark vi. 1-5.
They were offended with the outward form in which the God of glory approached them. Beholding the Carpenter, they missed the Christ.
3. The “offended” formalists.
“In vain they do worship Me . . . the Pharisees were offended.” Matt xv. 9-12.
They were offended with the truth, even from Christ.
4. The “offended” disciples.
“Many . . . of His disciples . . . said, This is an hard saying . . . Jesus said . . . Doth this offend you? . . . From that time many . . . went back and walked no more with Him.” John vi. 60-66.
They were stumbled at truth beyond their apprehension and turned away even from the Christ.
5. The “offended” inner circle.
“Then saith Jesus . . . All ye shall be offended because of Me this night.” Matt. xxvi. 31.

* References from A.V.

The reply of Peter.

“Though all . . . shall be offended . . . yet will I never.” ver. 33.

The fulfilment of the Lord's words.

“All the disciples forsook Him and fled.” ver. 56.

Peter “denied (Him) with an oath.” ver. 72.

After partaking of the cup that spoke of the poured-out life of their Lord, and their fellowship with Him; when the actual sharing of His sufferings came, they were “offended” and fled, leaving Him alone.

IV. The Christ is still a rock of offence.

1. An offence in the message of His Cross.

“Is the offence of the Cross ceased?” Gal. v. 11.

See I Cor. i. 23. “Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.”

2. An offence in the message of salvation by faith.

“The righteousness which is of faith . . . they stumbled at that stumbling-stone; as it is written, Behold I lay in Sion a . . . rock of offence.” Rom. ix. 30-33.

3. An offence to all disobedient souls.

“A rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient.” I Pet. ii. 8.

V. Christ will be an “offence” unto the end.

“The beginning of sorrows . . . ye shall be hated . . . then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another and . . . the love of many shall wax cold.” Matt. xxiv. 8-12.

The offence of the Cross must grow more acute toward the end, for the one who rejects the Cross, and its call to suffer, must reject the crucified followers of Christ, and hate them as a continual offence.

THE UNOFFENDED SOULS.

I. The secret of their faithfulness.

“These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.” John xvi. 1.

What things?

(a) The promised gift of the Indwelling Spirit of Truth that enables the soul to cleave to Him who is the Truth. John xiv. 16, 17.

(b) The vision of the Risen Christ that makes Him an ever increasing reality to the soul. John xiv. 18-21.

(c) The knowledge of the Triune God in possession of the whole being. John xiv. 20-23.

II. The witness in their lives.

“Sincere and without offence.” Phil. i. 10.

“Giving no offence in anything.” 2 Cor. vi. 3.

Compare Matt. xvii. 27. Rom. xiv. 21. Eccles. x. 4. Unoffended souls give no offence to others and know that there must be no cause of offence in the followers of the Lamb, even though they increasingly know the offence of the Cross and its message. See also Matt. xviii. 7.

III. Their attitude to offences in themselves.

“If thy hand . . . offend . . . cast . . . from thee.” Matt. xviii. 8, 9.
See the passage in Matt. xviii. 8, 9.

IV. The care of Christ for His unoffended ones.

“Whoso shall offend one of these little ones . . . it were better for him . . . that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” Matt. xviii. 6.

“Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.” Matt. xviii. 7.

“Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them.” Ps. cxix. 165.

The Child-Life.

I. The Pattern given by the Lord Jesus.

“He called to Him a little child, and set him in the midst.” Matt. xviii. 2.

II. How to become a little child.

1. The Spirit of Jesus imparted to the redeemed.

“Because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying . . . ‘Father.’” Gal. iv. 6.

2. A new life communicated for the renovation of the soul.

“Except ye be converted, and become as little children.” Matt. xviii. 3. A.V.

3. Self-renunciation, revealing the path of crucifixion.

“Whosoever . . . shall humble himself as this little child.” Matt. xviii. 4.

4. One life with the Lord Jesus, living union with Christ.

“Whoso shall receive one such little child . . . receiveth Me.” Matt. xviii. 5.

The Lord Jesus is the pattern, and His child-spirit is shown all through the Gospel of John as He spoke of His Father, “Not I . . . but the Father” again and again.

III. The blessings of the “children.”

1. The Father’s face clear to them. Matt. xviii. 10.

2. The Father’s special care of them. Matt. xviii. 4.

3. The Father’s secrets revealed to them. Matt. xi. 25.

4. The Father meets the enemy for them. Ps. iii. 2 (see also Matt. xxi. 16).

IV. The child-spirit in Old Testament patterns.

1. Solomon.
The child-spirit for ruling. 1 Kings iii. 7.

2. Samuel.
The child-spirit for priestly service within the veil. 1 Sam. iii. 1 etc.

3. Jeremiah.
The child-spirit for being a messenger for God. Jeremiah i.

See Naaman as a suggestive picture of the spiritual path to the child-life. 2 Kings v. 14.

Magnificent Deliverance.

“He delivers magnificently.” Ps. xviii. 50 (*French Version*).

I. The song of praise from an overflowing heart.

“I love Thee, O Lord my strength, “my rock,” “my fortress,” “my strong rock,” “my shield,” “my high tower.” ver. 1, 2.

II. The hour of extremity.

“The cords of death compassed me . . . the cords of Sheol (the grave) were round about me: The snares of death came upon me.” ver. 4, 5.

A graphic description of spiritual extremity. Cords bind and hold fast in powerlessness, so do the snares that death fastens and weaves round about the soul in its hour of testing.

Paul's story in 2 Cor. i. 8. aptly illustrates this Psalm. “We despaired even of life.” We who live, in union with Christ, are “always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake,” that we may learn how to cast ourselves upon His life, and prove in ever deepening measure that He “delivers magnificently.”

III. The one resource in extremity.

“In my distress I called . . . and CRIED unto my God.” ver. 6.

Nothing left but a tongue, and—just strength to cry! This is being brought to an end of oneself.

IV. How God delivered.

1. “He heard my voice . . . and my cry.” ver. 6.

“The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry.” Ps. xxxiv. 15.

2. “He bowed the heavens also, and came down.” ver. 9.

3. “He . . . did fly: Yea, He flew swiftly upon the wings of the wind.” ver. 10.

4. “He sent from on high, He took me; He drew me out of great waters.” ver. 16. m.

These “great waters” are always typical of Jordan, the river of death. “Beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me.” Matt. xiv. 30.

5. “He delivered me from my strong enemy . . . too mighty for me.” ver. 17.

“Him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil.” Heb. ii. 14. m.

It was the “strong enemy” that brought the “snares of death” upon the soul. It is well to know the cause.

6. "He brought me forth also into a large place." ver. 19.

Out of the narrow bounds of the grave into the boundless infinitude of Himself. This description of His magnificent deliverance is beautiful. Note the Father's response to the cry of His sinking child. He heard; He came down; He flew swiftly; He drew me out; He delivered me; He brought me forth into a large place.

"Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver." (2 Cor. i. 10. A. V.).

V. The condition of God's immediate response.

"The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands . . . for I have kept the ways of the Lord." ver. 20-24.

"If our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God; and whatsoever we ask, we receive." I John iii. 21, 22.

It is only in the path of obedience, and in the assurance of a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men, that we can thus boldly cry unto God with certainty that He will fly swiftly, and deliver us from our strong enemy, "too mighty for me."

"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, . . . the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin." I John i. 7.

VI. The blessings in the "large place."

1. *Darkness lightened.*

"The Lord . . . will lighten my darkness." ver. 28.

2. *Power to run through all opposition.*

"By Thee I run through a troop." ver. 29. m.

3. *Power to overcome all difficulties.*

"By my God do I leap over a wall." ver. 29.

4. *Girded with strength.*

"God that girdeth me with strength." ver. 32.

5. *Power to walk with God.*

"His way is perfect . . . He maketh my feet like hinds' feet: and setteth me upon my high places." ver. 30, 33.

VII. The rescued one becomes aggressive.

"He teacheth my hands to war . . . I will pursue mine enemies and overtake them: Neither will I turn again till they are consumed." ver. 34, 37.

VIII. The empowering of God.

"Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle." ver. 39.

"Yea, Thou liftest me up above them that rise up against me. Thou deliverest." ver. 48.

"He delivers magnificently and sheweth lovingkindness."
ver. 50. French Vers.

