The Collected Writings of J. N. Darby, Volume 7 (Doctrinal 2)

John Nelson Darby

Public domain. As published on plymouthbrethren.org.

Also online at https://plymouthbrethren.org/series/10990

KEE Ministry Library · Faithful Men
kee-ministry-library.netlify.app

Brief Scriptural Evidence On The Doctrine Of Eternal Punishment, For Plain People

Edited By William Kelly

Reprint 1972

Bible Truth Publishers

239 Harrison Street, Oak Park, 111. 60304

Printed in Germany

Brief Scriptural Evidence On The Doctrine Of Eternal Punishment, For Plain People

The doctrine of everlasting punishment having been much called in question, and the minds of the simple shaken, and the faith of some overthrown (though I have been occupied with the subject, more at large, for some time back, with the purpose of writing on it), I have thought it well to publish some brief pages meanwhile for plain people. And here to such I would suggest to distrust those who talk much about Greek to those who do not understand it. It is easy thus to impose on people. It is useful to know Greek, no doubt, in studying the New Testament, because it was written in Greek; and it is perfectly fair to refer to it with those who, knowing Greek, can judge of what is said; but it is very suspicious when much quoted to those who do not; for how can they judge about it? A man tells you “eternal” does not mean “eternal” in Greek. That sounds very conclusive; but how can you judge whether it does or not? Now in all those who talk much about Greek to plain people, I

have generally found trickery; and that their Greek has not been worth much when put to the test by those who did understand it. Without pretending to be very learned, I know Greek, and I have studied the Greek Testament, and I have not been led to place any confidence in their statements about the Greek, but the contrary. The Spirit of God will guide more surely a plain man, if he be humble, in fundamental truths, than a little Greek will those who trust in it.

Now, to a plain man, the statements of his English Bible leave not a doubt on the mind that the punishment of the wicked is eternal.

These statements, I have no doubt whatever, are substantially right. No doubt, being a human work, translations are imperfect, and the translator's views and feelings are apt to be transfused into them. But in the main, the doctrine presented by the English Bible, and the faith produced by it in a plain believer's mind, is sound doctrine and divinely-taught faith, though it be possible some passages might be more exactly rendered. None, however, that I am aware, affecting this truth are misrepresented by the translation. And it is quite evident to me, and to any plain honest man, that God meant to produce on the mind of the reader the conviction that eternal misery is the portion of the wicked, and I do not believe that He meant to produce the conviction of a lie, nor frighten them with what was not true. Now I shall quote many plain passages, adding my unhesitating conviction that the attempts to undermine this doctrine of scripture (and I have been compelled to examine a good many) have entirely failed, and that the arguments used are either dishonest, some of them flagrantly so, or contradictory and fallacious,

and that all of them subvert other fundamental truths. And I declare also my conviction that a sound knowledge of Greek confirms the plain man's scriptural faith. I shall state why in a few plain words at the end.

I give a body of texts (some of which by themselves might not prove the point), that the effect the Holy Ghost meant to produce may be wrought according to the full testimony He has given. I beg the plain reader's attention to these passages. Some refute the doctrine of the salvation of all; some, the notion that the wicked will perish, i.e., cease to exist. Some shew that the human notion of divine love, which denies the vindication of God's majesty and holiness against sin by wrath, and the eternal impossibility that light should have fellowship with darkness, is an unscriptural and an unholy notion. Some refute particular arguments used in favour of these errors. So that, if the mind be solidly imbued with these passages, the error is confuted; and, lastly, some of them shew, that the doctrine of scripture is, that there is wrath, and that everlasting misery and punishment is the portion of unbelieving and rebellious sinners. Some shew that it applies to all kinds of sinners, without law, under law, and unbelievers of the gospel.

I shall quote figurative as well as plain statements, because figures are meant by God to produce some conviction, the exact force being no doubt to be sought in exact expressions. Matthew 3:10, 12; ch. 5:22, 29, 30; ch. 6:15; ch. 7:13, 23;1 ch. 8:12; ch. 10:28, 33; ch. 11:22; ch. 12:31, 32; ch. 13:40,2 41, 49; ch. 18:8, 9;3; ch. 22:13; ch. 23:33; ch. 25:46;4 ch. 26:24. Mark 3:22; ch. 8:36; ch. 9:43; ch. 16:16. Luke 12:4, 5, 9, 10; ch. 16:19-31. John 3:3, 15, 36; ch. 5:29,5 ch. 6:53; ch. 8:24. Acts 1:25. Romans 1:18; ch. 2:5-16; ch. 9:22.6 1

Corinthians 1:18;7 ch. 3:15. Philippians 1:28; ch. 3:18. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10; ch. 2:10-12. 1 Timothy 6:9. Hebrews 6:6; ch. 10:26-31; ch. 11:27. James 5:20. 2 Peter 2:9, 17, 21; ch. 3:7. 1 John 5:12. Jude 13. Revelation 14:9, 10; ch. 20:10-15; ch. 21:5-8.

Now no one can deny that the effect of these passages is, to lead men to believe that the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness, as well as His love in Christ; that, if this love be despised, and the gospel rejected, damnation is the consequence; that, as to those who come under wrath, their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; that they have never forgiveness; that they are not saved, but perish; and that they are tormented for ever and ever in the lake of fire and brimstone; that having despised the sacrifice of the cross, there is no more sacrifice for sin. But men seek to evade these plain testimonies, and begin to reason, and to speak of Greek.

Now there are two systems by which men seek to set aside these plain passages. One is that all will be saved, all, even the devil himself, though some few of them do not like to say anything so plain as that.

The other is, that the wicked will not be saved (the soul not being immortal at all), and that the fire of hell will in time consume them.

Now these two systems quite destroy one another. It is the latter which most prevails here in England, the former in other countries. Those who hold the latter say that the former is monstrous and unscriptural: first, because of the passages which declare that some people are to be damned and others saved, and very many which speak of destroying body and soul in hell, or

something of equal force; and also because, if they are saved, they are saved without the atonement and regeneration, for there are those who have rejected the one and despised the other, and for whom there remains no more sacrifice for sin. And indeed nothing can be plainer. And so as to the devil and his angels. For, to be consistent with their views, they must save them too. For they say God is to be all in all, and, being love, there can remain no misery. But if so, the devils must be saved too. But then, they have no Christ, no Saviour; sq that, according to this doctrine, if I tell a man he cannot be saved without Christ, I am not telling him true, for there are those who are, according to this system. That is, the whole gospel is subverted as to every one. But is it not plain to an honest mind that when it is said “he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned,” this does not mean “he that believeth not” shall be equally saved with him that believes—only he shall be punished for awhile first? For that is the doctrine of the first class, or Universalists, as they are called. And when it is said, they which believe on Him ushould not perish, but have everlasting life,” is it not equally plain that it does not mean that, though they would not believe, they would still have it and not perish at all? And when it is said “whose end is destruction,” it does not mean that their end should be to be in happiness like others, though they waited a little longer? And when it is said “hath never forgiveness,” that it does not mean one will have it in the end? And when it says, “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,” that it does not mean they are to get out of it safe and sound and to be in glory like the saved? God has said, “these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” Now,

who would believe that this meant that the condemned were to go for a short time into punishment, but had or would have eternal life quite as much as the others? Eternal life and eternal or everlasting punishment answer to one another, and mean the same in either case. They argue that it means eternal in neither! But will any one believe that “eternal life “does not mean life for ever and ever? If its lasting for ever is only to be understood from the word “life,” because it is Christ’s life, why add the word eternal? The plain reader will hardly believe that they say eternal is added to confine it to the next age, or millennium!8 But this is quite a fallacy; for we are said to have it now, before the millennium comes at all. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.”

The punishment of the wicked, then, is said to be of equal duration with the life of the blessed. But further it is said to be of equal duration with the life of God. In Revelation 5:14, it is said that they worship Him who liveth for ever and ever. And in chapter 14:11, it is said, the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. Now if the punishment of the wicked is said to endure as long as the life of the blessed, and as the life of God Himself, I ask, how could God have expressed more strongly to living men its enduring everlastingly? If He has said “it hath never forgiveness” — if He has said “their worm dieth not” —what could God have said more if He had meant to convey what eternal punishment was? And note here, that Revelation 20, where they are said to be in the lake of fire without, is after the millennium, and all is over, when it is said It is done, and God is all in all.

Hence the advocates of the second system of error have declared that the first has long been proved entirely absurd and untenable; and they have set up another, namely:

That the soul is not immortal at all, and that death means simply ceasing to exist, and therefore, that life is to be found only in Christ; and that, after a certain quantity of punishment, the wicked will be turned out of existence, or consumed by the fire of hell, and exist no more.

Such is the doctrine much in vogue, in this country, on this subject.

Now, upon the face of this doctrine the grossest inconsistency at once appears. For, if death means ceasing to exist, the soul not being immortal at all, and that anything beyond this is found only in Christ, how come the wicked to be alive after death in order to be punished? Where do they get this life? They cannot be alive to be punished at all. “He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life,” say they. Now, if this means literally that the wicked have not life beyond death, they cannot exist when dead to be punished. It is quite clear to a Christian man, that “life” is used here in the sense of life in which we live to God in blessedness; for having no life is said of those who are naturally alive, but are dead in trespasses and sins. They have no divine life or blessedness, instead of being dead to sin and alive unto God.

But then the scripture is most clear and positive, that there is wrath and punishment and judgment and torment after death for all who are not saved. And this they cannot deny, without denying the whole testimony

of God. But if there is, then men do live after death; and death does not mean ceasing to exist, but ceasing to exist soul and body together in this world. And that is what is as plain as possible from scripture. “It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment.” Why here, the judgment, which is to bring on men the whole extent of the consequences of sin from the wrath of God, is after death. Though sin makes always miserable; yet the coming of wrath, in the true full sense of the word, does not begin till after death, and by judgment, instead of death being the end of the man. And mark, this is not anything peculiar to those that have heard of Christ, though they doubtless are far more guilty and will be beaten with many stripes. It is appointed unto men. It is their common natural portion as sinners9—death and judgment.

Again, “Fear not them which kill the body, but after that have no more that they can do, but fear him who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell.” Now here death (instead of being the whole wages of sin, though it be its wages) is made comparatively light of, if taken alone, but what comes after in body and soul in hell is the thing to be feared. And note, there is no such thought as a man’s soul dying with his body, as they say who teach that simple death was the whole wages of sin, alleging the passage, “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.”

This threat is also quoted by them to prove that man was not created immortal;10 for how should it be said “thou shalt die,” if he was immortal? Now I should think this was a very plain proof that he was immortal. If I say to a child, If you do such a thing, you shall be whipped, that would not surely mean, you shall be whipped at any

rate; so, “if you eat, you shall die “means, plainly, death was a consequence of eating. And so the apostle tells us, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” But that death thus coming in was not ceasing to exist is evident, because “it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment.” Again, “Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But … fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell.”

That is, we have the positive revelation of God, that their comment is a false one, that death is not the whole wages of sin, but that judgment comes after it. But then, to get out of this, they say that death was the wages of Adam’s sin, but that these punishments are the wages of our own. Now the apostle does not state the matter so. He says, “and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” That is, he connects the sin of all men and Adam’s sin together, as bringing in death itself on all; so that this will not do either.

But were it even not thus disproved by the apostle’s statement, there is another thing remains: if Adam’s sin brought in death on all his posterity, and man is not immortal (for that is their doctrine), where do sinners get the life from after death (that is, after ceasing to exist at all)? Their sins cannot give it them. They tell us that, death having been pronounced on man, there is no immortality, no life, but in Christ. Well then, see what it comes to: the wicked have life in Christ in order to be punished for their sins, and this life, which they have in Christ, is not eternal life: for if it be, they must be (if not eternally happy or saved) eternally miserable. And moreover, this life, which they have of Christ to be

punished in, is to be consumed by the wrath and punishment of God! If it is not life in and from Christ, then death does not put an end to a man; death is not what they pretend it is; man is, in a word, an immortal being. And further, what was the worth of Christ's death? Some of them say it was just simply death as the wages of sin. But "He bore our sins"; and if so, our sins being merely a measured quantity of punishment, it is not the wrath of God due to us as lost sinners, but merely a partial punishment He had to avert. But further, as regards the wicked, the death of Christ, they say, averted death from them so that they should be punished. He did not bear their sins—that is clear—for it is for them they are to be punished; so that Christ's death was necessary to keep alive the wicked in order to punish and then consume them, and was applied to this purpose by God!

And now some general remarks. Note this, all kinds of expressions are used, beside eternal punishment, as Their end is destruction—They shall not see life—They have never forgiveness—They have no life in them—Christ shall deny them—He never knew them. So that the argument as to the meaning of "eternal" in Greek, were it valid, leaves many other statements untouched; but it is not valid. They pretend that "eternal" means what belongs to the millennial glory of the dispensation that is coming. Now I believe in the glory of that dispensation; but I say "eternal" does not mean this in Greek, and I challenge any man who knows Greek to produce me one passage where it does. It is used sixty-eight times11 (besides three which refer to past time), and not one can be brought to shew that it means the millennial period. Many prove that it means "eternal" in

all, and many prove that it does not apply to the millennial state when used in the connection in which they say it does. I shall quote some plain ones to both points.

That it means “eternal.”

2 Corinthians 4:18: For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 5:1: A house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

1 Timothy 6:16: To whom be honour and power everlasting.

1 Peter 5:10: The God of all grace who hath called us to His eternal glory.

So in Hebrews 5:9; ch. 9:12, 14.

These passages shew that the natural meaning of the word is “eternal,” in contrast with temporal.

As to the second point, that it does not mean “millennial,” the reader will find that eternal life is quite as often said of our having Christ’s life in this world as in the next; because it is that divine life which is a real thing given us, as true in this world as in the next. Its full development is in the next, of course, and therefore we naturally speak of it as there; but scripture equally states that we have it here; so that it certainly does not mean a millennial condition, though we have it then as now. The word translated “for ever,”12 does sometimes mean, when used in other ways, what is not eternal. It is used for the duration of anything in uninterrupted continuance, though the thing in its nature may not last for ever, and hence for the whole of any particular period—as the whole of man’s life, sometimes the whole

course of this evil world, the whole of a dispensation. But when it is used in connection with the subjects we are treating of, there is not the least doubt it means eternal, and indeed wherever it is not used with a particular subject which limits it; and when translated for ever, it never means the millennial age, as alleged.