The Father's Call to Disobedient Children.

A GLIMPSE INTO THE HEART OF GOD IN JEREMIAH II. AND III.

I. The Father seeking His children.

“The word of the Lord came to me saying, Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem.” ver. 1, 2.

II. The Father's message.

“Thus saith the Lord ; I remember . . . the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals ; how thou wentest after Me in the wilderness.” ver. 2.

Note the Father's tender memories of the early days and the first love of the soul. How beautiful to Him the eager following after Himself alone in the wilderness. Then He said, "Israel was holiness unto the Lord" (ver. 3), wholly set apart for God, His precious first-fruits, so kept by Him that none could touch! "All that devour him shall be held guilty . . . saith the Lord." (ver. 3.)

III. The Father's complaint.

“What unrighteousness . . . in Me, that they are gone far from Me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?” ver. 5.

1. *Israel's ingratitude and forgetfulness.*

“Neither said they, Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt ; that led us through the wilderness?” ver. 6.

2. *Israel's sinful abuse of His grace.*

“I brought you into a plentiful land, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof ; but when ye entered, ye defiled My land.” ver. 7.

3. *Israel's sad condition.*

“The priests (for the people God-ward), said not, Where is the Lord ? and they that handle the law knew Me not.”
 “The shepherds (guarding the flock), also transgressed against Me.”
 “The prophets (the messengers of God), prophesied by Baal (to please the world), and walked after things that do not profit.” } v. 8. m.

Is this not a picture of the professing church to-day ? They do not miss God's Presence, and the messengers of God seek to please the people, and occupy themselves with profitless things, that will count for naught in eternity.

IV. The Father's pleading.

“Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the Lord . . . consider diligently ; and see if there hath been such a thing.” ver. 9, 10.

“*Hath a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods ?*”

“But *My* people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.” ver. 11.

“My people . . . have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters,
and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns.” ver. 13.

“*Hast thou not procured this unto thyself?*”
“Thou has forsaken the Lord thy God, when He led thee.” ver. 17.

“*Why go into Egypt, and persist in the wrong way?*”
“What hast thou to do in the way to Egypt?” ver. 18.

“Thine own . . . backslidings shall reprove thee : know therefore
and see that it is an evil thing and a bitter, that thou hast forsaken
the Lord.” ver. 19.

*It is not in the Father's heart to plan bitter things for His children,
but when they rebel and go their own way they must know how
hard it is to kick against the pricks. When the devil takes
captive the children of God, it is generally because they go into a
bath God has not chosen. Upon the King's highway, "No lion
shall be there for He shall be with them." (Isa. xxxv. 8, 9. m.)*

V. The Father's reminder of broken vows.

“Of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands ; and *thou
saidst*, I will not transgress . . . yet thine iniquity is marked
before Me, saith the Lord.” ver. 20, 22. m.

VI. The Father's unveiling of all excuses.

1. First Israel said they had not gone astray !
“How canst thou say, I am not defiled, I have not gone after the
Baalim ?” ver. 23.

2. Then they sank into despair and wilfulness.
“Thou saidst, There is no hope ; no ; for I have loved strangers, and
after them will I go.” ver. 25.

*Yet, He said, in the time of their trouble they will say, "Arise, and
save us" (ver. 27). They would seek Him then.*

VII. The Father's lament.

1. *His patient dealing seemed in vain.*
“In vain have I smitten your children ; they received no correction.” ver. 30.

2. *His power and control is cast aside.*
“Wherefore say My people, We are lords ; we will come no more
unto Thee.” ver. 31. A. V.

3. *His love is ignored.*
“Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet My
people have forgotten Me, days without number.” ver. 32.

VIII. The Father's view of sin and its influence.

1. *It injures others as well as the soul.*
“Therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways.” ver. 33. A. V.

2. *It brings bloodguiltiness upon the sinner.*
“In thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the innocent poor.” ver. 34.

3. *It blinds the eyes and hardens the conscience.*
“Yet thou saidst ; I am innocent.” ver. 35.

4. *It makes the soul misjudge God.*

“Thou saidst . . . surely His anger is turned away from me.” ver. 35.

(But God cannot forgive sin unless confessed.)

“Behold I will enter into judgment with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned.” ver. 35.

5. *It gives a restless conscience.*

“Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?” ver. 36.

(The faithful warning—“Thou shalt be ashamed of Egypt . . . thou shalt not prosper.” ver. 36, 37.)

IX. **The Father's five calls to return.** (Jer. iii.)

1. “*Yet return* again to Me, saith the Lord.” ch. iii. 1.

2. “*Wilt thou not* from this time cry unto Me, My Father, Thou art the companion of my youth?” ver. 4. m.

3. “I said, after she had done all these things, *Turn thou* unto me.” ver. 7. A. V.

4. “Go, and proclaim . . . *return*, thou backsliding Israel . . . I will not look in anger upon you : for I am merciful.” ver. 12.

5. “*Return*, O backsliding children . . . for I am a husband unto you.” ver. 14.

The conditions.

“Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord.” ver. 13.

The promises.

“I will bring you to Zion : and I will give you shepherds according to Mine heart, which shall feed you.” ver. 14, 15.

X. **The Father's heart made glad.**1. *The Father's sorrow over their sin.*

“I said, How shall I put thee among the children and give thee . . . the goodliest heritage of the nations?” ver. 19. m.

2. *The glad sound to the Father's heart.*

“A voice is heard . . . the weeping and the supplications of the children, for that they have perverted their way, they have forgotten the Lord.” ver. 21.

3. *The Father's voice.*

“Return, ye backsliding children, I will heal.” ver. 22.

4. *The children's response.*

“Behold, we are come unto Thee ; for Thou art the Lord our God . . . Truly in the Lord . . . is the salvation of Israel.” ver. 22, 23.

“Let us lie down in our shame . . . for we have sinned against the Lord our God.” ver. 25.

“If any man sin, we have an Advocate (“Helper,” “Comforter,” *margin*) with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous : and *He* is the propitiation for our sins.” I John ii. 1, 2.

Faith in the Faithful God.

“The just shall live in His faithfulness.” Hab. ii. 4. m.

I. The Name of God.

- “The Lord thy God, He is God; the faithful God!” Deut. vii. 9.
 David sang of His faithfulness. See Ps. lxxxix. 1, 2, 5, 8, 24, 33.
 “They shall worship because of the Lord that is faithful.” Isa. xlix. 7.

II. The Name of Christ. “Faithful and True.” Rev. xix. 11.

1. “Faithful” to God in the work of redemption entrusted to Him.
 “Jesus who was *faithful* to Him that appointed Him.” Heb. iii. 2.
 2. “Faithful” to the people on their behalf God-ward.
 “A merciful and *faithful* high priest.” Heb. ii. 17.
 3. “Faithful” in His work of revealing God to souls.
 “Jesus Christ . . . the *faithful* witness.” Rev. i. 5.
 4. “Faithful” to His redeemed in dealing with their sins.
 “The faithful and true Witness.” Rev. iii. 14.

III. What the Faithful God is faithful to do.

1. “Faithful” to forgive and cleanse when we confess our sins.
 “He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us
 from all unrighteousness.” I John i. 9.
 Our part, “If we *confess* our sins.” See Prov. xxviii. 13.
 2. “Faithful” to complete the work He begins in us.
 “Who shall also confirm you unto the end . . . God is faithful
 through whom ye were called.” I Cor. i. 8, 9.
 3. “Faithful” to take full possession of us.
 “The God of Peace Himself sanctify you wholly . . . faithful is He
 . . . who will also do it.” I Thess. v. 23, 24.
 4. “Faithful” to keep us from the adversary.
 “The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you and guard you from the
 evil one.” 2 Thess. iii. 3.
 5. “Faithful” in the hour of temptation.
 “God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye
 are able; but will . . . make also the way of escape.” I Cor. x. 13.

IV. What the redeemed have to do.

1. Live by the faithfulness of God.
 “The just shall live in His faithfulness.” Hab. ii. 4. m.
 (i.e. reliance *upon God*, not upon our faith.)
 2. Simply count Him faithful.
 “Sarah . . . received power . . . since she counted Him faithful
 who had promised.” Heb. xi. 11.
 3. Hold fast the confession of their hope in Him.
 “Hold fast . . . waver not; for He is faithful.” Heb. x. 23.
 4. Commit themselves continually to His keeping.
 “Commit . . . in well doing unto a faithful Creator.” I Pet. iv. 19.
 “Fully assured that . . . He [is] able to perform.” Rom. iv. 21.