Many other arguments from the use of it in Greek might be urged; but I do not go farther here, as I might only perplex those who do not understand that language. In a passage which relates to our subject we have plain proof, however, that “everlasting” does not mean millennial. For it is said, “depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Now, on their own shewing, the devil and his angels are not there till the millennium is over; so that it does not mean millennial. Further, they insist on the words “destroy” and “destruction.” Now we have already shewn, it cannot here mean to put an end to the existence of what is destroyed; because it lasts as long as the life of the blessed, and even of God Himself. But that it does not mean so in many passages is plain. The very title given to the angel of the bottomless pit would shew it. He is called Apollyon, i.e., the destroyer; now he ruins no doubt many, but he cannot destroy in the sense referred to. So “the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.” “The lost sheep of the house of Israel” is the same word; and it is the strongest used.

I have thus stated some of the strongest scriptural proofs of the doctrine, and I have met the main arguments of the systems which error has attempted to set up. The attentive Christian will find that both subvert the work of Christ and the claims of the holiness of God;

for if men are saved who have died in the entire rejection of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and for whom there is no more sacrifice for sin, then salvation by these means is not needed for us. Or, if death is the whole wages of sin, and man is not immortal at all, the sufferings of the Son of God and His being forsaken of God in wrath are really set aside: it is not that which comes from the necessary majesty of God's holiness, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. And at any rate, Christ merely set aside a certain temporary punishment for some, and secured its infliction on others, as without Him men would have ceased to exist, like a horse or a dog! He procured eternal life for some, and a temporary life for others, in order that they might be miserable! No Christian, I think, but must see that this is not what God teaches us. Nor is there the smallest ground for one doctrine or the other. It is alleged that in Colossians Christ is said to reconcile all things that He makes; but this is merely the visible creation, to the exclusion of a third class who are mentioned in Philippians as being obliged to bow the knee to Him, namely, those under the earth, strictly, the infernal things or beings, but who are not included in the reconciliation. So that, when compared with Philippians 2, it proves quite the contrary.

The result of our examination is to leave in its full force eternal punishment (the terrible consequence of the enmity of man's heart against God), and eternal blessedness (the result of God's free and blessed grace), in their plain scriptural sense, as commonly believed by simple-minded Christians. It is equally clear that the just divine vengeance which inflicts the punishment will know how to apportion the many stripes and the few

stripes, to distinguish duly those who perish without law and those who are judged by law (though all be shut out from the presence of God, as in the judgment which devours the adversaries); and that the sovereign divine grace which has called any to glory will know how and when to place on the right hand and on the left in the kingdom, according as He has prepared it for them, while giving to each his reward according to his labour (eternal blessedness with Jesus, and like Jesus, being the common portion of all).

The thought is indeed solemn: but I can say that the examination of scripture on the subject has not left a cloud on my mind as to the truth taught in it; while the examination of the systems opposed to it has satisfied me, that they are fallacious and superficial, not taught by the Spirit of God, nor the truth of the word; and that sound and full examination of the Greek they plead confounds their statements.

And now, poor sinner, mark this: you may fancy that you are to judge God, and that you are competent to say that He ought to assign so much or so much punishment to so much sin; but know that He is to judge you. The notion of His love, which makes it an obligation incumbent on Him to act so and so in it without His being able to help it, and so that eternal punishment cannot be, is a false, unscriptural, and senseless notion. He is love; but He is God, and acts freely and holily in His love. God is love; but it is God that is so. Love is what He is. But the first question is, who He is; and He is God, and doeth what pleaseth Him. Now, mark this. If the Spirit of God has touched your conscience, you know that you deserve to be shut out of the presence of God for ever. You are conscious that you have deserved

eternal wrath and punishment. If you are not, you do not know yet, by divine teaching, what sin is. And I pray you to remark that, in this question, it is not what may be, or what might be, which is in question. You are a sinner:—What, in your own conscience, does sin deserve? And further, if it is a question what sin deserves, it is a question of what Christ bore, what His atonement was; for He bore our sins and was made sin for us.

God speaks plainly of wrath, indignation, vengeance, because of sin. What was the wrath due to sin, which Christ bore when He bore our sins in His own body on the tree? It is not a speculative question, of what might be, but of what saves you! Do you believe, that what Christ bore, when He made His soul an offering for sin, was merely the amount of a certain temporary suffering? that this was what sin amounted to in the presence of God? and that this too was what God's wrath amounted to? Do not be led astray by any abuse of the blessed truth that it was Christ's divine nature that gave infinite value to His work. It did so, blessed be God. But He "bore our sins in his own body on the tree." And "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." "He was wounded for our transgressions." "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, with his stripes we are healed." Now was what He bore for us, for you, a mere amount of temporary punishment, or the holy wrath of God, the awfulness of God's forsaking Him while He was alive, His soul being made thus an offering for sin? That wrath which shuts out from His presence, while the soul can know what it is—is not this what we have deserved? It is not merely torment and then ceasing to exist; though Christ, as a divine Person, gave infinite value to His work.

Some mightier creature might well have borne temporal punishment due; but the wrath and judgment implied in eternal punishment a divine eternal Person alone could bear.

Those who deny eternal punishment quote also sometimes the scriptures of the Old Testament, such as the following— Genesis 6:3, “My spirit shall not always strive with man”; Isaiah 57:16, “For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wrath; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made”; and again, Psalm 49:12, “Man being in honour abideth not; he is like the beasts which perish.”

Now any plain godly reader can judge from such quotations as these what such an argument is worth; for it is clear that nothing but exceeding inattention, or positive dishonesty, could apply such passages as having anything to say to it. First, as to Genesis, it is most plain, that it is God’s patience with man before the flood, while the ark was a preparing, when, according to Peter’s comment, the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah. Their spirits being cast into prison, when thus judged, is plain proof enough that they subsisted after their death.

As to the second, Isaiah 57:16, it is equally plain that the Lord is speaking of men in the earth. If He contended with them continually—did not cease and spare them, they would perish as living men. The stumbling-blocks were to be taken out of the way of His people. The high and holy One would revive the hearts of the humble, and the heart of the contrite, for He would not strive for ever, nor be always wroth. “For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth and smote him … I have seen

his ways and will heal him," etc. Now what has all this to do with hell? Just nothing at all. Let me advise the simple reader, when a quotation is made, always to read the context before he receives a new doctrine.

Lastly, Psalm 49. Again I say, read the Psalm, and it will be at once seen that it applies to glory in this world. "For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever … they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless, man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish." What "man being in honour "has to say to his being in hell would be hard to say. "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them." Is it not evident that the doctrine here taught is, that death blasts all the earthly glory of man? "His glory shall not descend after him"; but even here, dark as were the views of what was beyond death, there is no sign of any final destruction or of final recovery.

I add a word for the reader who does understand Greek. The etymology given as early as the time of Aristotle, and by him, is aien on, always existing. The earliest use of the word is in the sense of a man's life. It is so used frequently by Homer of the death of his heroes and in other ways. It is used by Herodotus and the Attic poets, so far as to say anepneusen aiona. Very much later it came to mean one whole dispensation period or state of things; but, when used by itself in its own meaning, it had very clearly the sense of eternity. It is thus used by Philo in a passage which can leave no doubt, en aioni de oute pareleluthen ouden oute mellei alia monon uphesteke. "In eternity, nothing is either past or to come but only subsists."

In conclusion, I say (as has been remarked by others) that, if God had meant to convey the idea of eternal punishment, He would not have used expressions stronger than He has used; nor do any exist.

1 Mark this and chapter 10:33, because it is impossible to believe that Christ could say these things of those who were redeemed and saved as much as others, though to be punished awhile.

2 In those two verses, 40 and 49, it will be said “world” means age or dispensation; be it so, I believe it does; but that does not affect the judgment pronounced as to that which is to follow.

3 Here everlasting fire or hell-fire is in contrast with life; if they go into one, they do not go into the other; nor is any particular word used which might, as they allege, make it apply to a peculiar period of happiness. Life and hell-fire are contrasted.

4 Now here in Greek “everlasting” and “eternal” are precisely the same word; and what one means for life, the other means for punishment.

5 Here, they will tell you, “damnation” means judgment. So it does; but it is in contrast with having life. And in judgment “no flesh living shall be justified.” The judgment is at the end of all.

6 God is minded to shew His wrath and make His power known. Though love, He is God, and His majesty must be maintained against rebellion and sin.

7 Now in this, as in Mark 16:16, perishing and being damned is contrasted with being saved, so that any plain person must conclude that they are not saved. Some are saved, and others perish because they reject the cross.

8 This they base on their Greek, of which a word just now.

9 And Christ's death as bearing the sins of many is contrasted with this in its efficacy for the saved.

10 Others say he was conditionally immortal, for they do not agree in their systems.

11 That is, the Greek word aionios.

12 Eis ton aiona. It is used twenty-six times, of which twenty-three clearly mean "never" or "eternal." Of the other three, one is obscure, namely, Abraham and his seed for ever; the two others cannot be used as a proof: one refers to the Comforter abiding with the disciples (John 14:16); the other, sinners being reserved for the blackness of darkness for ever. Not one can be brought to shew that it refers to the millennial time of glory. We have the expressions this world, and the world to come, as to which men may reason, but never the words above used.

A Letter To G. V. Wigram,

Containing Brief Comments on “The Reply of Philomath to the Brief Scriptural Evidence on the Doctrine of Eternal Punishment for Plain People”

Montpellier, March 22nd, 1848.

My dear Wigram,

The pamphlet you have sent me has a voice, which, though it may be in a disagreeable way, has given me pleasure. For it surely proves that my tract has taken effect; and the effort to undo the testimony is so utter a failure, that it confirms me in the conviction that the Lord was with me in the matter of the publication. I have been even much struck with the way in which some very important points acquire new weight by the utter inability to meet them. I return you a notice of the tract, in case you should have need for any one: of course, I pass by all the abuse.

As to the tract of W. B., noticed in the first page, Mr. Seabrook should have explained, that it denies entirely every doctrine and every principle which he holds on the subject. It teaches that death and destruction involve the cessation of existence, and that no man has life out of Christ, and that, unless men are saved by being regenerated in this life, they perish totally and entirely when the judgment comes—exist no longer. Its principle is entirely the contrary of Mr. S.’s, of universal salvation. They are one only in rejecting the doctrines of scripture. W. B. has not been honest in his book; he speaks of immortality as if scripture spoke of it in passages where he knows full well the word means the incorruptibility of

the body, of which he has himself given the evidence in his tract. In the Lord's mercy, the progress of the error was arrested. I had answered the tract, and left my answer, on going abroad, to be printed. The publication having been stayed in my absence, at the instance of a friend of W. B., because I had noticed the want of honesty; when returned, I found the progress of the doctrine so completely dropped, that I found it needless to print the reply.

As to the force of the texts strung together, I leave it still to every honest, simple mind. In page 5 of Mr. S.'s tract I note the remark, that age, in Matthew 8 (aion in the singular) is used for a specific period—this age. I believe it is; but my previous remark, called mystification, is the whole matter. The fact that the judgment spoken of in that passage takes place at the end of this age, does not in the smallest degree affect the duration of the punishment to which that judgment sentences the guilty. They are cast at the end of this age, by the sentence pronounced, into a furnace of fire, where is wailing and gnashing of teeth.

As regards the second paragraph, I was not aware that the writer went so far in error as he does. He tells us that the eternal life here spoken of is a reward life. Now I read in scripture that eternal (aionios) life is the gift of God, not the reward of works, though its full enjoyment may close and crown them. As to the persons referred to in Matthew 25, I believe they are the Gentiles living on the earth when the Lord comes. What then? What has that to do with the duration of the punishment inflicted on them? They are unbelievers and believers, as I judge, and the third class are the messengers from among the Jewish people, as I apprehend; their reception of them,

as bringing the word of testimony, the Lord considers as being equivalent to receiving Himself, though they, on receiving graciously the messenger, were unaware that the Lord took it as done to Himself. That was all they were ignorant of: and what has that to say to the duration of the punishment of the goats, who also were ignorant that, in rejecting the messenger, they would be treated as rejecting the Lord Himself? Otherwise, note, the special privilege called eternal life is obtained by natural kind conduct, with no real motive which refers to Christ at all; for they acted in ignorance of what they were about and that which merited eternal life, which redemption does not acquire for any one. Mr. S. says, page 6, “It is not said, everlasting torment”; but the only other time kolasis is used, it is translated torment in the English version, and rightly enough, though punishment be equally well given as the sense here. Mr. S. says, the word is age-lasting punishment. That is easily said; it is what I positively deny: his business is to prove, not to say it. I shall quote farther on some passages to shew that it cannot be assumed to be so. Next he says, as minister of the circumcision, the Lord refers to Isaiah 66. This is an unhappy remark, because the Lord positively declares that this applies to Gentiles, and His throne as Son of man: “He shall gather before him all nations,” or all the Gentiles. The judgment of the Jews was closed in Matthew 24:31.

My next remark, on which Mr. S. comments in page 6, I repeat, as of an importance which no cavil can touch. John 5:29 contrasts a resurrection to life and a resurrection to judgment; and that resurrection to judgment is not at the beginning of the millennium, so as to last that age, but at the end, when Christ on the

great white throne judges the dead, when the millennial age is over, and after which Christ gives up the kingdom, that God may be all in all, when without are dogs and murderers, etc. Judgment at the close of all is contrasted with a resurrection to life. Mr. S. says, We know full well that there are those who will be justified in judgment. The answer is, The word of God says no man living will. Those who believe in Jesus will not come into judgment (for that is the word, as Mr. S. justly insists in John 5). The passage in Psalm 143 is not cited in Romans 3, nor is it an unconverted person out of Christ. “No man living,” comprises all men, without exception. If God entered into judgment with them, they would be condemned. Moreover, the Psalmist speaks of a pious and converted man, who felt the holiness of God: “Enter not into judgment with thy servant.” “My soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land.” “Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God.” In a word, the whole psalm shews that the divine life was unquestionably there. It is not the present state of all men, but as far as possible from it; and because he was not in that state, he knew that no man living could be justified. And mark, that eternal life is not the term used in this passage; resurrection to judgment is contrasted with resurrection to life. Further, life and death are not God’s holy contrasts here at all, but life and judgment: some are raised for life, and some for judgment: if raised for judgment, they are clearly alive. But scripture does not speak of life merely in this low physical sense—does not use it as meaning that men are not dead. “She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.” Living men are “dead in trespasses and sins”; and “to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son shall not see life.” And I beg the reader to

remember and bear this in mind, because a great handle is made of it without any foundation. As I have based nothing on any use of hades or sheol (pp. 8, 9), I have nothing to add on the subject, nor have I any views that hell is always used for hell-fire, for hell is used for it sometimes. But here I have a more serious remark to make on the statements of Mr. Seabrook. “Hell-fire,” he says, “is always spoken of as the fire of gehenna, and of bodies.” Now the very text that Mr. S. quotes particularly insists on the contrary. Both do in sense, but one of them in terms. Matthew 10:28: “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.” What can I say of this being referred to, to prove that hell (gehenna) only refers to bodies? The reader will readily see that the same emphasis is found in sense in Luke 12:5. I have said nothing of hades as a ground of argument; Mr. S. has of gehenna, of which the reader must judge for himself. Mr. S. is mistaken in saying, I have not read or thought; but it requires no comment.

His statement on the work of Christ goes far to satisfy me of the unsoundness of his views on it; and for this reason— the entire silence as to substitution or bearing of sins. Universalists always base redemption-efficacy on the Person of Christ, to the exclusion of the bearing of sins. Mr. Seabrook seems to me to do the same here; he speaks of the essentially divine character, and a work equal to His Person, but declares, which I beg earnestly the reader to note, that there is no forgiveness of the punishment of sins, but only the gift of life, as the forgiveness of Adam’s own sin; but that, as regards sins, “God will render to every man according to his works,”

and “Jews and Gentiles are said to be punished according to their misdeeds.” “There is no remitting the punishment for personal sinful actions to any one.” “Adam was punished before he died, but the wages of his own transgression brought death, both personal and relative.” What does ours bring? What does it deserve? Do our sins deserve the wrath of God? or, if we are all punished for our sins, and “the Bible never speaks of forgiving or remitting the punishment for personal, sinful actions to any one, for God will render to every man according to his works,” “Jews and Gentiles being punished according to their misdeeds” —if this be so, why did the Lord not only lay on Christ the iniquity of us all, but He was “bruised for our iniquities, wounded for our transgressions; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed”? Why is it said, He shall bear their iniquities? Why does Peter, referring to this passage, say, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree”? And why is the remission of sins, not of sin merely, the grand primary declaration of the gospel, and the free gift, of many offences unto justification, in contrast with the unity of Adam’s one act, which brought in death? “For the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift of many offences unto justification.”

But it is not true, that it was by Adam’s sin to the exclusion of ours that death reigns; for the apostle says, “and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” And James 1:15 declares the universal effect of it in man. Now, as to remission of sins. Let the reader take his Bible, and read Matthew 26:28; Mark 1:4; ch. 3:28, 29; Luke 1:77; ch. 3:3; ch. 5:20. So Matthew 18 and the whole parable, which is very instructive on this

point; ch. 24:47; Acts 2:38; ch. 5:31; ch. 10:43, ch. 13:38; ch. 26:18; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 1:3; ch. 10:2, 12; 1 John 1:9. Let me beg the reader to consult these passages, and he will soon see what place this capital truth holds in the testimony of the gospel, which Mr. S. here boldly denies. See also as to the fruit of personal sin, even as to temporary death, 2 Samuel 12:13. Mr. S.'s statement has no sense, but I suppose it is merely a mistake: "the sin of fallen nature, which is death." When he says, the wages of the sin is death, his translation is wrong, and the usual one right. He must know that abstract nouns have the article in Greek, and have not in such a sentence in English. The authorized translation is perfectly correct—"The wages of sin is death."

But let the reader well note what this Universalist doctrine, which pretends to exalt God's love, ends in (and I suppose Mr. S. has "read, thought, and enquired about it")—total silence as to substitution, and total omission of the doctrine of Christ's bearing sins, and consequent denial of the forgiveness of them, as every man is to be punished according to his misdeeds. And then, reader, if so, what have they deserved? It is clearer and clearer that this doctrine is not Christianity, though Christians may fall into it.

As to what follows in page n, I beg the reader's attention. The attempt to get rid of the doctrine of eternal punishment is sought to be sustained by declaring that the Greek word, aionios, so translated, does not mean eternal, in the common sense of the word, but millennial. This, of course, puzzles people. I did not avoid the question. Their whole system depends on it. If eternal does mean what we all take it to mean,

their system is a cruel and wicked deception of the enemy. And now watch the result. I challenge the advocates of the error to produce a single passage which proves that aionios means millennial. There are about seventy passages in the New Testament, in which the word is used. They cannot produce one! Yet all their system depends on this. Mr. S., to get out of the difficulty, calls it carnal, and asks me to produce one which contradicts it. Surely, when they affirm a word means something, and their system depends on its having this meaning, their business is to produce a passage which proves it. The absence of this meaning is the whole point. It might have any other meaning possible; that would make no difference. It has not that meaning which is necessary to their system: it rests with them to prove it has. Who ever thought that scripture was written to contradict false meanings given to words? Universalists build a false system on the meanings of a word, declaring that others have mistaken its meaning. They are challenged to produce one which proves it has the meaning they allege, and they cannot. I have no need to bring one to contradict it. They must prove what they allege.

But now, reader, I go farther, and I will produce a great many which contradict their assertion, and prove that aionios does mean eternal in the common sense of it. Indeed, I had done so already.

2 Corinthians 4:18: “The things which are seen are temporal” the things which are not seen are eternal.” That is, not temporal, nor merely millennial, nor for an age, nor for many ages merely, but not temporal, nor for time. The visible are proskeira, for a time; the invisible, aionia, eternal, not for a time: if the word aionios meant

millennial, that would be for a time too. Aionios does not mean, and is not, millennial, but eternal in the plain sense of the word. So in 2 Corinthians 5:1: “We have an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Philemon 15: “For perhaps he therefore departed from thee for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever,” aionion, eternally again contrasted with for a season. Hebrews 13:20: “Through the blood of the everlasting covenant.” The efficacy of Christ’s blood (according to, or in the power of which, He was raised from the dead) I suppose lasts longer than the millennium. So Hebrews 9:12: “He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” Is it only for a thousand years Christ has obtained redemption for us? And mark here, it is not eternal glory, or men might cavil about its being the vestibule to the universal happiness which followed, but eternal redemption. Again, Hebrews 9:14: “Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.” By no possible artifice can eternal be made to mean and to be millennial here. Romans 16:26: “According to the commandment of the everlasting [aionion] God.” Here again the application of the term millennial would be blasphemous nonsense. Further, more particularly as to life, aionial life does not mean millennial life, though those who possess eternal life now will no doubt be in millennial glory. See 1 John 1:1, 2: “That which our hands have handled of the Word of life. For [and] the life was [has been] manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.” That is, Christ, as He was with the Father, and as He was seen in the world, was eternal life. This expression certainly, therefore, does not refer to the millennial

state, but to something far more essential, fundamental, and important, blessed as that state may be and surely is.

Again, “God hath given to us eternal [aionion] life, and that life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life “(1 John 5:11,12). Here again it is evident as to our possession of it, that it is impossible to distinguish eternal life from the possession of life in the Son; that life is eternal life. He that has the Son has life in the Son, eternal life, for He is eternal life (v. 20); and he that has not that, has no life at all spiritually. The distinction of eternal life being millennial is utterly false. Christ is the true God and eternal life. In John 3:36 we have the same truth, that Christ is life—eternal life; and that he that has not eternal life has none, and never will have, stated in a negative, that is, in the strongest manner. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting fife; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” It is impossible to state it in a more absolute universal manner—“He shall not see life.” In other cases, as Jude 7, “Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire,” there is no pretence for making it mean millennial. So in 1 Timothy 6:16, “To whom be honour and power everlasting [aionion].” These passages positively contradict the statement, that “eternal” means and is the millennial glory. I might add many more, as the case of the ruler (Mark 10:17); he did not think of millennial glory.

As regards what follows, it is a pity that Mr. S. has not given the passages in which life is connected with world. That eternal is said to belong only to the sheep, believers, the elect, etc., is perfectly true, and (as Mr. S.

has failed to produce a single passage which proves that eternal means millennial) very important too. But he has forgotten that life itself is declared not to belong to any others—that they “shall not see life.” Mr. S. tells us “that where life is used in connection with world, eternal [aionios] is not once prefixed.” The reader would perhaps suppose that the scripture speaks often of life in connection with the world. Just twice, and both in the same passage—John 6:33, 51. I have searched under zoe and zoopoieo (life and quickening); and I find only these. If the reader will take the trouble to read the passage from verse 26, he will see that eternal life is expressly in question— only that Christ does not confine it to the Jews, amongst whom He was, but, as universally in the Gospel of St. John, extends the object of His coming to the world. See John 1:4, 7, 9 (the limit of efficacy is given in verse 12, compare verse 21); ch. 3:16, 17, 19. The limitation to faith is in the same passage, and eternal life contrasted with perishing and condemnation; for the distinction between life and eternal life is utterly futile. See John 3:36; ch. 4:42; ch. 6:27 (see also ch. 12:32, where it is expressly referred to the present bearing of the cross); ch. 14:31; ch. 15:18, 19; ch. 16:8, 20:28; ch. 17:18,21,23,25; where again, though the world is the object, the distinction is carefully maintained between the bearing and sphere “of the testimony and the reception of it. “The world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me”: so, “I pray for them, I pray not for the world.” (Compare also John 1:10, 5.) Hence, John 6:33, the Lord says He came down from heaven to give life unto the world, but He adds, “But I said unto you, that ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. And

this is the Father's will that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." All that the Father had given then to Jesus would come to Him and have part in the resurrection of the last day, that is, have everlasting life, millennial glory. They would have eaten of the bread and lived by Him; but if they did not eat of the bread, though He was there for life, they would never see life; if they did not eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, they had no life in them. That is, His coming for the life of the world, and people having part in that life, are carefully distinguished in the passage. He came down to give life, but He was not received save by those whom the Father gave to Him: that a man may eat thereof, says the Lord, and not die; but whoever ate had not only life, but eternal life (v. 54). The distinction attempted is unknown to, and denied by, scripture. The other verse is 51, where the Lord speaks of His death, namely, that it applied to the world, as He spoke of His incarnation or coming down from heaven. But He declares that if a man eat, he should live for ever (eis ton aiona); that if he did not eat, he had no life in him (v. 51, 53). That is, He positively denies, in the passage, the distinction attempted by Mr. S. "He that eateth me, shall live by me," but whoso eateth hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day; he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever (eis ton aiona). The passage cited levels the whole fabric attempted to be raised on it. Mr. S. has stated in Latin (cum multis aliis, that is) that there are many other passages than these two verses. He should have produced them. It is stated, he says, "over and over again, that the world is to have life." It is never stated. We have examined the passage quoted. He says there are many others. There are not. As to God

being the Saviour of all men, specially of them which believe, it is evident that Saviour here applies exclusively to providence and saving life in this world. God's careful providence is extended to all, specially to believers. "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe." The apostle trusted in the living God in the midst of all difficulties, and dangers, and insults, because He preserved (and everyone who has examined it knows that soter has this sense as often as, or oftener than, that of eternal salvation) all, and particularly faithful men (not properly believers, but rather faithful men).

In 1 Timothy 2:2-4 the apostle shews that kings, and those who seemed the most removed from the influence of the gospel and hostile to Christ, ought to have our prayers; for that was acceptable to our Saviour God, who shut none out, but was willing all should be saved. But the passage knows no other salvation than coming to the knowledge of the truth. It is indeed written, as Air. S. says, that God has given to us eternal life; and it is indeed not once written that He has given to the world such life; and I add, it is not once written that He has given to the world any life, nor that the world is to have it. 1 John 2:2 says nothing about the world being saved—not a word; it speaks of Christ being the propitiation for the world. That Christ died for all, many scriptures testify; and I firmly believe, the blood (by which every attribute of God was glorified) put on the mercy seat makes it a place of access to all sinners under heaven. But scripture does not ever say that Christ bore the sins of all. This bearing of sins is a truth which universalists carefully keep back.

2 Timothy 2:10 proves nothing at all, save that eternal glory was associated with the salvation he sought for the elect. No one doubts that, I suppose; and it is clear by the following verses the thought of the apostle goes no farther. If it did, it would upset Mr. S.’s theory altogether; for dying with Christ is made the condition of living with Him in any way. Bui it is evident the apostle speaks practically of what was before him. (Compare Col. 2:20; ch. 3:1, 4; and Rom. 6:1, 11.) I have now examined all the doctrine and the scripture.

As regards the shades of difference between universalists, I know nothing; but I know this difference between the deniers of the scriptural doctrine of eternal punishment, that some say that the scripture teaches plainly that all will be saved; and others, that this is absurd, and that it has been plainly and completely refuted by scripture, because scripture says that believers will be saved, and that those who believe not shall be condemned; and these therefore allege on the contrary that those who do not believe will be destroyed after a certain quantity of suffering, and utterly perish. This is a shade, and I should think a deep shade, of difference; inasmuch as one view subverts all the principles, all the reasonings, and all the interpretations of the other. God’s love makes Him save all, according to one; it does not according to the other. The beautiful harmony of salvation for all and glory for some, is all a delusion according to the other. And the texts said to maintain it by one, prove nothing of the kind to the other.

And now a few remarks as to the words.