“If we are faithless, He abideth faithful.” 2 Tim. ii. 13.

“Kept for Jesus Christ.”

“Beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ.” *Jude i.*

I. The Keeper.

- “The Lord is thy keeper” (see Psa. cxxvii. 1). Ps. cxxi. 5.
The Redeemer’s committal to the Father.
 “Holy Father, keep them.” John xvii. 11.

II. The Kept ones.

- “Them that are sanctified by God the Father.” Jude i. A.V.
(i.e. Those who are wholly possessed by God, see 1 Thess. v. 24.)
 “Let them . . . commit the keeping of their souls . . . unto a faithful Creator.” 1 Pet. iv. 19. A.V.
(i.e. Those who commit the keeping.)

III. The Keeping.

- a.* What we are kept from.
 “Him that is able to keep you from falling” (“stumbling” R.V.) Jude 24. A.V.
 “Keep them from the evil one.” John xvii. 15.
(i.e. Greek, as a parent keeps a child.)
 See also 2 Thess. iii. 3. A.V. 1 John v. 18. R.V.
- b.* What we are kept in.
 “A steadfast mind Thou keepest in *perfect peace*, because it trusteth in Thee.” Isa. xxvi. 3. m.
- c.* What needs special keeping.
Lips. “Keep the door of my lips.” Ps. cxli. 3.
Feet. “The Lord . . . shall keep thy foot from being taken.” Prov. iii. 26.
 “He will keep the feet of His holy ones.” 1 Sam. ii. 9.
Ways. “Keep thee in ALL thy ways.” (Compare Exod. xxxiii. 20.) Ps. xci. 11.

Silence is deeply necessary for abiding in God’s keeping, for the lips wholly guarded will tend to recollectedness in Him. The “feet” describe the daily walk, along which the devil ceaselessly places his snares, but “mine eyes are ever toward the Lord, He shall pluck my feet out of the net.” Think of the earthen vessel as a fortress indwelt by the Lord with the lips as the door. The heart (the citadel) is His, the enemy assails the door to draw the possessed one out of the keeping through the tongue, and then he lays snares in the path to trip us up. Feet and lips are mainly the two assailable points to a soul encased in the whole armour of God.

- d.* How we are kept.
 “Kept by the power (energy, or ‘dunamis’) of God, through faith.” 1 Pet. i. 5. A.V.
 “The peace of God . . . shall keep your hearts.” Phil. iv. 7. A.V.
(Kept by God’s mighty energy, and God Himself.)

The Father’s promise.

- “I the Lord do keep it . . . every moment : lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.” Isa. xxvii. 3.

“He compassed him about, He cared for him, He *kept* him as the apple of His eye.” Deut. xxxii. 10.

IV. The Way to abide in the Keeping.

1. “Keep thy heart, above all that thou guardest.” Prov. iv. 23. m.
See that your heart is centred on God, honestly true to Him, and He will guard the circumference.

2. “I keep under my body . . . lest.” 1 Cor. ix. 27. A.V.
The body must be kept subservient to the Spirit if the devil is to get no advantage through it. Be not ignorant of his devices.

3. “Neither be partaker of other men’s sins : keep thyself pure.” 1 Tim. v. 22.
See the sin of silence in Lev. v. 1, and God’s dealing with Eli because of his attitude to the sin of his sons.

4. “Keep . . . unspotted from the world.” Jas. i. 27.
Take heed to the world-spirit around you, that you are not touched by it.

5. “Keep yourselves IN the love of God.” Jude 21.
 “I . . . have loved you : abide ye in my love . . . if ye keep My (will) ye shall abide.” John xv. 9, 10.

Hide in your Father’s heart : never mind how ignorant and foolish you are, He loves you ; rest in that love. Seek to obey His will up to your light, and let nothing come between you and Him. Whatever mistakes you make, even if you really fall into sin, don’t go away from Him because of it, but remember 1 John ii. 1, and abide in His love.

6. “That good thing (i.e. “the gift of God which is in thee,” ver. 6) which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.” 2 Tim. i. 14. A.V.
Rely upon the Indwelling Spirit to keep you faithful to the conditions of abiding in His keeping.

* * * * *

V. The full assurance of faith.

“I know whom I have trusted, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him.” 2 Tim. i. 12. A.V. m.

THE REWARD OF OBEDIENCE.

The Kept ones delivered from the great tribulation.

“Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole inhabited earth.” Rev. iii. 10. m.

They are among the ones ready for Christ’s coming.
 “Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments.” Rev. xvi. 15.

Spiritual Fainting Fits!

“Now it is come unto thee and thou faintest!” Job iv. 5.

I. Fainting fits and their consequences.

1. *They unfit us for service.*

“What man is . . . faint hearted? let him . . . return unto his house.” Deut. xx. 8.

2. *They make others faint also.*

“Lest his brethren’s heart faint.” Deut. xx. 8. A.V.

3. *They unfit us to make right decisions.*

Esau “was faint . . . said . . . What profit? . . . and he sold his birthright.” Gen. xxv. 29-33.

4. *They give Amalek an occasion to attack.*

“Amalek . . . smote . . . when thou wast faint.” Deut. xxv. 17, 18.

5. *They give occasion for reproach.*

“It is come unto thee and thou faintest.” Job iv. 5.

II. Fainting fits and their occasions.

1. When seeking blessing and God keeps us waiting.

“My soul fainteth for Thy salvation.” Ps. cxix. 81.

2. When our Father is chastising us.

“Nor faint when thou art reproved of Him.” Heb. xii. 5.

3. When we are in trial and sorrow.

“If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.” Prov. xxiv. 10.

4. When meeting the contradiction of sinners.

“Consider Him that endured . . . lest ye . . . faint.” Heb. xii. 3. A.V.

5. When waiting for success in service.

“In due season . . . reap, if we faint not.” Gal. vi. 9.

6. When needing persistency in prayer.

“Ought always to pray and not to faint.” Luke xviii. 1.

7. When the adversary attacks us.

“The enemy . . . hath smitten . . . my spirit fainteth.” Ps. cxliii. 3, 4. m.

8. When looking at all that is against us.

“When thou . . . seest . . . let not your heart faint.” Deut. xx. 1-3.

III. Fainting fits and their cause.

1. *Lack of sufficient spiritual food.*

Illustrated—“Hungry . . . thirsty, their soul fainted.” Ps. cvii. 5.

2. *Admitting doubt of God’s faithfulness.*

“I had fainted, unless I had believed.” Ps. xxvii. 13.

3. *Looking at the enemy and our difficulties.*

“When thou . . . seest . . . a people more than thou . . . let not your heart faint.” Deut. xx. 1-3.

IV. Fainting fits and their remedy.

1. *A cry in extremity to God.*

"I call unto Thee when my heart fainteth." Ps. lxi. 2. m.

2. *Anchoring upon God's changeless love.*

"When my spirit fainted . . . Thou knewest my path." Ps. cxlii. 3. m.

3. *Casting oneself upon the Divine power.*

"The Lord . . . fainteth not . . . He giveth power to the faint."
Isa. xl. 28, 29.

4. *Resting upon the Word of the Lord.*

"It shall be said . . . Let not thine hands faint." Zeph. iii. 16. A.V. m.

5. *Looking away from the giants unto Jesus.*

"Consider Him . . . that ye wax not weary, fainting in your souls."
Heb. xii. 3.

6. *Pouring out the heart before the Lord.*

See note to Ps. cii. "A prayer of the afflicted, when he fainteth
and poureth out his complaint before the Lord." Ps. cii. Note and m.

V. Fainting fits and their claim.

1. Upon the Father's heart.

a. *He will not try the child beyond its power.*

"I will not contend for ever [lest] the spirit should faint away."
Isa. lvii. 16. m.

b. *He will renew the strength and teach it how to walk.*

"They shall walk and not faint." Isa. xl. 31.