First, it is stated (p. 16), that there is another word for endless applied to “life by Christ.” But Mr. S. carefully abstains from telling us where. It is a pity, too, he has not told us what the word is. There is no such word that I know of or can find. There is a word applied to Christ Himself (Heb. 7:16), “according to the power of an endless life,” in reference to His priesthood; but this has nothing to do with the question: it is the inherent nature of Christ’s life, and means indissoluble. And not only so, but the reference to such a passage would be most unhappy, because the proof given that Christ has a priesthood of such a nature is, that He is so eis ton aiona. That is, the word said by Mr. S. to mean a period which is not endless, in contrast with this power of an endless life, is the word used here to prove that the life is endless. “Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever [eis ton aiona] after the order of Melchizedek.” The truth is, that in this phrase aiona cannot be referred to the millennium, nor to an age, as a short specific period, because it would be rather till the millennium. So in the passage John 6, he that eateth this bread shall live to the millennium, which would be absurd. It is just simply for ever. Again, verses 22, 25, as to the Jewish priests, death forbade them to continue,” but this man, because he continueth for ever [eis ton aiona] hath an unchangeable priesthood, wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him, seeing he ever [pantote] liveth to make intercession for them.” Here again, eis ton aiona (for ever) is used as the opposite to liability to cessation because of death; that is, to have eternal continuance is equivalent to endless, unceasing life. Further, the great argument used is, that aionial (or

eternal) does not mean endless, but millennial. If it does not, the whole question is decided, because punishment is declared to be aionial (eternal).

What does the word then mean in scripture? They say the word does not mean endless. I refer to other Greek books to prove what the word does mean. It is said they were written in a different age, with different notions. But they do inform us what the word means in the language, though of no authority for any notion whatever. The scripture, I am told, is richly sufficient. I turn to scripture: and I ask, of about seventy times the word is used, to produce a passage which proves it has the meaning they allege. They do not venture to produce one; and try to get out of the difficulty by asking me in turn to produce one which contradicts it: I have produced several. Further, I cite Philo, who lived in the same age, and who treats the point in question, and his statement is as plain and positive as possibly can be; he insists in a remarkable definition, that the word is precisely what they say it is not. Mr. S. says, it is assuming the point in dispute: it is assuming nothing. Philo states, in the strongest possible way, that the word specially means what Mr. S. says it does not. Mr. S. says, he probably did not know Hebrew. But we are talking of Greek, which was his native tongue. Air. S. says he did not become a Christian: perhaps not; what then? He says he was a Hellenistic Jew writing in Greek. That is, he used precisely the idiom of the New Testament; the writers of which were, as to their language, Hellenistic Jews, writing in Greek, directly taught and inspired of God. I beg the reader to refer to the citation I have given from Philo, and he will see its force plainly. Mr. S.’s arguments themselves shew it. I fully accept the

statement that the proper thing, the grand matter, the only conclusive way, however, is to turn to the Holy Spirit's use of language in scripture; but there, I repeat, it has not been attempted to produce a passage which proves what is alleged. Several prove that the word has the sense of eternal or endless. On the whole, the attempt to upset the scriptural proof given of the doctrine (in which I have let scripture speak for itself to the conscience of the reader) has only abundantly confirmed what it has sought to impugn. Mr. S. puts the question, as to Matthew 25, "Are the sheep and goats believers and unbelievers? "Now, as this would be plain to ordinary Christians, however obscure the faith of the sheep might be, as they know of no spring of acceptable good works but faith, Mr. S. will excuse my asking if he believes all men are really men, in the ordinary sense of the word. I do not pretend to know his opinions; but there are those who hold that some men are devils by birth, and hence are not included in the salvation of all men, so that the force of this latter statement is only kept to the ear. Is this Mr. S.'s view? It is but fair to know what the positive opinions are we are called on to embrace as scriptural. The principles of universalism, as generally taught, embrace the salvation of devils; for they say that God is love, and God is to be all in all. That is, a salvation without a Saviour, for Christ never became a devil to save devils. Mr. S. has not stated, and does not, that I know of, hold this; but then the argument that God is universal love becomes mere human selfishness. And the second question arises, Does Mr. S. hold that some men are really devils naturally? And is that class of men or devils to be saved? Some may think this too ridiculous and absurd; but what is too absurd for man to hold? And some do hold it seriously.

What Mr. S. says is true: men are agitated on this point. Were it not so, I should not have replied to Mr. S.'s publication. As they are, it was well to examine it.

Yours affectionately,

J. N. Darby

Scriptural Enquiries As To Some Of The Doctrines Contained In J. P. Ham's Theological Tracts

You will not disapprove my following the advice you give the readers of your Theological Tracts (which the Holy Spirit Himself gives us), by proving what you have presented to them, as well as what is presented by the Protestant Churches. I have proved the latter now many years ago, at least in some measure. But the apostle tells me to prove all things', and my experience teaches me that it is quite as needful to prove new things as old. Indeed the need of it is more obvious; for old may be approved by the long experience of true saints as sure ground for their souls, and what is new has certainly to be proved at first. The approbation of centuries has no weight at all with me. Nor even is the constant faith of the saints in all ages a measure or a proof of truth; but neither is a light disregard of it a proof of a state of soul which gives competency to judge of truth. Christ brought in new things; but the well-instructed scribe possessed the old, and held them fast. Our whole enquiry must be, as to either new or old—Are they in the word?

Now I judge that some remarks you have made on the subject of resurrection are just. The Church had greatly lost sight of it: it had along with it lost sight of the Lord's coming, and hence had used language as to the separate state of the soul, which I judge to be quite unscriptural. The statement I thus make will, I trust, tend to assure you that I am not prejudiced against your views, as if governed by ecclesiastical orthodoxy.

I think there has been entire failure where you judge that there has; and I judge it to be a very great and real evil. But you cannot deny the tendency of man's mind to run into some opposite extreme, when offended by an error. These moral Scyllas have been the wreck of many a mind, which had rightly avoided some Charybdis, that had too much engrossed their attention.

Now I am sure you will allow me calmly to investigate your reasonings, and judge them by the word; and at the same time to quote other passages, when you seek to overthrow the application of a particular one.

I take your examination of 2 Corinthians 5. Now I agree with you that mortality being swallowed up of life is not the soul's going to heaven—that our house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, is not the separate state. Nor is mortality being swallowed up of life accomplished till our full glorious state—our house not made with hands—is put on. I further admit, that Paul in this passage does not express any desire of death. Nay, he even says that was not the object which occupied his desires, but something else. Thus far (and they are very important points) we agree. I believe, as you do, that he connected this state of glory with the coming of the Lord Jesus. But then the apostle goes farther. His desire is that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now mortality was his present state in the body; not when (according to your idea) body and soul had ceased to exist, but when he was groaning, being burdened, and desired that life, which he possessed, might, in the power in which Christ had overcome death, swallow up all trace of mortality. He does not say how this was to be; but had he been changed and never seen death, this would have taken place, and given the full proof of the

power of this life, and the just and only adequate force of the apostle's expression. He so saw the glory, and what he possessed already, as wrought of God for this self-same thing, that he wished the power of life which he possessed to swallow up mortality. Of course resurrection will produce the same effect in result; but Paul was comparing his present condition and the glory before him, and applies (in desire) the power of life in Christ, of which he was made partaker already, to the present production of this result. The mortality (to ihneton) was what he had while alive.

Having thus spoken of the sense of the passage, allow me to examine some of your comments.

And forgive me if I judge that you have made the apostle say many things which he has not said, and attached meanings to his words which ought to be proved, not asserted.

You make him say, "'We are confident,' I say, of so glorious a re-creation in Christ Jesus awaiting us; and are, therefore 'willing rather to be absent from the body,' that is, from our 'natural body,' our present mortal and corruptible nature which separates us from the Lord, and to be possessed of our 'spiritual body,' our new incorruptible nature, in order 'that we may be present with the Lord,' which cannot be until the resurrection, when 'mortality shall be swallowed up of life.'"

Now you cannot deny that the greater part of what you make the apostle say here, he does not say. He says none of the things which concern your doctrine. He does not say "and be possessed of our spiritual body"; he does not say, "our new incorruptible nature, that we may

be present with the Lord”; and when you say, “which cannot be until the resurrection,” it only applies to what you say, not to what the apostle says. He does not say that he was confident of so glorious a re-creation; nor does he say he is confident of anything, a sense in which the word employed is never used in the New Testament. 13 It means, to be of a confident spirit, of good courage, bold.

The ‘therefore’ is not connected, as you make it, with this glorious future state, as making him confident, but with what he already possessed while in the body. “Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident,” etc. Now you cannot fail to see how immensely important this is to the whole question. It was what Paul had already as God’s workmanship, which made him so courageous at all times. Now if all this was totally to perish—that is, if what God had made him to be was, “He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing” —how could that inspire him with confidence? The utter total perishing of what God had wrought was a strange ground of boldness.

And remark here that your doctrine involves believers in the same plight as sinners. In vain God has wrought in them by the same power as in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, Ephesians 1:19, 20. In vain that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, John 3:6. In vain Christ Himself is their fife, Colossians 3:4. And, because He lives, they shall live also, John 14:19. No: body, soul, spirit, the fife they have in Christ, all perish together. The earnest of the Spirit goes. The Holy Ghost abandons them. Do you believe that that eternal life which they

have in the Son (1 John 5:11) perishes; or that they have it not really?

Again, you say, “The apostle desired to ‘be’ present with the Lord, not as a disembodied soul, for he says, ‘not for that we would be unclothed.’” But the apostle never says that he desired to be absent from the body, but that he was willing rather. That is, not that it was his object of desire, but that he preferred it to being in the body. All this shews that you have not sufficiently taken account of what the apostle says. He did see the glory, and seeing it, would have mortality swallowed up of fife, of that life whose power was already in him; for he was quickened together with Christ and by the same power—Christ was his life. He knew God had wrought him for this glory, and he had received the earnest of the Spirit; so that, if death did come, he was not the less confident—he would be willingly absent from the body and present with the Lord. And you will please to remember that he had actual death just before his eyes. He was writing to them about a persecution which had made him despair “even of life.” Now it was not his desire to die, but to be glorified; but so well did he know that he had life in power of Christ risen, that if he did die, he knew he would only gain by it.

You tell us that “absent from the body” means having received it again in glory. I say it, because the apostle says, “it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body.” But does it not seem strange that “absent from the body” should mean taking it in glory? It does not say so at least.

Again, you say, “Man, the one compound being, is compared to an ‘earthly house’ or ‘tabernacle’ which will be ‘dissolved.’” Why man, the one compound being? Compounded of what?

You tell us that saints are to put on Christ—to put on incorruption, and hence that these expressions cannot allude to the body as distinct from the soul. Now I admit that the corruptible may put on incorruption, or a man put on a character; that is, put on may be used as a figure of a change of state or character. But you have not quite seized the force of the argument here. It lies in the word “tabernacle,” not in putting on or off. Now I humbly conceive that an earthly dwelling-place of a tabernacle does suppose some one dwelling in it; that is the idea conveyed by the figure. And you must remember that the Holy Ghost dwelt in the apostle, and that he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. This surely is not part of the perishing compound. What comes of the living union of the members with the Head?

But the apostle certainly does not speak of man—the one compound being. He speaks of being in a tabernacle which made him groan; he speaks of the tabernacle being dissolved, not of his being dissolved; he speaks of his having a building of God, eternal in the heavens. That is, his language is entirely the opposite of what you have felt necessary to the support of your argument. He does not speak of a compound being, but of a tabernacle in which he was, and which made him groan, the apostle’s words are not at all what you make him say.

You do well to deal with the passages which you consider the strongholds of those opposed to the doctrine. But you must be aware that there are other

passages which treat of the subject, which you would have done well to have considered along with this one, as naturally suggesting themselves.

I suppose you believe that Christ was as truly a man (though truly God) as we are. What did He mean when He said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit”? And when He said to the poor thief, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise”? Surely He did not deceive him. This is the more important because the thief was looking for the time of glory, and hoped to be remembered then, and said, “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” But the Lord (who could bring out of His treasures things new and old) would not leave him, as you would leave us, without hope till then; but assured him of that new thing, for He brought life to light by the gospel, as well as incorruption. “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Was Christ there without a soul? Had He not a human soul? What became of it at His death? And remember, if He lives, I do. The thief’s body was on the cross, Christ’s in the tomb. How was he in paradise with Christ? Again, Stephen—to whom the heaven was opened, and who was full of the Holy Ghost—was he deceived when he said, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,” just in the words of his Master, with the reflection of whose glory his face shone? But he was full of the Spirit, suffered like his Master, and looked to being with Him. Again, the apostle says, that to die is gain, though to live is Christ (Phil. 1:20-23). Now it is hard to suppose that dying is gain, if it is merely the dissolution of my whole being. But this is not all. The apostle in this passage is discussing life and death. Now having this as his subject (without speaking of future glory) he says, that to depart and be with Christ is far

better. Here, dying is gain, and he explains this by saying that departing and being with Christ is far better, but that he should continue with them for their profit. Now permit me to observe, if “departing” alluded to all the saints going up into glory in resurrection, the apostle could not contrast continuing with them with that departing. There would be no sense in what he says, for then we shall all go up together. His departing from them was then by death in contrast with his continuing with them, yet he thought it “far better,” though “to live is Christ.” Again, I read of body, soul, and spirit being sanctified; so that scripture distinguishes these things very clearly. I read, the end of faith is salvation of souls. I read of those “who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.” Surely this teaches me to distinguish between them; and to distinguish between them in death. Again, when I read of souls under the altar before Christ’s coming to judgment, I admit it is a figure, but it is not a figure to represent that such beings do not exist at all. White robes are given them, and they are told to wait. Now I might force the figure perhaps to mean that, in God’s sight, their martyrdom cried for vengeance; but how white robes could be given to what did not exist, would be hard to tell.

In a word, I find your tract representing the apostle as saying what he does not say at all, and that you forget a crowd of passages which are opposed in the plainest way to what you make him say.

Again, you say, “God has conferred through Christ the gift of immortality.” Now out of what treasure did you get this? You do not state in this tract. You could not, I suppose, state that “bringing life and immortality to light by the gospel” had anything to do with it, because

bringing it to light would prove that it existed before. Besides, you know, I am sure, that the real meaning of the word is “incorruption.”

You tell me indeed that” the believer is here taught (2 Cor. 5) that he himself in his one totality, not a part of himself, must be ‘ dissolved.’ “But then in referring to the passage I find the apostle saying quite the contrary and distinguishing himself and his tabernacle. You try to prove he must mean something else; but he says that his tabernacle must be dissolved, not himself in his one totality. And I find the Lord telling me in the most explicit way, that the killing of the body does not reach to the soul. They kill the body, but cannot kill the soul (Matt. 10:28). Am I to believe Him or your doctrine?