2. Upon the children of God.

a. *For kindness and longsuffering love.*

"To him that is ready to faint, kindness should be shewed . . .
else might he forsake . . . the Almighty." Job vi. 14. m.

b. *For earnest upholding in prayer.*

"Grace . . . multiplied through the many . . . wherefore we
faint not." 2 Cor. iv. 15, 16.

c. *For loving encouragement.*

"Encourage the fainthearted." 1 Thess. v. 14.

Fainting fits are most serious in standard-bearers.

"As when a standard-bearer fainteth." Isa. x. 18.

Fainting fits are dangerous in the press of battle.

"David . . . fought [and] waxed faint, and . . . the giant . . .
thought to have slain David." 2 Sam. xxi. 15, 16.

Fainting fits call for the instant help of others.

"Abishai . . . succoured him." 2 Sam. xxi. 17.

Fainting fits *overcome* are given special commendation.

Thou "hast laboured, and hast not fainted." Rev. ii. 3. A.V.

Child of God, "Take heed and be quiet . . . neither let thine heart
be faint." Isa. vii. 4.

A Sickly Appetite!

“If any man . . . consent not to the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . he is blinded with pride, and . . . is filled with a sickly appetite for disputations and contentions about words, whence arise envy, strife, reproaches, evil suspicions, violent collisions” (Gr. “frictions”). 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5. C.H.

I. The signs of a healthy appetite!

It feeds on “wholesome words,” even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, “doctrine” that makes us Godlike! 1 Tim. vi. 3. A.V.

II. Sickly fruits from the sickly appetite.

“Envy, strife, railing . . . gallings one of another.” 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5. A.V. m.

III. Paul’s direction to Timothy how to deal with sickly appetites.

a. “Charge” them not to “give heed” to anything that “minister questions,” rather than the exercising of the “stewardship.” 1 Tim. i. 3, 4.

b. “Charging them in the sight of the Lord that they strive not about words, to no profit.” 2 Tim. ii. 14.

IV. What Timothy was to do himself.

“Shun” “profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness.” 2 Tim. ii. 16.

“Refuse” “foolish and ignorant questionings, knowing that they gender strifes.” 2 Tim. ii. 23.

“Turning away” “from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called.” 1 Tim. vi. 20.

V. The directions repeated to Titus.

“Shun foolish questionings and fightings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.” Titus iii. 9.

VI. What Paul called the sickness!

“Their word will eat as doth a gangrene.” (i.e. “an eating cancer” *Syriac version.*) 2 Tim. ii. 17.

VII. How sickly souls miss the mark.

“Some having missed the mark, have turned aside unto vain talking.” 1 Tim. i. 6. m.

VIII. The true aim of the Gospel.

“The end of the charge is love out of a pure heart.” 1 Tim. i. 5.

IX. “Itching ears” one special mark of the latter days.

“For the time will come when they will not endure the *healthful* teaching; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts . . . and turn aside unto fables.”

2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. m.

X. What faithful souls are to do.

“Preach the word . . . bring to the proof . . . with all longsuffering and teaching.” 2 Tim. iv. 2, 3. m.

“Give diligence . . . approved unto God . . . handling aright the word of truth.” 2 Tim. ii. 15.

What to do with honest questions.

“She came to prove Him with hard questions . . . she communed with Him of all that was in her heart, and Solomon told her all her questions.” 1 Kings x. 1, 3.

“I will see you again . . . in that day ye shall ask Me no question.” John xvi. 22, 23. m.

Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.

I. THE FORERUNNER AND HIS PATHWAY.

Ps. ii.

“Whither as a Forerunner Jesus entered for us.” Heb. vi. 20.

I. The crucifixion of Christ foreshadowed.

“Why do the nations rage . . . kings . . . rulers take counsel together.” ver. 1, 2.
See Acts iv. 26-28, where this passage is cited as foretelling the tragedy of Calvary.

II. The Anointed Christ.

“Against the Lord, and against His Anointed.” ver. 2.
Comp. John i. 41. mar. “We have found the Messiah, which is being interpreted ‘Anointed.’” See too Acts x. 38.

III. The cause of the rage revealed.

“Let us break their bands asunder.” ver. 3.
Contrast Matt. xi. 30. “My yoke is easy.” Christ was a witness against sin (see John vii. 7), and the rage at Calvary was but the culminating attempt of the world, the flesh, and the devil, to cast off His claims and His rule.

IV. The Omnipotence of God.

“He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.” ver. 4.
See John xix. 11 and Acts iv. 28.

V. God's purpose fulfilled.

1. The Resurrection.

“The Lord said . . . Thou art My Son ; this day have I begotten Thee.” ver. 7.
Comp. Heb. i. 5. and Rev. i. 5. “The Firstborn of the dead.” The “holy hill of Zion” in the Psalms foreshadows the spiritual “Mount Zion” of Heb. xii. 22 and the “Holiest of All” of Heb. ix. 8. Jesus entered as our Forerunner ; rejected and crucified on earth He was exalted in heaven.

2. The Ascension.

“Yet have I set My Anointed upon My holy hill of Zion.” ver. 6. A.V. m.
 “Yet,” in spite of the rage and apparent triumph of the powers of darkness. “Yet have I set My King.” “Through His own blood, entered in once for all.” (Heb. ix. 12.)

3. The Father's promise to the Ascended Son.

“Ask of Me, and I will give Thee.” ver. 8.

VI. The Son's inheritance.

- "I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance." ver. 8.
 "Whom He appointed heir of all things." Heb. i. 2.
Comp. John xvi. 9, as the firstfruits; Heb. i. 8, and Phil. ii. 9-11 as the unfolding of God's purpose and plan. See too that the inheritance is actually and really in the saints (Eph. i. 18), the individual believers gathered out from the nations, and joined to the Lord, one spirit.

VII. The Son's authority

- "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron." ver. 9.
 (Comp. Rev. ii. 26, 27. Matt. xxviii. 18.)

VIII. The present call of grace.

- "Now therefore be wise . . . be instructed." ver. 10.
 "Kiss the Son" (mar. "lay hold of.") ver. 12.
 "Take refuge in Him" (mar.) ver. 12.
 "Happy are all they that take refuge in Him." ver. 12. mar.

The Joy of the Lord.

"I will . . . joy in My people." Isa. lxxv. 19.

1. The Joy of redeeming the sinner.
 "Jesus . . . who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross." Heb. xii. 2.
2. The Joy of delivering the captives.
 "He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with singing." Ps. cv. 43.
3. The Joy of forgiving love.
 "I will cleanse them . . . I will pardon . . . and [they] shall be to Me for a name of joy." Jer. xxxiii. 8, 9.
4. The Joy of indwelling His own.
 "The Lord . . . in the midst of thee . . . He will rejoice over thee with joy, He will . . . joy over thee with singing." Zeph. iii. 17.
5. The Joy communicated to His possessed ones.
 "That My joy may be in you." John xv. 11.
6. The Joy imparted by His word of life.
 "These things I speak . . . that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves." John xvii. 13.
7. The Joy of the Lord the strength of His redeemed.
 "The joy of the Lord is your stronghold." Neh. viii. 10. m.
8. The Joy of fellowship over others.
 "Rejoice with Me . . . I have found My sheep." Luke xv. 6.
9. The Joy of final presentation to the Father.
 "Before the presence of His glory . . . in exceeding joy." Jude 24.
10. The Joy of rewarding a life spent for Him.
 "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matt. xxv. 21.

Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.

II. HOW THE LIFE MUST BE SOUGHT.

Ps, xxvii.

"One thing have I asked of the Lord . . . that I may dwell in the house of the Lord." ver. 4.

I. From the standpoint of assured salvation.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation."

ver. 1.

"Is," present tense. "He that hath the Son hath the life."

I John v. 12. "My," personal possession. "He loved me." Gal. ii. 20.

II. In the knowledge of God as our strength.

"The Lord is the strength of my life."

ver. 1.

Brought to an end of our own strength, we are "strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in [our] hearts." (Ephes. iii. 16, 17.)

III. With deliverance from all fear of the enemy.

"Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear."

ver. 3.

There is no knowledge of God gained without the encamping of the hosts of darkness against the soul, determined to hinder. But "in nothing terrified by your adversaries," must be the attitude. See Isa. l. 5-9 as the pattern for the one desiring to dwell in the Holiest of All.

IV. As the supreme desire of the soul.

"One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after."

ver. 4.