I do not deny then the importance of the resurrection, but I bow to the plain testimony of scripture, that the soul lives meanwhile, “for all live unto him.”

But you quote another passage in your reasoning, on which you make another apostle also say what he does not say, and forget a crowd of passages which shew your doctrine to be unfounded. You make Peter say, “Believers are begotten again unto a hope of life.”

Does he say this? You first say a living hope, or a hope of life, and then drop what the apostle says, to put your interpretation as his statement. Had you not better let him speak for himself?

You will find this word “living,” I may say, a favourite word with him. It is not surprising; he was taught it first by the Father. Christ was for him the Son of the living God. Of this resurrection (as Paul teaches us in Rom. 1:4) is the proof. Hence Christ’s resurrection had begotten them again to a “living hope.” Ought not

“begotten again” to have suggested to you that life—new life—was actually received, not hoped for? Hence, using this same word, he tells us Christ is a living stone, and that we are become living stones built up on that great foundation. That is, the doctrine of the apostle is solemnly and emphatically the opposite of what you make him say. He says they are living stones, as Christ is a living stone; you tell us they have only a hope of life.

And what is the doctrine of other parts of scripture? “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life” (John 3). “He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life.” We wait for glory, we wait for the redemption of the body. Why thus distinguished? They who have received the first-fruits of the Spirit wait for this; we wait for the redemption of the inheritance, but (how much greater soever the enjoyment may be) we do not wait for our own redemption—we have it through His blood. We do not wait for life, because he that hath the Son hath life. We shall not have glory till Christ comes (there you are right, according to scripture), but we have life; in believing, we have life through His name. When He who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory; but we are dead and risen with Him, and therefore seek the things above. The inheritance is reserved in heaven for us—that is, glory is; but not life—it is hid with Him there, but we have it, or it could not be called ours. You forgot, too, in quoting, “kept by the power of God,” to add, “through faith,” which would entirely destroy your application of it; for you say that “believers among the living or the dead are kept by the power of God.” But the apostle says “through faith.” Are

those who have ceased to exist, in “one totality “of body and soul, kept through faith? Surely if I take the word, and prove your statements by it, you must feel yourself, they do not a moment stand the test.

You speak of the future life of believers being in resurrection. Be it so; but their present life, what is it? Have they no divine life in Christ? What becomes of that?

Allow me to add, though it be another subject, that no true Christian denies that abundant mercy has saved him; but that abundant mercy has so made him feel his sins, that he knows that they must be put away from before the eyes of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look at sin. He believes that Christ has put them away—has borne them in His own body on the tree; that by His stripes he is healed; and hence that God is just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus. He does not doubt the mercy. He knows it is sovereign goodness; but the way that grace has operated is in the gift of His Son for the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Do you believe this? The love shewn in this is not perhaps always sufficiently put forward; but denying the justice of God (that is, His righteous hatred of sin, and the judgment due to it) is not the scriptural way of enhancing the love. Whatever men may do, scripture, while telling us that God is love, tells us that His righteousness is revealed in the gospel—His righteousness for us—blessed be God—still His righteousness. It tells us, that we are made His righteousness in Christ. It tells us, that wrath is revealed from heaven. It speaks of a wrath to come, from which Christ has delivered us; that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God; that if Christ be denied,

there is only a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. This is not what it delights to dwell on; it comes on purpose to speak of love. If it speaks of wrath itself, it is in order that men may escape it. It is love that speaks, where wrath is spoken of. But it does not conceal— does not deny the truth of God's character in righteousness if love be despised; nor hide from us that by nature we are children of wrath.

I will take up in another paper the question, whether the destruction spoken of is taking away existence. I turn to the general interpretation of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. We have seen the Lord speak in the most positive way of the distinction of soul and body, and declare that man could kill one but not the other. In the next place, the Lord (in Luke 20:38) declares in the most positive manner that all live to God, referring to persons acknowledged to be dead. You tell us that this means that they will live hereafter, but that they do not live at all meanwhile. But then meanwhile God is the God of the dead, or ceases to be the God of Abraham. The force of the Lord's argument is not that God has been the God of Abraham, nor that He will be, but that He is, and that He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; adding, "for all live to him." They will be raised, for they live now—is His statement. That they lived in His purpose was nothing to His argument, for that did not hinder His being the God of the dead now, if they do not exist now. God was not going to leave them in this imperfect state; He would raise them; but He declares that they do live, and that all live to Him. Is living in His memory, when they have ceased to exist, His being the God of the living, not of the dead? Is it their living to Him? They

lived as much for a Sadducee as that. The question is not here whether He quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not as though they were, but whether He is the God of things that do not exist—that are extinct. Christ says He is not, for that they do live to Him; you tell me they do not—it is only in His memory—but that they will hereafter. Which am I to believe? I do not need, then, the parable of Lazarus to found the doctrine of the soul's living existence after death, because I have the Lord's own positive explicit teaching on the subject—man can kill the body, he cannot kill the soul.

I admit then freely it is a parable. I do not press the letter of the parable, nor say that, when the rich man's body was in the grave, he had literally a tongue to his soul so that water could have cooled it. I go farther, I admit that the parable is adapted to Jewish notions. Abraham's bosom is clearly a figure for the best possible place in another world, according to Jewish ideas. All this seems to me very clear. But then the parable is surely meant to convey something. You say that the sense is, supposing these three men brought into each other's presence, when the probationary scene was over, such as is here described would be the character and circumstances of their interview. Be it so. But why would it have this character? Was it not what happened after death that produced such sentiments? Was it not the misery, the unhappiness, consequent on death in another world, which was to produce the conviction Christ desired in the living? Did the Lord mean by such a picture to convey the idea that men suffered and enjoyed nothing after death? He does not say the man rose, and had his place in Abraham's bosom; He says. he

died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. Would not this sanction the idea that the just after death (i.e., when he died) subsisted still? "He died and was carried into Abraham's bosom." Does that mean —is it consistent with the idea—that when he died he ceased to exist (and so also the rich man), but afterwards he arose and went into Abraham's bosom? Does it not contradict the idea, that on dying he ceased to exist? And, however useless, does not the torment of the rich man, his body being in the grave, teach that he existed while his body was there? He was buried, and lifted up his eyes in Hades, being in torment—a figure, no doubt, but a figure of something which was to act on the conscience. He was buried, say you, and thereon ceased to exist. Can the Lord's statements fall in with yours?

If you examine the passage you will find that the Lord in these chapters is setting aside Jewish thoughts and enlarging their thoughts as to grace.

Chapter 15. The elder brother represents the Pharisees, or Jews who murmured against grace—the prodigal, the poor sinner, received back by divine love in a way quite above law.

Chapter 16. The unjust steward shews that man, and especially Israel, had lost their stewardship of God's goods in the world, though they had them in possession; and that they ought when, in this state, to use them, not for present enjoyment, but with a view to future blessing; and thus, when they failed, when this earthly scene was done with for them, when they left their stewardship, they would be received into everlasting habitations. Then, in the parable of the rich man and

Lazarus, the Lord shews that they must not suppose (as the Jews did) that riches were a proof of divine favour; for one had only to lift the veil of another world, and how would all be reversed! And remark, that there is no thought of a destruction of the rich man according to your idea: he was remaining tormented in the flame. It applies neither to the non-existence you suppose on man's dying, nor to the destruction you suppose to take place at the end. It was a continuing torment. Did the Lord mean or consent to mislead them, or frighten them with an untrue representation? for He clearly meant it to act on their consciences. You talk of the rich man being disowned by Abraham, but Abraham had nothing to do with his being there. It was his portion on dying. Surely the alarm to the living was an unwarranted one, if there was no consciousness and no continuing misery after death. The parable would not convey such an impression to any one, but on the contrary— that there was misery and happiness meted out when men departed from this world.

I will add only a word on your reasonings about the conscious and unconscious state. Forgive me if I say these words are a blind. There can be neither a conscious nor unconscious state of what does not exist. There is, on your theory, no being in existence. If God creates a new one, it is not that which was before, it is a new creation, as much as when a man is born. You compare it with this; you forget that when a man is born, it is a new being. He did not exist before; he is referred to no previous existence. But if God brings a new man into existence out of nothing, how is this new man to answer for what another man did who lived four thousand years before? Surely it must be the same man

to be responsible. But it is not, if he has totally ceased to exist. Hence even the fantastic notion of the pre-existence of the soul supposed its existence to continue. Consciousness or not, is not the question. You deny its existence. What does not exist, cannot be even unconscious.

You say that material organization is necessary for every condition of being. Do you believe God then to have a "material organization"? When you speak of ghosts, you forget that the idea of Christians is that the Lord Jesus receives their spirits, as the Father did His, and as they believed the Lord Jesus did Stephen's. They believe these passages shew the existence of a separate spirit, and a happy existence.

As regards 1 Thessalonians 4, I fully accept the application to the coming of the Lord, and the contrast between the hope He gives, and what is commonly given; so that I have no remark to make on the positive teaching of your tract. But when the apostle says "them that sleep in Jesus," the word sleep is not calculated to convey the idea of non-existence, but the contrary. They are lost to their brethren, for the time, like a man asleep; but it is only sleep: and to call death "sleep," would surely not tend to make us think the dead saints are "extinct."

As regards 1 Corinthians 15, the resurrection was the grand public proof that life was not gone, that death was overcome, that Christ has destroyed the power of him who had the power of death. It was also the only full perfect state of man in glory like Christ to which we are predestinated. But though this were the proof and the perfection of this purpose of God and of Christ's victory,

it does not follow, because all would fail if this were not true, that man does not exist meanwhile; for this reasoning is applied first and principally to Christ. Now it is certain He did not cease to exist when He died. If Christ be not risen, Paul says, our faith is vain. That was His victory, the proof of acceptance. Satan could not destroy a soul, but he had the power of death, and though he had nothing in Christ, yet Christ underwent death for our sakes. Had He been holden of it, victory would have been on the side of the enemy who had the power of death. So with us: if there be no resurrection, then Christ is not raised; if He be not, our faith is vain. But then it is certain that this reasoning does not imply non-existence, unless Christ was “extinct.” If you think this, you ought to say so; we shall know the import of your doctrine better.

In result, on proving your statements by the word, I find the scripture positively states that the soul is distinct from the body; declaring (Matt. 10:28) that man who can kill the body cannot kill the soul; shewing me Christ commending His Spirit to the Father (Luke 13:46); Stephen full of the Holy Ghost (Acts 7:59) doing the same thing in the Spirit; the Lord declaring to the poor thief that he should be that day with Him in paradise (Luke 13:43); Paul in speaking of his death—exclusively in contrast with his being with the saints, which he will be in the resurrection—calling it departing and being with Christ, to which nothing can be more opposed than being “extinct” (Phil. 1:23). I find this confirmed by a crowd of passages, which suppose, or allude to, or are consistent with it.

And I find in one very plain passage, which you seek to shew does not apply to it, you are obliged to make the

apostle Paul say what he does not say; and to mean what his words plainly contradict.

I find too that in other passages, as in 1 Peter, the rich man and Lazarus, and Christ's answer to the Sadducees, you are obliged to force the passage, and make it mean what it does not say, in order to sustain your doctrine. Thus you say "all live to Him" does not mean that they are alive, but live in God's memory; that a living hope, is a hope of life, though the same word is used more than once just after in a meaning which does not allow of such a force being given to it.

In a word, I find scripture forced by you to maintain your view, and contradicting it in the plainest passages possible— passages which you have omitted to notice. I reject therefore your doctrine as unscriptural, and antiscriptural; and I judge that every one who bows to the word must do so.

I do not at all say that you are a Unitarian, for I apprehend your tracts shew you are not, at least on some points; but, unless I strangely deceive myself, your exposition on the points treated of in these tracts will be found in the doctrines of the notes of what the Unitarians call the Improved Version.

The Lord willing, I shall in another paper examine your views on Christ's sacrifice (which you set aside, as Unitarians do).

13 It is used by Plato with peri (about) as "confident about" a thing; but used by itself it means the tone of mind, and is always and only so used in the New Testament.

Scriptural Enquiry As To The Doctrine Of Eternal Punishment Contained In J. P. Ham's Theological Tracts

I beg my reader who may not know Greek not to suppose that I have any thought of unsettling his mind as to the plain English words in scripture. My object is just the contrary. In the English Bible, there are no doubt defects, as in every human work. I have found passages which I think might be more exactly translated, and have taken the pains to translate for myself the whole of the New Testament, save a few chapters. But I am sure of this, that the more intimately a person is acquainted with the idiom of the language—the more he is familiar with what the learned call the usus loquendi (that is, the customary forms of speech)—the more he will see how thoroughly well acquainted the translators were with the language they were dealing with. I can confidently affirm this to be the case in the New Testament; and as far as I can pretend to judge of the Old, I can bear the same testimony: so that, on the whole, while admitting some human defects, the reader who knows neither Hebrew nor Greek may be assured he has the sense of the original. Taken as a whole, it is the most perfect translation of any book I have ever read. I am told the Dutch translation is very good: I cannot compare them, but of those which I can, the English Bible is by far the best. Forty-six or forty-eight of the most learned and capable men were long engaged in it—divided into classes of six, who did the part they were most competent for; and then it was passed to the others, and revised by all, and compared with

translations in other languages. My object then is, not to lead you away from your Enghsh Bible, but back to it with confidence. When persons object to a doctrine, that the original word has not the force ascribed to it in English, one is obliged to enquire what is its force in the original: but my object in this is that the humble English reader may be assured he has God's mind in what he reads. I add the Greek quotations, that those who know that language may see all is well founded and fair.