"That I may know Him . . . this one thing I do."

(Phil. iii. 10, 13. A.V.)

V. What Sanctuary life really means.

1. Abiding in the Holiest of all (see Heb. x. 19).

"That I may dwell in the house of the Lord."

ver. 4.

2. Walking in unbroken fellowship always.

"That I may dwell . . . all the days of my life."

ver. 4.

3. Beholding the glory in the Face of Jesus Christ.

"That I may . . . behold the beauty of the Lord."

ver. 4.

4. Asking and receiving that our joy may be full.

"That I may . . . inquire in His temple."

ver. 4.

VI. The blessings in the Sanctuary.

1. Hidden in time of trouble.

"In the day of trouble He shall keep me secretly."

ver. 5.

2. Anchored upon the rock in times of shaking.

"He shall lift me up upon a rock."

ver. 5.

3. Kept in the place of victory, "far above all."

"Now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies."

ver. 6.

4. Kept in the spirit of joy and praise.

"I will offer . . . sacrifices of joy. I will sing, yea I will sing praises unto the Lord."

ver. 6.

VII. God's call to seek His face, and our response.

"When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face; my heart said unto Thee,
Thy face, Lord, will I seek." ver. 8.

VIII. The pleading of a seeking soul.

"Hide not Thy face from me." ver. 9.

"Cast me not off . . . O God of my salvation." ver. 9.

"Teach me *Thy* way." ver. 11.

IX. The path of testing, and the enemy.

1. The adversary and his instruments to hinder.

"False witnesses are risen up against me." ver. 12.

2. The tenacity of faith.

"I had fainted unless I had believed to see." ver. 13.

3. The assurance of life to follow.

"I believed . . . to see . . . in the land of *the living*." ver. 13.

X. The patience of faith.

"Wait on the Lord: Be strong, and let thine heart take courage."

"O tarry thou the Lord's leisure." (*Prayer Book Version*.) ver. 14.

"As for me."

"Lord, what shall this man do? . . . *What is that to thee?* Follow
thou Me." John xxi. 21, 22.*

1. "*As for me*," when worldlings prosper.

"Men of the world . . . have their portion in this life; [but] *as for me* . . . I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."

Ps. xvii. 14, 15.

2. "*As for me*," when others sin.

"Sinners . . . their right hand is filled with bribes. But *as for me*, I will walk in mine integrity."

Ps. xxvi. 9, 11. m.

3. "*As for me*," when others injure us.

"They rewarded me evil for good . . . but *as for me*, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth."

Ps. xxxv. 12, 13.

4. "*As for me*," when our nearest forsake us.

"Mine own . . . friend . . . against me. *As for me*, thou . . . settest me before Thy face for ever."

Ps. xli. 9, 12.

5. "*As for me*," in times of affliction.

"It was not an enemy that reproached me. *As for me*, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me."

Ps. lv. 12, 16.

6. "*As for me*," when the "tongue scourgeth."

"They . . . speak against me . . . but *as for me*, my prayer is unto Thee."

Ps. lxix. 12, 13.

7. The "*as for me*" of warning.

"Truly God is good . . . to such as are clean of heart. But *as for me*, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped . . . when I saw the prosperity of the wicked."

Ps. lxxiii. 1, 3. m.

8. The "*as for me*" of dependence upon God's mercy.

"Neither shall evil dwell with Thee. But *as for me*, I will come into Thy house in the multitude of Thy mercy."

Ps. v. 4, 7.

* *References from A.V.*

Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.

III. THE THIRST AFTER GOD.

Ps. xlii. and xliii.

I. The cry after God.

“As the heart *panteth* . . . so panteth my soul after Thee . . . my soul *thirsteth* for God . . . when . . . shall I come and appear before God?” ver. 1, 2.
This intense desire after God is the fruit of the purpose of the will to seek but one thing. “One thing . . . that will I seek after.”

II. The valley of weeping.

“My tears have been my meat day and night.” ver. 3.
The way to Zion lies always through the valley of tears. See Ps. lxxxiv. 5, 6.

III. The reproach of others.

“They continually say unto me, Where is thy God?” ver. 3.
Others looking on cannot understand the dealings of God with the soul intensely seeking to know Him.

IV. The memory of past experience.

“I remember . . . how I went with the throng, and led them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise.” ver. 4.
Present trial is ever darker in the light of past joy, but the faith of the soul in the hour of trial is more precious to God than even the praise and joy when it went with the throng to worship Him.

V. The soul anchored on God.

“Why art thou bowed down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted . . . hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him.” ver. 5. m.
It is blessed to be brought to the place where there is no hope but in God. (See Rom. iv. 18.)

VI. The depths of Jordan.

“I remember Thee from the land of Jordan . . . Deep calleth unto deep . . . All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me.” ver. 6. 7.
“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.” Isa. xliii. 2.

VII. The spirit of trust and prayer.

“Yet the Lord . . . lovingkindness . . . in the night His song shall be with me, even a prayer unto the God of my life.” ver. 8.
Note that the “song” is a prayer! A prayer from the soul in the night of sorrow is as a song unto God.

VIII. The recognition of the enemy's oppression.

"I will say unto God my rock . . . Why go I mourning while the enemy oppresseth?" ver. 9. m.
It is well to be able to discern the enemy. The oppression is permitted to teach the soul to stand on the rock in bare faith.

IX. The instruments of the adversary.

"As with a crushing . . . mine adversaries reproach me . . . Where is thy God?" ver. 10. m.
*This is just as the Christ was reproached at Calvary when they said "He trusted on the Lord, that He would deliver Him."
 (Ps. xxii. 8. m.)*

X. The renewed anchoring on God.

"O my soul . . . Hope thou in God : for I shall yet praise Him." ver. 11.
The adversary's oppression, and the reproach of others, only wrecks the soul upon God, enabling Him to fulfil the cry of those that seek Him.

XI. The cry to God for judgment.

"Judge me, O God, and plead my cause." Ps. xliii. 1.
The soul thirsting after God seeks His judgments, and desires above all things to know His truth. "To the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." (Prov. xxvii. 7.)

XII. The assertion of faith.

"Thou art the God of my strength." ver. 2.
It is only by the Divine strength imparted that the soul is able to go through the deep waters with steadfast faith.

XIII. The ceasing from effort.

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth ; let them lead me : Let them bring me unto Thy holy hill." ver. 3.
There must come a point where the thirsting and longing, praying and weeping, must cease, as the soul lets itself go into the hand of God to be led to its goal in His own time and way.

XIV. The confidence and joy of faith.

"Then will I go . . . unto God my exceeding joy." ver. 4.
Note the spirit of faith. God is still the exceeding joy even though He appears to have cast off the seeking one.

XV. The quiet waiting for the will of God.

"Hope . . . I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." ver. 5.
The soul has found its rest, for quiet surrender to the will of God brings it to its desired haven.

Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.

IV. THE GUIDE AND THE PATH.

Ps. xxiii.

I. The Guide along the pathway.

“The Lord is my Shepherd.” ver. 1.
Note the personal “my” and compare John x. 1-18 for the description of the sheep and the Faithful Shepherd.

II. The certainty of all-sufficiency.

“I shall not want.” ver. 1.
 The Shepherd will assuredly see that the soul shall “not want any good thing” as it follows Him obediently.

III. The earlier stages of the pathway.

1. Taught to lie still. ver. 2.

“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.” ver. 2.

2. Led by quiet ways so as to mature in growth.
 “He leadeth me beside the waters of quietness.” ver. 2. m. A.V.

3. Restored and renewed in every time of need.
 “He restoreth my soul.” ver. 3.

4. Taught the righteousness of God in details of life.
 “He guideth me in the paths of righteousness.” ver. 3.

5. The object of His careful training.
 “For His Name’s sake.” ver. 3.

Taught to lie still in the hand of God, and trained by the Shepherd to know what is according to His righteousness in the outward manner of life, the guided soul is then led on “from faith unto faith,” as it is written, “But the righteous shall live from faith.” Rom. i. 17. m.

IV. The deeper path in the fulness of time.

1. Step by step through deep darkness.
 “Yea, though I walk through the valley of deep darkness.” ver. 4. m.

Note that it is a walk through, for there is a way out the other side. A quiet steady walk with God in bare faith is the Lord’s delight. “The proof of your faith . . . more precious than gold.” (1 Pet. i. 7.)