I now desire to notice two points, which I omitted in my former tract, as deserving to be taken up distinctly. I mean the force of the word Eternal in the original, and the real scriptural doctrine as to Christ's death. I shall say a few words on the first, from its close connection with the whole subject, and because the denial of the force of the word "eternal" is always connected with low views of sin, and a false estimate of Christ's death; and ends in a practical denial of it. Though I have found such loose notions as to what "eternal" means, always accompanied by unbelief in the real atoning efficacy of the sacrifice of Jesus, still, the latter lying at the foundation of all relationship as Christians with God, I shall treat it last, and more fully than the first; and I shall shew, as I did as to the former points, so as to this yet still more important one, that you have garbled the scripture you quoted by important omissions, denied some of its plainest statements, and left aside a mass of the plainest truths it teaches.

I turn to the word "eternal." The word used in the Greek Testament, as it is well known to those familiar with it, is aionios, formed from aion. This latter word is used in classical Greek writers for "man's life," and in scripture for "a dispensation "(or course of events in this world

ordered of God on some particular principle), as well as in the sense of “for ever.” Homer, Herodotus, and the Attic poets use it in the former sense, and say, he breathed out his life [aiona]. In this sense, evidently, we have nothing to do with it. It has the general force of one continuous existence on a given principle of life. Again, it is figuratively used for the continuous subsistence of a given system going on in the same principle— as for example, the dispensation which was to close by Christ’s coming. Hence the word is used for the course of this world, as always going on in the same uniform manner. But its proper force being continuous uninterrupted existence, it is particularly applied to that in its highest sense; that is, to eternity and to God. That this is its real sense, I shall bring the best authority to prove, and then examples from scripture in which it is so used, and in which it is impossible it should be taken in any other way.

Thus Aristotle declares that its force is aien on, always existing: we could hardly have a clearer expression for God or eternity. If anything can be more express, it is Philo’s explanation of it. Philo was a Hellenistic Jew, who flourished in the time of the apostles, and hence is the best possible authority for the force of words used in the New Testament, when it is a mere question of Greek. He says, en aioni de ou te pareleluthen ouden oute mellei alia monon uphesteke; “in eternity [aion], nothing is either past or to come, but subsists.” Nothing can more fully shew that this word, in its own simple full force to a Hellenistic Jew of that age, meant eternity in the strictest sense.

Another remarkable proof, that this was the force of the word, is its being the term used for certain imaginary

beings, of which oriental philosophy (which had adopted some names and natures from the Christian revelation, and in this shape sought to call itself Christian) made the main fabric of its theories to consist. They were called aiones, because they were immortal and unchangeable. The following is a part of Mosheim's note on this subject, whose learning no one, I suppose, will dispute. "Aion properly signifies indefinite or eternal duration, as opposed to that which is finite or temporal. It was, however, metonymically used for such natures as are in themselves unchangeable and immortal. That it was commonly applied in this sense even by the Greek philosophers at the time of Christ's birth, is plain from Arrian, who uses it to describe a nature the reverse of ours, superior to frailty and obnoxious to no vicissitude: ou gar eimi Aion all anthropos meros ton panton os ora emeras enstenai me dei os ten oran kai parelthein os oran. I am not an Aion, but a man, a part of all things, as an hour of a day, I must subsist as an hour, and pass away as an hour." This contrast of aion with such passing away gives the clearest possible proof of the received force of the word. Thus its natural force, and the use of it in the time of Christ and the apostles, is clearly proved. I shall now shew from scripture that the word is there used properly and distinctively for eternal; and this by passages in which it can have no other meaning than that, and only that. 2 Corinthians 4:18: "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal [aionia]." Can anything be more positive than this? In the verse preceding: "an eternal [aionion] weight of glory." 2 Corinthians 5:1: "A house not made with hands, eternal [aionion] in the heavens"; where the same contrast is maintained. Philemon 15: "Departed for a season that thou shouldest

receive him for ever [aionion].” 1 Timothy 6:16: “To whom [God] be honour and power everlasting [aionion].” 1 Peter 5:10: “The God of all grace who hath called us to his eternal [aionion] glory.” So Hebrews 5:9: Salvation is called “eternal”; chapter 9:12: redemption is “eternal,” and that in contrast with what was only temporary; and again, chapter 9:14: “Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.” So Luke 16:9: “When ye fail they may receive you into everlasting [aionious] habitations.” Now these passages shew in an unequivocal manner, that the word, taken by itself in its proper sense, meant eternal or unchanging, unceasing duration, in contrast with temporary.

That examples may be found in which the word when, connected with another, may have the sense of unchangeableness during the whole existence of that other, is true; but that in nothing alters its own proper meaning, where used to express that. Thus in English, if a child asks me, have I lent him something or given it him for ever, I may say, I have given it you for ever; yet the perishable thing will not last for ever: it means the gift is not to be recalled; it is given with a constant and unchangeable purpose, as long as the thing lasts. Does that produce in the mind of any English person any doubt as to what “for ever “means, as to the proper sense of the word? It confirms that sense, though there be a modification of it by the application of the words. So it is in Greek, aionios means eternal: it is used in a way which can leave no doubt of this.

There are passages where its connection gives it a modified force, as applied to what is of unchanging character and existence, while the thing subsists which is spoken of. After all, there are but three such. It is

used seventy-one times in the New Testament. Besides these I have mentioned (in which its sense is not only beyond dispute, but in some of which it is contrasted with partial duration), it is used forty-four times with life, to signify the portion of the blessed. No Christian, I suppose, doubts what is the duration of eternal life. That is, in fifty-four cases it certainly means eternal in the common English sense of the word. And God is called everlasting, Romans 16:25. Consolation is said to be everlasting, 2 Thessalonians 2:16. The glory of the saints is said to be eternal, 2 Timothy 2:10. Judgment is said to be eternal, Hebrews 6:2, that is in contrast with temporal judgment. In chap. 9:15, the inheritance is said to be eternal. I may remark that, in all these passages of the Hebrews, eternal is really used in contrast with the temporal dealings of God with the Jews as a nation. Chapter 13:20, the covenant founded on Christ's blood is said to be eternal in the same way. 2 Peter 1:11, the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is spoken of. Revelation 14:6. The gospel announced by the angel is said to be eternal. Now these passages certainly do not weaken the proof of the word; many of them confirm it in the strongest way. We have now sixty-two, out of seventy-one times it is used, in which the plain meaning of eternal is not to be disputed. That from Revelation 14:6 alone may be said to be obscure, though I have no doubt myself of its force. In three passages, in one and the same peculiar phrase, it has a special force, pro chronon aionion—before times. Here it is used with a word, "times," which necessarily modifies its sense, and it may be taken for "before these times or distinctive periods in which God has been acting continuously and without change on special principles." That is, His unchangeable purposes

unfolded themselves in created time in certain forms which displayed what He unchangeably was. Before all these various displays of God's nature in His ways, eternal life was ours in His purpose, before and independently of all these. The doctrine of the Church preached by Paul had been kept secret during all these developments of what God was in His ways; life was given us in Christ before—it was promised before.

Now beside these three very special passages which I have noticed, and which certainly do not affect the general meaning of the word when used in its own proper sense in the ordinary way, there remain five which speak of punishment. Matthew 18:8: "To enter into life maimed than to be cast into everlasting fire." Matthew 25:41: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire"; and verse 46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into fife eternal"—where the same word is applied to both life and punishment, and surely in the same sense. Mark 3:29: "Is in danger of eternal damnation." 2 Thessalonians 1:9: "Punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." Besides, there is Jude 7, where the cities are said to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. On this passage, which is no doubt figurative, I would remark that the cities are spoken of as still subsisting before them, under judgment, as a present manifestation of the consequence of sin; prokeintai deigma puros aioniou diken upechousai. They are now suffering continuously (for that is the undoubted force of the Greek word, which is in the present tense), as an example before your eyes. No doubt in speaking of cities, it is figurative; but the figure used is present continuing consequences

of sin before their eyes, as an example, to warn those before whom they then lay under its effects. Having said thus much (and I do not think any Greek scholar will venture to deny that is the force of prokeintai upechousai diken), I leave what I have said as to this word to its own proper effect in the conscience, as pronounced of God.

I omit many passages which, though not using the word, have the same effect—such as “hath never forgiveness”; because Mr. Ham’s doctrine would not, I apprehend, deny their force, though it leaves them out. But the last example leads me directly to enquire the force of these words on which much is rested; that is, perishing, destruction, etc. Now that it would be a dreadful thing to be destroyed by the judgment of God, no one will deny. Still, man is so perverse, that he will calculate with that, and loves sin so, that he will sin on. Now though, alas! he may forget eternal punishment; or his passions hurry him on; though he may hope for forgiveness after all, and go on in sin, miserably abusing a goodness, as to the true nature of which he deceives himself, he will not calculate with eternal punishment. Passion may govern, lusts may enslave; but one cannot quietly prefer an eternal misery one thinks of and believes in.

Does then destruction, as used in scripture, mean the extinction of being? Let me turn to examine, by the word of God, your tracts which present this notion to me. They declare that all the terms used concerning future punishment convey the idea of complete extinction.

Before proceeding farther, I set aside the idea that “if it [eternal punishment] exceed the capabilities of our mental apprehension, it loses its hold on our moral

being.” If you merely mean that eternity is beyond the grasp of a finite mind, no doubt that is true; but it is nothing whatever to the purpose, because that is as true of eternal life. I suppose you will not deny that that, if we believe it, has a hold on our moral being. On the other hand, it is an incontestable fact that the thought of eternal punishment has, and has had through ages, an immense hold on men’s moral being; and through grace the announcement of it has had the effect of leading men to flee for refuge to the hope set before them in Him who saves us from the wrath to come. You would not have to complain of the common Protestant doctrine (and every one knows it is not confined to Protestantism), if the doctrine you complain of had not been universal. Exceptions did but prove the rule. It had been preached, and very loudly preached, and insisted on by some, and held by all, whose very name of orthodox proved—to say the least—the universality of their opinions. They believed it, and it did affect them. It had a moral hold on them; nay, in a vast number of cases, probably a vast majority of cases, the belief of it was that which first had such a moral hold on them, that they turned to God, and found refuge from the expected (and as they thought, deserved) eternal misery, in the atonement which you deny. To deny this, in the face of the universal experience of ages, and the known history of thousands of souls, and of the whole Church of God, and all professing Christendom, is a mere absurdity. It has a hold on our moral being. Your putting on paper that it has not, will not destroy the fact that in men’s souls it has. You, dear sir, would not like to be eternally in misery, and you know very well what it means; and so does every poor man that may read this tract; and so does every one of my readers, high or low, rich or poor,

one with another. No; you oppose it, because it has too strong a hold on our moral being. Man will settle non-existence with himself, or temporary purgatory with his priest, or perhaps his own imagination; but he must settle eternity with God; and man does not like that. Anything but God for him who is not reconciled with Him. But what brings us into God's presence is that which has real hold of our moral being.

But to proceed. If I examine scripture, I find that your assertion, that the terms of scripture concerning future punishment all convey the idea of complete extinction, is totally unfounded. Being tormented for ever and ever does not; everlasting punishment does not; being punished with few and many stripes does not; weeping and gnashing of teeth when cast into outer darkness does not; being lost even while we exist here does not; the smoke of torment rising up, though a figure no doubt, does not convey this meaning; an undying worm, though also a figure, does not. I do not know whether you consider these as similar terms and words to those you have selected; but you have, either from prepossession, forgotten them all save the last, or been very culpably remiss in omitting them, and saying, "All of which convey the idea of complete extinction."

Besides, I have another remark to make. You speak briefly and vaguely and give no citations here; so that one must search for oneself in replying to you. But several of the words you refer to, as, "plucked up root and branch," "thorns cut up," "consumed, burnt up," are either not found at all, or drawn from the Old Testament, and apply to temporal judgments executed on the earth. Thus the men of Belial are as thorns, and the man that would touch them must be fenced with iron, and the

staff of a spear, and they shall be utterly burnt with fire in the (same) place. This surely refers to an earthly judgment, and while a figure, alluding to thorns, surely does not unfold the ultimate results of God's judgment about them. It is found in 2 Samuel 23:6. "Plucked up root and branch" is not, that I can remember or find, scriptural. Malachi 4:1 speaks of leaving neither root nor branch; but this is an earthly judgment, and a different thing entirely. When these wicked ones are cut off out of the earth, they shall not leave successors or sprouts after them of the same kind.

"Consume," is not used in the New Testament that I am aware of, save in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, where the wicked one is spoken of, and where also an earthly judgment is spoken of: "Whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and destroy by the brightness of his coming." This wicked one is spoken of as subsisting afterwards, first for a thousand years and then as still with the devil in the lake of fire. You would find it difficult to prove, from this passage at least, that "consume" meant to cause existence to cease, and the being to become extinct. In the Old Testament I read of consuming off the earth. But while used in very various senses, as the zeal of God's house is said to have consumed Christ, I do not see any place which touches the question of subsequent existence. Earthly destruction is often spoken of—of peoples, kingdoms, circumstances, prosperity; but I see nothing said of the soul nor of the body even, but of a visible state of being upon earth. Now the Lord has said that destroying the body on earth does not destroy the soul. I find no passage where "consume" is used which goes any

farther. Judgment on earth is the natural subject of the Old Testament.

“Burnt up,” is not used of people in the New Testament, that I am aware of, or can find. Nor is it used of people in the Old, save of the two captains who came to take the prophet by the king’s command; so that I hardly know why you have brought it forward. Certainly there is no passage in which it is used which bears in any way on the subject before us.

“Ground to powder” is used once in the New Testament by the Lord, and spoken of as accomplished by Himself. “He who shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.” I confess my inability to discover how this shews that a man on dying becomes extinct. It is in contrast with being broken by a stumble over it; and seems indeed to express very vividly the different fate of the Jewish people, as rejecting Messiah when here, and their judgment when He returns. Though as a general principle it may be more largely applied perhaps; but if it proves anything, it proves degrees of judgment, not common extinction. But even suppose it does apply, the crushed person has ceased to live, but he physically remains; for being “ground to powder” is a change of state, not absolutely ceasing to exist. But, as I said, it is a figure, and to be interpreted by more direct instruction. There we find torment, everlasting punishment. Now torment, weeping and gnashing of teeth, certainly are not meant to represent that those who are tormented and weep have ceased to exist.