2. The valley and its shadow.
 “The valley of the shadow of death.” ver. 4.

The actual cup of death was drained to the dregs by the Shepherd Himself, and He is a tender Guide for the sheep as they are led through what is spiritually as a shadow compared with His passage through the reality of death at Calvary.

3. The faith of the faithful soul.

"I will fear no evil."

ver. 4.

In the green pastures, and by the still waters, the soul learnt to know the heart of the Shepherd. Now it can follow and trust Him without fear.

4. The unseen Presence in the valley of darkness.

"Thou art with me."

ver. 4.

Compare Isa. l. 10. "Let him trust . . . and stay upon his God."

5. The support of the trusting heart.

"Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me."

ver. 4.

Thus is the soul taught to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Gently weaned from all reliance upon experiences, emotions, or outward supports, "the word of the Lord" becomes its rock ground, for the "word of the Lord shall endure for ever."

V. The life in the Sanctuary realized.

1. The banqueting house.

"Thou preparest a table before me."

ver. 5.

2. The Anointing Spirit.

"Thou hast anointed my head with oil."

ver. 5.

3. The overflowing heart.

"My cup runneth over."

ver. 5.

4. The assurance of faith.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me."

ver. 6.

5. The decision of faith.

"I will dwell in the house of the Lord."

ver. 6.

Compare Psalm lxvi. 10-12. "Thou broughtest us into . . . But Thou broughtest us out." Again Psalm lxxxiv. 6, 7. "Passing through the valley . . . they go from strength to strength, every one of them appeareth before God in Zion."

Alone.

1. "Alone" God calls us and blesses us.

Isa. li. 2.

2. "Alone" we must be led by Him.

Deut. xxxii. 12.

3. "Alone" with Him, He conquers us.

Gen. xxxii. 24.

4. "Alone" we learn to suffer and endure.

Lam. iii. 28.

5. "Alone" we sit when His hand is upon us.

Jer. xv. 17.

6. "Alone" we learn to know the Lord.

Dan. x. 7, 8.

7. "Alone" we learn to watch with Him.

Ps. cii. 7.

8. "Alone" He unfolds to us His mysteries.

Mark. iv. 34.

9. "Alone" we must be content to serve Him.

Luke x. 40.

See the Lord Jesus as our Example.

"Every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me."

John xvi. 32.

See also John viii. 29. John viii. 16.

Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.

V. THROUGH DEATH TO LIFE.

Ps. cxvi.

I. The praise of the delivered soul.

"I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice." ver. 1.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" *Rom. viii. 35.*

II. The path of death and the grave.

"The cords of death compassed me." } ver. 3. m.

"The pains of the grave found me." }

"I found trouble and sorrow." }

"All we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death." (*Rom. vi. 3.*)

III. The cry of the soul for deliverance.

"Then called I upon the Name of the Lord." } ver. 4.

"I beseech Thee, deliver my soul." }

"Whosoever shall call . . . shall be saved." (*Rom. x. 13.*)

IV. The response of the Lord.

"Gracious is the Lord . . . and merciful . . . I was brought low, and He saved me." ver. 5, 6.

"Ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God Who raised Him." (*Col. ii. 12.*)

V. The rest of faith in God.

"Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." ver. 7.

"We which have believed do enter into that rest." (*Heb. iv. 3.*)

VI. The Lord's deliverance.

1. "Thou hast delivered . . . from death." } ver. 8.

2. "Thou hast delivered . . . from tears." }

3. "Thou hast delivered . . . my feet from falling." }

"Who delivered us out of so great a death, and will deliver . . . He will also still deliver us." (*2 Cor. i. 10.*)

VII. The land of the living.

"I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living." ver. 9.

*Joined to the Risen Lord the soul is brought out into a new sphere of life graphically described as "the land of the living." The "living" have power to "walk" and as it is now "alive unto God" (*Rom. vi. 11*), it walks "before the Lord" and not before men.*

VIII. The soul's confession.

"I will speak : I was greatly afflicted : I said in my alarm, all men are a lie." ver. 10, 11. m.

The soul had heard of the "land of the living," but when it sought to know it in experience and found itself "brought low" into the valley instead of being exalted to the mountain top, in its alarm it cries "all men are a lie."

IX. The new spirit of sacrifice.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits?" ver. 12.

"Now . . . discharged . . . we serve in newness of the spirit."
Rom. vii. 6.

X. The spirit of obedience in the "land of the living."

1. "*I will take the cup of salvation.*" ver. 13.

Since Christ has all of me, I must henceforth take—and be evermore taking—all of Him.

2. "*I will . . . call upon the Name of the Lord.*" ver. 13.

Henceforth my part is to call upon Him. I call and He works out His will for me. Victory through the Name, the all-prevailing Name, is now for me.

3. "*I will pay my vows unto the Lord.*" ver. 14.

I will keep my word to Him. Henceforth it must be absolute obedience in the power of His life. In the past I have promised and failed to fulfil. Now He will enable me to do all He bids me.

"*I will take*"—His continual salvation.

"*I will call*"—upon Him to work for me.

"*I will obey*"—His every wish.

This is the life in the "land of the living." Glorious salvation—*liberty to do right!*

XI. The life in the Sanctuary.

1. The glad attitude of a bond-slave to Christ.

"O Lord, truly I am Thy servant." ver. 16.

2. The loosing from bonds to be in bonds to Christ.

"Thou hast loosed my bonds." ver. 16.

3. The sacrifice in the Sanctuary.

"I will offer . . . the sacrifice of thanksgiving." ver. 17.

4. The place of abiding.

"In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem." ver. 19.

"Ye are come unto . . . the heavenly Jerusalem." Heb. xii 22.

"Praise ye the Lord." Ps. cxvi. 19.

Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.

VI. THE CONDITIONS OF ENTERING.

Ps. xxiv.

I. The recognition of God as the Creator.

“The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.”

ver. 1.

The Psalm begins with the reminder of the Majesty of the God we seek to know. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

II. The earnest question of a seeking soul.

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in His holy place?”

ver. 3.

It is one thing to ascend, i.e. enter into His Presence, another to be able to stand there. Even the Philistines knew this, and said “Who is able to stand before . . . this Holy God?” (1 Sam. vi. 20). We can only stand before Him hidden in His Christ. “Ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” (Col. iii. 3.)

III. The conditions of knowing Sanctuary Life.

1. “He that hath clean hands.”

ver. 4.

This pictures the putting away of all known sin out of the life. The practical “putting straight” of crooked ways, so far as they concern our actions. “*Touch not the unclean thing,*” is the necessary preliminary to the words, “and I will receive you.” (2 Cor. vi. 17.) Compare Job xi. 14 and Ps. xviii. 20.

2. “He that hath . . . a pure heart.”

ver. 4.

The heart cannot be purified by faith whilst the hands are clinging to any wrong practice.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” (Matt. v. 8.)

3. “He that hath . . . not lifted up his soul unto vanity.”

ver. 4

There must be the surrender of the desire for the empty fleeting things of earth ere the heavenly realities can be revealed. We cannot cling to Christ with both hands, when they are filled with other things.

4. “He that hath . . . not sworn deceitfully.”

ver. 4.

Here again we meet with *truth* as the condition or all spiritual blessing. Absolute honesty with God and man. No deceit toward God or profession of surrender whilst keeping back part of the price (Acts v. 2.). We cannot deceive the Holy Ghost. No dissimulation toward others, professing to be what we are not.

Clean hands, not touching anything known to be sinful, a pure heart, cleansed by the Holy Spirit from sinful desires, the surrender of the will, consenting to forego seeking first the things of time, and true and honest dealing with God and man. Thus briefly does the Psalmist sum up the conditions of ascending to dwell in the Holy Presence of the Eternal God.

IV. The assured blessing from God.

1. "He shall receive the blessing from the Lord." ver. 5, A.V.
If we will fulfil the conditions, the Lord can fulfil His "If ye obey . . . then." (Exod. xix. 5.)
2. "He shall receive . . . righteousness from the God of his salvation." ver. 5.
Righteousness is needed to stand in His presence, not our own righteousness which is but filthy rags, but the righteousness of the Righteous One which is "unto all and upon all who believe." Rom. iii. 22. A.V. See also 2 Cor. v. 3, 4.
3. He shall be one of a new generation. ver. 6.
 "God sent forth His Son . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. iv. 4, 5.
4. He shall be one of those who seek His face. ver. 6.
This is the highest record we can desire. One who knew the Lord face to face, even as Moses did.

V. The revelation of the Ascended Lord.

1. *The entry of the King.*
 "Lift up your heads, O ye gates . . . and the King of Glory shall come in." ver. 7.
The way to ascend into the Holiest is now shown. The Psalmist turns from the recital of the practical conditions for the seeking soul, to the heavenly vision of the One who entered within the veil as a Forerunner for us, bringing us in Himself back to God.
2. *The Conqueror from Calvary.*
 "The Lord mighty in battle." ver. 8.
 "Having put off from Himself the principalities and the powers, He made a show of them openly triumphing over them." Col. ii. 15.
3. *The Lord of Hosts.*
 "Who is this King . . . the Lord of Hosts? He is the King of glory." ver. 10.
 "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led Thy captivity captive." Ps. lxxviii. 18.
 "He is not ashamed to call them brethren saying . . . I and the children which God hath given me." Heb. ii. 11, 13.

Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.

VII. THE CONDITIONS OF ABIDING.

Ps. xv.

I. The one question of the soul.

“Lord, who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?” ver. 1.

The soul that has once known close communion with God, and the life of dwelling in His sanctuary, has no keener question or desire than to know how to abide unbrokenly in His Presence.

II. The practical conditions in detail.

1. Feet. “He that walketh uprightly.” ver. 2.

This means the practical walk represented by the feet and their steps. “If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk.” (Gal. v. 25.)

2. Hands. “He that . . . worketh righteousness.” ver. 2.

This speaks of the hands. “God said I will dwell in them . . . Touch no unclean thing.” (2 Cor. vi. 16, 17.)

3. Heart. “He that . . . speaketh truth in his heart.” ver. 2.

This touches the very issues of life. “Thou desirest truth in the inward parts” (Ps. li. 6.). Truth in the heart will bring truth to the lips.

4. Tongue. “He that slandereth not with his tongue.” ver. 3.

See Jas. iii. 2. “If any man stumbleth not in word, the same is . . . able to bridle the whole body.” “If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as My mouth.” (Jer. xv. 19.) Walking in communion with God He will use our lips only for His glory.

5. Ears. “He that . . . taketh [not] up a reproach.” ver. 3.

The margin of A.V. reads “receiveth.” The ear and what it listens to has much to do with the life of communion. How few of us are willing to comply with the conditions of close fellowship with God! We must be so satisfied with His Presence that we are content to be blind and deaf to all that would grieve Him.

6. Eyes. “He that . . . is lowly in his own eyes.” ver. 4. P.B.V.

“In whose eyes a reprobate is despised; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord” (R.V.). Compare Jas. ii. 1-6. How opposed this is to the spirit of the world! We cannot dwell in God’s Presence and countenance sin because of the worldly position of the sinner.

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These six points speak of the avenues through which sin may approach the soul seeking to abide in the Sanctuary. We find the same series in Isa. xxxiii. 15, pointed out in reply to the question, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?" (ver. 14). Our God is a consuming fire and He cannot keep us abiding in *heart* while tolerating any laxity in life. The daily walk; the work of the hands; the thought of the heart; the word of the tongue; the listening of the ears—must all be under His control and kept in accord with the Holiness of His Sanctuary.

III. The spirit of the whole life.

1. *Self sacrifice the law of action.*

"He that sweareth (i.e. promiseth) unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not: though it were to his own hindrance."

ver. 5. P.B.V.

He that sweareth to his own hurt, and *changeth not!*"

ver. 4.

Our broken promises seem but trifles, but they are not so to God. An old proverb runs "Straws tell how the wind blows," and the little things of life, more than the great ones, show the true character of the Christian.

2. *Self sacrifice in the handling of money.*

"He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent."

ver. 5.

The handling of money is the keenest test of our spiritual life. The Pharisees scoffed at the words of Christ because they were "lovers of money" (Luke xvi. 14), and self-interest in money matters secretly lies as the cause of many fruitless Christian lives.

IV. The assurance of life in the Sanctuary.

"He that doeth these things shall never be moved."

ver. 5.

Compare 2 Pet. i. 10. If we will "add on our part" all diligence in taking all the supply for our need out of God's abundant provision of grace for practical life and God-likeness, we shall have now, and by and by, richly supplied unto us an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of Christ.

"I will extol Thee, O Lord."

Ps. xxx. ver. 1.

1. "Thou hast drawn me up."

ver. 1. m.

2. "Thou hast healed me."

ver. 2.

3. "Thou hast brought up my soul from Sheol."

ver. 3.

4. "Thou hast kept me alive."

ver. 3.

5. "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing."

ver. 11.

6. "Thou hast loosed my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness."

ver. 11.

"O Lord my God, I will give thanks."

ver. 12.

Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.

VIII. THE OUTLOOK FROM THE SANCTUARY.

Ps. xxix.

I. The worshippers and the worship.

“Give unto the Lord, O ye sons of the mighty (margin, “sons of God”) . . . Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His Name ; Worship the Lord in holy array” (A.V. mar., “His glorious sanctuary”). ver. 1, 2. m.

II. The object of praise.

“The voice of the Lord.” ver. 3.
The Sanctuary is the only place in which we can hear His voice and see its effect in the earth. “He heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat.” (Num. vii. 89. A.V.)

III. The outlook from the Sanctuary.

1. The voice upon the waters controlling.
 “The voice of the Lord is upon the waters.” ver. 3.
2. The voice in irresistible power.
 “The voice of the Lord is powerful . . . is full of majesty . . . The voice . . . breaketh the cedars.” ver. 4, 5.
3. The voice distributing the Holy Spirit as fire.
 “The voice . . . heweth out flames of fire.” ver. 7. m.
4. The voice shaking all that needs shaking.
 “The voice . . . shaketh the wilderness.” ver. 8.
5. The voice commanding stripping.
 “The voice . . . stripeth the forests bare.” ver. 9.

IV. The theme in the Sanctuary.

“And in His temple every thing saith, Glory.” ver. 9.
The worshippers in the Sanctuary, watching the ways of the Lord in the world, know that the “earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord,” even as from His temple they look out and see that the breaking, shaking, stripping, all speak of His glorious power.

V. The knowledge of God in the Sanctuary.

1. God at the helm.
 “The Lord sat as King at the flood, yea the Lord sitteth as King for ever.” ver. 10.
2. God giving strength and peace to His people.
 “The Lord will give strength unto His people ; the Lord will bless His people with peace.” ver. 11.
In the Sanctuary the soul is brought to know the sovereignty and Omnipotence of God, and looks out with God upon the world, watching Him working all things after the counsel of His own will.

Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.

IX. THE SANCTUARY VIEW OF SUFFERING.

Ps. lxxiii.

I. David's testimony.

"Surely God is good . . . to such as are pure in heart." ver. 1.

II. David's "But!"

"But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped." ver. 2.

III. David's snare and its cause.

"For I was envious . . . when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." ver. 3.
David looked at the prosperity of those who knew not God and admitted envious thoughts, as he compared his circumstances with theirs and "bitied" himself.

IV. David's description of the prosperous worldling.

1. They seem to die without many pangs even though they did not serve God. ver. 4. m.
2. They are not in trouble as other men (i.e. David himself!) neither are they plagued. They are consequently full of pride. ver. 5, 6.
3. "They have more than heart can wish." ver. 7.
4. Yet they "scoff" and speak loftily and practically defy God. ver. 8, 9.
5. They afflict and oppress His people. ver. 10.
6. They say that God does not know, as He appears to take no notice! ver. 11.

V. David's comparison of himself.

- "Surely in vain have I cleansed my heart, and washed my hands in innocency." ver. 13.
- "I" have put away sin in vain! ver. 13.
- "I" have sought to do right for nought! ver. 13.
- "I" am only plagued all the more! ver. 14.
- "I" have nothing else but chastening! ver. 14.
- "I" may not talk as they do, God deals with me severely at once, and all God's children would be offended (A. V.). ver. 15.
- "I!"—well, it is too painful for me to think of it all! ver. 16.