I have followed then your references to these passages, and sought out some others you have omitted; and I

have found they entirely subvert your statements. A search into scripture, to which you refer, does not the least bear you out: indeed some of the words one is at a loss to find there, or are found only in a single passage to which I have referred, and which cannot be applied to the subject you treat. The wicked are compared to chaff burned in unquenchable fire, by John Baptist (in Isaiah 5 it is a mere comparison, and the judgment of the wicked otherwise expressed), and nowhere else that I am aware of. So thorns burnt up are only in 2 Samuel 23:6, already considered. We will consider the words of John the Baptist a little farther on.

Let me now turn to the use of the words “perish,” “destroy.” Now in usual English it is quite certain that in speaking of these subjects, these words do not convey the idea of extinction. When it is said, “They shall without doubt perish everlastingly,” this is not meant to convey, nor is it received as meaning, that they will cease to exist, but that they will be utterly cut off from the presence of God for ever. When Judas is said to be “the son of perdition,” it is not supposed to mean that he would cease to exist, and that like other people who are not saved, but that, as Peter expressed it, he would go to his own place. Punishment is spoken of— being beaten with many stripes: this is not non-existence. But it is certain that “perish,” and “perdition,” and “everlasting destruction,” when used about the things of the soul, do not convey to an English reader, nor do those who use them mean to convey, the ceasing to exist. Even when I say, “the world that then was perished,” I do not mean that it ceased to exist; but that its then state and form was ruined by the flood through God’s judgment. To judge of the force of the word more exactly, we must of

course seek its use in Greek. Now it is an entire mistake to suppose that it means always to cease to exist; other passages will prove to us that where it refers to the subject we are treating of, it does not.

I quote the following passages to prove the Greek translated “destroy” or “perish” does not by any means simply mean to cease to exist, or to cause to cease to exist. “Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 10:6). “The Son of man is come to save that which was lost” (chap. 18: n). Every time “lost” is used in the parables of Luke 15 this is the word employed. So in many other passages. Again, read 2 Corinthians 4:3, where it is certainly applied in the sense of morally condemned, and not in the sense of having ceased to exist; and its meaning here goes farther than in the passages just quoted, which declare that men were in a ruined state, but God could save them. This passage speaks of them as finally condemned: “If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.” It is used by the apostle John (chap. 18:14): “That one man [Christ] should die for the people,” where Caiaphas had used the ordinary word die—chapter 11. Indeed it is constantly used for dying without an idea of ceasing to exist by it. So it is used of marring bottles. So the devils (Mark 1:24): “Art thou come to destroy us?” “Now it was not ceasing to exist they dreaded. They say in another Gospel, “Art thou come to torment us before the time?” Now these passages shew clearly that the word does not necessarily nor simply mean “cease to exist,” or to cause to cease to exist; but also to be ruined while we exist, whether as a present moral condition or as a final and eternal state.

But other passages will prove that it was not the intention of the scripture to attach the sense of ceasing to exist to the word where the final state of the wicked is referred to. Thus it is called everlasting punishment as well as everlasting destruction. It is said of the devil, and the beast, and the false prophet, that “they are tormented day and night for ever and ever.” This, mark, is in the lake of fire. It is said of those who receive the mark of the beast, that “the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.” Now I am not here arguing the doctrine of scripture on the subject, because I much prefer to leave it to its natural effect on the conscience. But I say that these passages amply shew that when the scripture speaks of perishing and being lost, of everlasting destruction, it does not mean to convey the idea of ceasing to exist. And mark, these passages speak too of the lake of fire, which you say is to destroy the wicked. Again, at the close of all (Rev. 21:8), when the new heavens and the new earth are there, and all things are made new, the wicked “have their part in the lake of fire which burnetii with fire and brimstone.” It is not then a fire which simply burns up the present world like a lake: such an idea indeed is as foreign from that of a lake as can possibly be. The lake of fire is never connected with the elements burning with fervent heat. Note, too, that the words “for ever and ever,” which are applied to torment, are those which are applied to the duration of the life of God—” who liveth for ever and ever.”

If I take the noun “perdition” or “destruction,” the result is the same. It cannot be shewn by a single passage that it means ceasing to exist; in many, it means turning to a bad account, and the like. I will note some of them. “To

what purpose is this waste [of the ointment]?" (Matt. 26:8). "Why was this waste of the ointment made?" It is a bad use of it here, Mark 14:4. Judas is "the son of perdition." Now it is certain, as we have seen, this does not mean cease to exist (John 17:12). Deliver to die (Acts 25:16). "An evident token of perdition "(Phil. 1:28). Now the courage of the Christians was no sign that their adversaries would cease to exist, but that they would be ruined, God being with the Christians. "The son of perdition" (2 Thess. 2:3). He does not cease to exist when judged, he goes into the lake of fire a thousand years before Satan, and is thereafter tormented for ever and ever. (See Rev. 20:10; 2 Pet. 2:1.) "Damnable heresies "(heresies of perdition); the heresies did not make men cease to exist. I am fully satisfied that in other passages the word does not mean ceasing to exist, but these shew it does not.

The conclusions drawn then by you from the supposed force of the word are entirely unfounded. The word in a great many instances cannot mean this, and that even when it is used in reference to our eternal ruin; for we are said to be lost, while we certainly are existing (the word "lost" being the same in the original as that translated "perish" or "destroyed"); while other passages applicable to those said to perish or be destroyed, prove that they exist still (shewing that it was not the intention in scripture to attach this sense to it).

We have already seen, in a former paper, that the soul does not cease to exist, with the body; and that the parable of the rich man certainly teaches that the wicked exist in misery.

The consequence of sin is not ceasing to exist—it is death, and after that, judgment. It is not appointed unto men to cease to exist; “it is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment.” That cannot be, if they have ceased to exist. Is there any sense, or possibility even, in making people cease to exist, because it is their natural condition to do so; and then making them to exist again (though, mark, it would not be them, but others), in order to make them cease to exist again; this last being the dreadful judgment of God? Yet this is your theory. When they die they are, you say, extinct; then they begin to exist again for the judgment of the great day; the effect of which is that they are burned up and cease to exist again.

I have examined, then, all the words referred to. Some are not used in scripture, some not in connection with the subject we are speaking of; others have decidedly another sense than that you have attached to them; while passages and expressions you have omitted expressly contradict your views. Forgive me if I say there is a little carelessness in dealing thus with scripture on so solemn a subject. It is too serious a one to deal so lightly with.

Now as to the passages on which you reason in detail. “The wicked,” you say, “are compared to chaff, to thorns cut up for rapid consumption in unquenchable fire.” As regards the latter, it is taken from Isaiah 33:12. But this only speaks of a present external judgment which would fall on the enemies of Jerusalem who came to spoil the Jews: they would perish on the earth, instead of executing their purpose. This is so entirely the case that, though in English translated “the people shall be as the burnings of lime, as thorns cut up,” it is in the original

“ammim” [peoples]. This therefore has nothing whatever to say to the matter. It does not touch in the smallest way the question of the existence or state of a soul after death.

Next, you say they are compared to chaff. This, as we have seen, refers exclusively to the language of John the Baptist: “Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Remark here that the whole is simply a figure, and, indeed, applies to the Lord’s dealing with Israel, His floor. The good grain would be gathered into His garner; the chaff would undergo punishment, as chaff is burned in the fire—hopeless and impossible to escape from.

Whether this figure means ceasing to exist is to be judged of from other passages. Now we have seen that the Lord speaks of abiding torment in the lake of fire. And in Matthew 13 when He speaks of the tares being burned, He says, The wicked shall be cast into a furnace of fire: “there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” They were not extinct then; they had not ceased to exist; so that I have the word of God declaring that it does not mean extinction. There are those who are tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Now this mere figure—for the words are spoken of chaff, not of men, your interpretation of which is contradicted by a number of passages—is really all you have to produce.14 You do not tell us so; we might suppose there were many such; but there are not. The same state is represented by being cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Here there is no idea of extinction, or ceasing to exist.

Now as to an undying worm, and fire unquenchable: they are figures, you say, borrowed from Isaiah. But figures of what? Extinction and ceasing to exist! Far from it. Exactly the contrary. It is a perpetual shame and judgment kept up, subsisting before other people's eyes, as a warning of the effects of sin, and a solemn testimony of God's judgment. No doubt in Isaiah it is applied to bodies, and is used by the Lord figuratively; but the perpetuation of the punishment is the point insisted upon in Isaiah. These are His words: "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make, shall remain before me, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." Now does this passage teach continuance, perpetuation of their state, or sudden consumption? It carefully teaches its continuance, its perpetuation. This is its specific object. No doubt it is referred to carcases; it says so. But what it takes pains to shew is, that the judgment exercised upon them would be a perpetual abiding testimony before the eyes of men. The Lord borrows this figure, as He does the word gehenna, translated hell, to carry it far beyond carcases. But the figure is of the abiding of the judgment: hence, their worm does not die—their fire is not quenched. It would be absurd to use such a figure to mean that the worm and the fire were there, but there was nothing for them to act upon. But the fact is, the statement of the prophet is precisely that it would not be a sudden consumption, but always there—as

shewing the effects of sin—from moon to moon, from sabbath to sabbath, when men came up amongst that people, who were to remain before the Lord. The carcases would be there—the gnawing worm there—the fire unquenched still. And this is adduced to shew it means sudden consumption!

I am not now discussing the doctrine. It is grace which warns us of it, that we may not be obstinate sinners, adversaries of God. It is that dark and solemn back-ground, which brings out the grace that saves us from it. But I deal with your statements as to scripture; I search the word: they fall to pieces at its touch.

Let us refer to the passages: “It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire “(Matt. 18:8). Why everlasting? Do you really believe the Lord meant to alarm us with this word, when it meant nothing? What matters its being everlasting, if we are to be instantly consumed by it? Everlasting fire (and this [see v. 22] is hell fire) has no real meaning, if I ceased to exist; it may as well go out. But, according to you, it is the fire that consumes the world. Is this, then, to be everlasting? Is it hell that is to consume this earth, and that by a fire that is never to be quenched? Besides, why would it be better for him to be cast into the sea with a millstone round his neck? He might as well, according to your interpretation, live on. It would be but to exchange instantaneous consumption by fire for drowning: and if left for the fire, he would have a much longer life to please himself in. Is that the force of this most solemn warning of the Lord? Again, when in Mark the Saviour insists in His warning that the fire never shall be quenched (alluding, as you say, to the passage in Isaiah

which pressed the perpetuation of the punishment, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched), you would have me suppose that He meant that for all that they would after the first moment be perfectly insensible to it. The worm might live—to do I know not what. They would have ceased to exist: the worm would have nothing to gnaw upon. Is this what the Lord presents? Is it what is presented by Isaiah 66? Is it not solemnly and urgently the contrary? Let any honest mind, who would think it blasphemy to charge the Lord with trifling on any subject, especially on this, judge. How solemnly does He repeat it!

Let me quote to you a passage from the book of Revelation, which I have already alluded to. “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night.” If this be figurative, as doubtless it is, it is not a figure of the extinction of being—of ceasing to exist.

You say, “We are likewise assured that the agent by which the destruction of the wicked shall be effected is fire, and that it will be that fire which shall consume the heavens and the earth “: and you quote Peter as proving it. Now all that Peter says is, that the earth will be given up to fire in the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men; but not a word of the men being subject to it then. Now I believe, from Revelation 20, that the wicked congregated against the camp of the saints and

the beloved city will be judged by fire coming down from heaven. But then the earth is not burned up. The lake of fire is there spoken of distinctly as something else (which, remark, has already subsisted for a thousand years, at any rate), the devil being then cast into it, and the beast and the false prophet being there, and to be tormented there for ever and ever. The lake of fire is certainly not then simply the consuming of the elements in a given day by fervent heat. The wicked, some of them, were in the lake of fire before, and it is another fire which comes down from heaven and consumes the wicked on earth—a fire by which the world is not consumed. Nor are the wicked dead yet even raised. The apostle then sees a great white throne, and One that sat on it, before whose face the earth and heaven fled away; and then the dead, small and great, stand before Him (whereas the previous fire which destroyed the wicked on earth, had come down from heaven on the hosts on earth, who had gone up over the breadth of the earth), and they are judged out of the things written in the books. For this, the sea gave up her dead—death and hades gave up theirs. They were judged; and there was a new heaven and a new earth; but the wicked have their part in the lake. Thus neither the living nor the dead wicked are consumed in the fire which melts the elements.

Every part of your statement is, in the most positive way, contradicted by the text of scripture. The lake of fire existed at least a thousand years, and some were in it before the end. At the close the wicked in rebellion are destroyed on the earth by another fire which does not destroy the earth. The dead are then called up to be judged before the great white throne; the heaven and

earth (which gives up its dead) fleeing from before the face of Him that sat upon it. Moreover, the resurrection of the just, or the first resurrection, is placed in this chapter a thousand years before this event; and it is at that epoch that the living wicked shall be punished with everlasting destruction from His presence. See Revelation 19, where He comes forth to execute it. For it is at His coming back from heaven the saints are raised to meet Him, and then appear in glory at the end (says the Lord) of this age; not when seated on the great white throne. Then heaven and earth flee from before His face: then He does not come to the earth. Remark further, both Peter (in the chapter preceding the one you quote) and Jude declare that the wicked mockers are reserved—the former, for the mist of darkness for ever; and the latter, for the blackness of darkness for ever. I repeat, then, your doctrine on this subject is utterly contradicted by scripture, and that in every particular. I prove it, and it crumbles to pieces before the word.

One or two texts, cited in the “Leaves for Truth Lovers,” remain. But I must repeat here a remark already made: except one, which I will notice, they are all taken from the Old Testament. Now it is the positive doctrine of the New, that life and immortality (incorruption) were brought to light by the gospel. Why then, to prove your point, do you have recourse to what was professedly dark on the subject? Besides the one I shall just now notice, and that alluding to John the Baptist, you have quoted only one from the New; and to explain this you have recourse to the Old; and you have omitted all the positive instruction of the New on the subject. And let me recall to your recollection, and to that of my readers, that your doctrine applies to saints as well as sinners.