VI. David's eyes opened.

- "It was too painful . . . until I went into the Sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." ver. 16, 17. A. V.
- In the Sanctuary David was given to see the things of earth in the light of eternity. All his envious thoughts melted away and he saw with deepest pity the end of the worldling.*
1. Prosperity, riches, earthly power, are slippery places. ver. 18.
 2. The end without God will be "ruin." ver. 18. m.
 3. The earthly things can vanish in one moment, then it is "desolation" indeed. ver. 19.
 4. The lofty souls are "utterly consumed with terrors." ver. 19.
 5. They have been living as it were in a "dream" and they awake to terrible reality. ver. 20.

VII. David's repentance and self-aborrence.

"My heart was in a ferment . . . so brutish (stupid, dull of spiritual vision) was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast ("be ye not as the . . . mule, which [has] no understanding."—Ps. xxxii. 9) before Thee." ver. 21, 22.

Foolish and ignorant indeed we are to question the love and wisdom of our God, even when we cannot trace His dealings. Many souls have well nigh slipped, as David did, by failing to see that the Father chasteneth for our profit, and that if we are without His chastening we do not bear the marks of being His sons. See Heb. xii. 5-13.

VIII. David's recounting of his riches.

"I am continually with Thee . . . God is . . . my portion for ever." ver. 23, 26.

1. God as his ceaseless companion. ver. 23.
(*Whilst the worldling is without God and without hope in the world.*)
2. God holding his hand that he might not slip. ver. 23.
(*Whilst the worldling is wholly dependent upon himself.*)
3. God guiding with His wondrous counsel in all the perplexities of life. ver. 24.
(*Whilst the worldling is in terror when trouble comes.*)
4. God finally receiving him into eternal glory. ver. 24.
(*Whilst the worldling ends in ruin and desolation.*)

IX. David's renewed decision.

"Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." ver. 25.

Compare David's words at another time in Ps. xvi. 1, 2. Surely his feet had well nigh slipped from his goodly heritage. But the Lord is merciful and gracious. David renews his fealty to his Lord, "Henceforth none upon earth . . . beside Thee."

X. David's acceptance of God's chastening.

"My flesh and my heart faileth: But God is the strength of my heart." ver. 26.

The view of eternal realities in the Sanctuary has not displaced the suffering, but gives fresh courage and strength for its endurance. It is always true that the outward must perish whilst the inward is renewed day by day.

We shall err if we think that life in the Sanctuary, hidden with Christ in God, means freedom from suffering, sorrow and trial. Rather will the soul be strengthened inwardly to be trusted more and more with the "fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death." (Phil. iii. 10.)

"The Lord is God, and He hath given us light: Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar."

Ps. cxviii. 27.

"If we endure, we shall . . . reign."

2 Tim. ii. 12.

Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.

X. THE LIFE IN THE SANCTUARY.

Ps. xci.

I. The abiding in the Sanctuary.

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under [His] shadow.” ver. 1.

II. The attitude of abiding faith.

“I will say of the Lord He is my refuge and my fortress . . . in whom I trust.” ver. 2.

*We abide in Him by an attitude of continual faith, saying trustfully
“He is my refuge just now.”*

III. The blessed shelter in the Presence.

1. From the snares of the evil one.

“He shall deliver thee . . . from the snare of the owl.” ver. 3.

2. From the noisome atmosphere of sin.

“He shall deliver . . . from the noisome pestilence.” ver. 3.

Conditions on our part:—

“Take refuge.” ver. 4.

“His truth is a shield.” }
}

God will shelter if we will hide in Him, remembering that we can only take refuge in Him whilst we keep in line with His truth. His word is our safeguard and buckler.

IV. The blessed life of the Sanctuary.

1. A life of fearless trust.

“Thou shalt not be afraid” of:—

a. The terror at night (the path of darkness and testing). ver. 5.

b. The arrow by day (the fiery darts of the devil). ver. 5.

c. The pestilence in darkness (the subtle things that the enemy brings around in times of testing.) ver. 6.

d. The destruction at noonday (*spiritually may be taken as no fear of the loss of all when the soul may be walking in the noonday of maturity of experience, which always brings maturity for trial.*) ver. 6.

2. A life of quiet security.

“A thousand shall fall at thy side . . . but it shall not come nigh thee.” ver. 7.

The soul, hiding in God as a refuge, must be safe so long as it abides trustfully, and humbly dependent upon Him to keep it in Him as its Home. A moment of self-confidence would break the abiding, and it would then quickly know that it was out of the keeping power.

3. A life of clear vision.

“Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the wicked.” ver. 8.

Abiding in the Sanctuary the soul becomes keen of vision to see around it the terrible consequences of sin, and understands more and more that the Righteous Lord must deal severely with sin, not only in the sinner but in His redeemed ones. It is impossible to really dwell in the light of God and minimise sin in any degree under the name of “infirmity” or “temptation.”

V. The safety of the habitation.

“Thou, O Lord, art my Refuge . . . The Most High [is] thy habitation.” ver. 9.

No wonder the Psalmist writes of the soul in such a Refuge:—

“There shall no evil befall thee.” } ver. 10.
 No “plague come nigh thy tent.” }

VI. The practical result of abiding.

1. Kept in all our ways.

“His angels . . . [shall] keep thee in all thy ways.” ver. 11.

The angels are here said to be the instruments of the keeping, and it is written in Heb. i. 14, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for . . . them . . . that shall inherit salvation?” But it is well that the kept ones should be occupied with Him Who is the Lord of the Angels, rather than those who are content to be lost sight of for Him.

See the Angel’s reply to John in Rev. xix. 10.

2. Walking in victory above the devil.

“Thou shalt tread upon the lion . . . the serpent shalt thou trample under [foot].” ver. 13.

It is certain that we must be above the devil or he will be above us! In Christ he is under our feet (Eph. i. 20-23), and with the decision of the faith that links us to the Victor, we must tread him under foot. As we take the attitude of victory, God will conquer him for us. (See Rom. xvi. 20. “He stood . . . and the Lord wrought a great victory.” 2 Sam. xxiii. 12.)

3. Steadfast in love and loyalty to God.

“Because he hath set his love upon Me . . . will I deliver him.” ver. 14.

It is touching to read this as written of our Father God. That we should rejoice that His love is set upon us is not to be wondered at, but that He should delight in our love set upon Him is marvellous indeed.

4. Knowing God in increasing reality.

“I will set him on high because he hath known My Name.” ver. 14.

See 2 Pet. i. 3, 4, where we are told that the knowledge of God

through His word makes us partakers of His Divine nature. In proportion as we are vitally joined to Christ, we must be brought increasingly into the life that dwells on high, even whilst in mortal body we walk the earth.

5. *Power in Prayer.*

“He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him.”

ver. 15.

Prevailing prayer depends far more upon our spiritual condition than we have thought. We must be walking in very close communion, and abiding very really in God as our Sanctuary ere there can be the quick response our God has promised.

VII. *The earthward life.*

1. *God's Presence in time of trouble.*

“I will be with him in trouble.”

ver. 15.

We are never promised aught but tribulation in the world, but we are assured of peace in Christ our Refuge and Home (John xvi. 33).

2. *God's deliverance and seal in trouble.*

“I will deliver him and honour him.”

ver. 15.

Continual deliverance in time of trial, and the seal of the Father's favour and love.

3. *Renewal of life for service.*

“With long life will I satisfy him.”

ver. 16.

It has generally been thought the mark of a very heavenly mind to desire to “depart and to be with Christ,” but we must remember that the one who wrote these words was “Paul the aged,” with a long life of honourable service behind him. It is not a healthy attitude of soul to wish to shirk the battlefield, and “enter into rest,” before we have done any service requiring rest.

With the deep need of the church and the world before them, God's “kept ones” must *desire to live*, even as Paul the aged, worn and spent, said “The business in regard to you, urges upon me to remain in the body, and this I confidently know, that I shall . . . remain . . . for the furtherance of your faith.” (Phil. ii. 24, 25. *Syriac.*)

4. *Continuous unfolding of God's salvation.*

“And shew him My salvation.”

ver. 16.

“This God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our Guide even unto death.”

Ps. xlvi. 14.

“Let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the Lord.”

Ps. cvi. 48.

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