Those who have eternal life, those who live because Christ lives, those who are in paradise with Him, whose spirits He has received, as well as mere natural men—all perish alike, are extinct. And you bring your proofs from the Old Testament, in which, we are assured by the apostle, the full revelation on this subject was not given, the truth about it was not yet brought to light. Is not this a strange way of getting at the truth? the rather, as the Lord Himself declares that the soul does not perish with the body—a passage which you have not thought it necessary to notice. Now the Old Testament saints had to do with a manifest exercise of the judgment of God on the earth, of a God enthroned at Jerusalem; or who had promised the land to those He had called out from their country and kindred (or even elsewhere, as in the case of Job). In the midst of the confusion and disasters occasioned by sin, and the delays of God's judgment by patient mercy, they looked sometimes by grace through the veil, and saw that city which hath foundations—as Job 19, Psalm 16. But in general they were occupied with the present government of God, and it was meant that they should be; and beyond that, habitually all was dark and the shadow of death. You would bring us back to this—deprive us, yes, even the saints, of the doctrine of life, if not of future incorruption.

Now you will find that what I have just said is plainly shewn in the passages of the Old Testament which treat of it; and that they close in the human view by the boundary of death. You quote, for example, Ecclesiastes 9:5: "But the dead know not anything ": now how does this go on? "Neither have they any more a reward." Do you believe that applies to anything beyond this world? You know well you do not; you teach the contrary. "For

the memory of them is forgotten: also their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun." Is it not as clear as the sun, that all this applies to this world, as does the whole book—speaking of what is under the sun in the days of the life of our vanity?

You quote Psalm 146:4. The psalmist is contrasting the help of man on the earth and the help of Jehovah. Men are not to trust in princes, for their help is vain. Once dead, all their plans and projects are over: happy is he that has the God of Jacob for his help. He turns the way of the wicked upside down. He shall reign for ever, Zion's God to all generations. Now what have the thoughts of man on earth perishing to do with the state of his soul after death?

But you chiefly rely on Job 14:12: nor are you singular. It has been at all times the resort of those who have gone even farther than you; and, with much more consistency, when they had extinguished body and soul, left them there; instead of creating a new person for a few minutes, as if he were the same, to extinguish him again in still less time. Thus speaks Job: "Man lieth down and riseth not till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." And if they do not, what does that prove? I believe that fully; but I would remark, that we cannot take all that Job says in the vexation of his spirit as revelations, any more than all his friends say, who did not speak rightly of God as he did. They all utter many acknowledged truths which no Christian doubts, and the writer of the book was inspired to give them; but it is only when we come to Elihu that we have an understanding of the case, which

is in the inspiration of the Almighty, and perfect in wisdom by knowledge fetched from afar. This I say, not as my opinion, but as the declaration of the inspired Elihu himself.

We must remember that an historical book being inspired does not mean that what every one has said in it is, but that the writer was inspired to give it to us. We learn the speeches of wicked men, the acts and deceitful words of Satan, recorded by inspiration; now they clearly were not inspired. God has given us a full picture of man and his ways, and of His own ways in patient mercy with him, till the full truth was revealed in Christ. But then man's ways were anything but inspired of God. The imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil, and that continually. To have a true inspired history of him we must have him as he is, not flattered by his own vanity; and hence the painful and frightful pictures we have in scripture. It tells the truth. Man hides it, because he is ashamed of himself; while he does for pleasure the thing he is ashamed of.

But in this case I see no reason to attribute the words to the unbelief working in Job's heart by the side of much right feeling. It was the evident apparent effect of death. A man died, and man saw him no more till the close of all. So it will be; he will not rise (he does not say live); but "they shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep." But what is that sleep? That he cannot tell you: only he uses terms which, while they are consistent with the ignorance of another world and of the intermediate state, certainly do not say the dead have ceased to exist, and imply the contrary. For when I say they shall not rise, they shall not awake nor arise out of their sleep, these words suppose some one who is asleep, who will

not awake till a given time. It is not a statement of nonexistence, but the contrary. Great obscurity, save by some special revelation throwing its sudden light in on the soul— such was doubtless their state. It would have proved the book not genuine, if we had the doctrines and notions even of the apocryphal books in it; but it is left in this obscurity by the God-fearing though harassed spirit of this holy man, painfully learning what his own heart was. He does not go beyond his measure. As to this world, man is gone; he himself desires even to be bid in the grave. “If a man die, shall he live?” he says. Now if you do not apply this to living again in this world, you contradict your own doctrine, and make Job an absolute infidel as to any resurrection, as to any living again at all. But Job is speaking, as all Old Testament saints speak, in view of this world in which they had to say to God: the other was undoubtedly dark to them. But all he says is, that man will not rise again (that is from the grave), till the close of all things. I believe so (not speaking now of the special revelation of the first resurrection, of which Job, of course, is not speaking here, but of man as such). I believe just what Job believed, that when man lies down “they shall not rise, nor awake, nor arise out of their sleep, till the heavens be no more.” What difficulty then can it give me? Job does not reveal to me what comes of his soul meanwhile. I do not expect him to do so. The Lord tells me it is not destroyed with the body. The apostle uses this same word “sleep,” adding “in Jesus” for the saints, who have their gain in death, because He receives their spirits. Can its use in Job create a difficulty? No, all is exactly in its place.

You add, “St. Paul says, to die is gain—not because he expected to live in a state of glory when dead, but because he knew that he should rest from toil and suffering—he would be taken away from the evil to come” (Isa. 57:1). Forgive my saying it was because of nothing of the kind. He says (it is found in Phil. 1:21-23), “having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.” To live was not such a weariness: he says, “to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” You have entirely misrepresented the passage: he does not talk of avoiding the evil to come, but of the good to come in being with Christ, when he says death is gain. Your remark is very unfortunate; because, in another place, he does speak of rest, but there it is not connected with death: “To you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.”

And if I turn to Isaiah—which you patch on to Philemon, to explain a clearer revelation by one less full—I find what we have seen already, only in even a more remarkable way, and certainly as far as possible from extinguishing the righteous: he has done with the trouble of this world, and, in this sense, he is at rest. But is that all the prophet tells us? Here is the passage. “The righteous perisheth” —mark the word— “and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.” Now, I ask, does this encouraging revelation, “he shall enter into peace”— mean he shall be extinct? No. It is not so clear as the New Testament; of course it is not. How could it be as clear as when Christ had lived

through death, and risen out of it? But while the general subject is the government of this present world, as it ever was amongst the Jews, it consoles the righteous with the thought, that in dying he would enter into peace.

But you quote, as I stated, one more passage from the New Testament: “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours.” No doubt. We all believe that. But is that the whole passage? No. First there is added, “and their works do follow them.” Are they then extinct? But suffer me to ask you further, how I can think or pronounce people blessed who are extinct, or have ceased to exist. And mark, he does not (if I follow the way you quote the passage) say, Blessed are those who have risen again, but, “blessed are the dead.” Now it is impossible to conceive that a person who does not exist is blessed: indeed it is simple nonsense to say so. But the emphasis is on “who die in the Lord.” Now, if they are extinct, the same as ungodly people, why are they more blessed in death? for that is the time you refer it to. But, besides all this, you have not quoted the passage as it is in scripture—a serious thing, it seems to me, when you profess to teach from it as God’s word. The passage runs thus: “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth.” Now of two things one: either, “from henceforth “refers to a particular prophetic moment, and therefore has nothing whatever to do with the extinction of a soul by death; or it is a positive revelation that people are immediately happy on their death. And when it is added, “and” (though they rest from their labours on earth), “their works do follow them,” being connected with “from henceforth,” directly

contradicts that for which you quote it. Why did you leave out these words?

You also quote the passage from the Psalms: “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades,” and argue that the application of it to Christ, is a proof that David’s soul being left in hades, had ceased to exist. I should have thought that a soul’s being left in hades, if it proved anything, proved that it did exist, or it could not be left there. The difference as to Christ was, that it was not left there; but both are supposed to exist, or they would not be thus reasoned about. It is quite true that David is not ascended into heaven. That expression js not applied to souls, nor does scripture speak of their being glorified; but it does of their subsisting after death, and of their being in hades. And when it says, “David was buried, and his sepulchre there,” it speaks of him as a known man on earth being dead and buried: not of his soul surely being buried: his soul is left in hades: be it so: it subsists then. What Peter would not do, as you say, I cannot tell: but I know, he does adduce his body being buried—which his soul, at any rate, was not, and his sepulchre being there—as a proof that David was not ascended. What other proof does he bring?

As to Psalm 17: “I shall be satisfied when I awake with the Lord’s likeness,” and never till then. But I am always confident—blessed be that grace which has pardoned and received and quickened me—knowing that if I am absent from the body, I shall be present with the Lord. So Paul, at Antioch, is insisting on Christ’s not seeing corruption, and that the psalm does not apply to David, for he has seen corruption. Does he say anything about his soul? Not a word. Stephen fell asleep—the word used by Paul as to David—but Christ received his spirit.

You quote the case of Samuel. Error always loves obscure passages. But this proves the contrary of what you quote it for. How could Samuel be brought up, if he was totally extinct, and had ceased to exist? How could he be disquieted, if he were not? I agree with you, that Samuel meant that Saul would be among the dead, as Samuel was; but Samuel's being there proved he had not ceased to exist when he was among the dead.

You quote Psalm 16 as referring to David, to prove that he expected nothing before his hope in Psalm 17; but you cannot use Psalm 16 as referring to David in one place, and in another prove, from Peter, that it does not. "In thy presence is fulness of joy," comes after "thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." Thus, if it do apply to Christ's ascension, it certainly does not shew the soul to be extinct in the meanwhile; for Christ certainly was not extinct; so that your reasoning from it is demonstrably false. Christ was in paradise before His ascension to the right hand of the Father, of which He speaks here: but the whole path was a path of life to Him: "In him was life." To say He was extinct, would be to give up being a Christian altogether, and yet worse than that.

I have now gone through all your statements on this subject, in which your great resource is the obscurity of the Old Testament on this point, an obscurity of which the New informs us; and, avoiding reference to the passages, and where you merely reasoned from a word, and sometimes one not used at all, or quite to another purpose, I have been obliged to examine the passages, and their context. But if the examination has been necessarily longer than the statement, it was worth while, for the sake of the souls of many poor sinners and

saints too, not only to shew the positive statements of the New Testament, but to follow you through your assertions and quotations, and see what they were worth.

I have again proved your doctrine by the word. I find that you omit all the clear positive statements of scripture; that your statements contradict them; that you assert, as to the use of words, what is not borne out by the fact; that you quote passages in part, or without the context, to prove your point; that your reasonings will not bear the light the moment the passages are consulted; and that what you do quote proves the contrary of what you quote it for. I reject your statements, therefore, when I have examined them, as unworthy of being entertained a moment longer. I only pray God heartily that you may be delivered from the snare into which you are fallen; and that He may preserve others from that which your words lay for them.

You have got some truth as to the importance of resurrection which others have not, but your own reasonings have carried you away. I cannot think you have examined the passages you refer to, or the use of words in them. Did I think so, I must judge you hardly honest in your reasoning, which I am not willing to suppose; but is it right thus carelessly to throw notions before others without carefully searching out their truth by the word? Why did you leave out “from henceforth” in quoting Revelation 14? Why do you speak of plucked up root and branch? I have searched concordances, lest my memory should deceive me—I find none such. Why speak of “burnt up,” when it is only used of the captains

who would take the prophet? Is this serious enquiry into truth?

I shall shew in another paper that your statements as to the “Atonement”—a yet more important subject—subvert, even in a more open way, those of scripture.

14 There is another from Revelation, which I. shall consider farther on. It will be seen then why I treat this as really the only one.

Scriptural Enquiries As To The Doctrine Of Atonement, In Reference To J. P. Ham's Theological Tracts

I now turn to your statements on Christ’s death; and if your error as to this is more important even than that which I have already noticed, so also your mis-statement of the contents of scripture is proportionately bolder.

I would set out by saying, that it was God’s free and perfect love which gave Christ for us, and which is the sole source of our salvation. Those who deny atonement (for you do deny it) in vain claim to be the only ones who believe in this love. Secondly, I should not deny that the way in which the gospel has been sometimes stated has obscured it; that is, that the effect has been, that God has been considered as simply a righteous being, and that Christ has died in love and propitiated Him. I say the effect; for those who preach in the most defective way on this point do not in the least deny that God’s love is the source of all this; though practically their manner of putting it obscures this blessed truth—that for wretched, lost, unhappy man, God has in infinite, compassionate, perfect as well as tender, love, given His Son, that whoever believes on Him may not perish, but have everlasting life. Blessed be God! He has done so; He has seen our need and visited us in it, and accomplished the perfect work needed to deliver us, and made sinners, through Christ, partakers of His glory. He calls us from sin and ruin by His testimony of His love in Christ.

But love is not exalted by denying that righteousness which must display itself in wrath against sin. The only effect of such a denial is to destroy the sense of our need of this love, and in the same proportion (and that is indeed entirely) the sense of it, and the real restoration of the soul to God by it; that is, to destroy the knowledge of God. If my sins were such that the death of the divine Son of God was needed—if God was so holy that He could not receive me unless my sins were washed away —put away out of His sight, how great was that love which would look in mercy on a mere defiled, worthless, and ungrateful sinner that, in his horrible pride, had thus offended Him, and had given the Son of His love for such! How great that which could willingly undertake such a task, saying, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God! “How great the peace, too, when—in the perfect certainty that my sins are put away, and judged by God to be put away in the presence and by the act of God’s righteousness, according to God’s own mind and holiness—I can stand in the presence of that love without fear, and in the knowledge that it has done that which has brought me there according to its own perfectness. It is not a false, unholy love which slurs over the evil, but one which proves the love of the Holy One in putting it away.

But let us examine your use of scripture. You are unknown to me; but surely you must be very inexperienced in the use of it, and quote it hastily, or I should not know what to think of your application of it, or your assertions about it. But I will examine them.

I will take one of your “Leaves for Truth Lovers” entitled “The Death of Christ.” You say, “Fear or dread of God very often arises from not understanding the meaning of

those expressions which state that Christ suffered for us, and shed His blood, or died for us." Now I should have thought that that which would have produced fear or dread would have been such passages as "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God "(Ps. 9:17). They "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe" (2 Thess. 1:9, 10). "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). "Our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29). "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19). "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever" (Rev. 14:11). And such like.

The death of Christ indeed gives the serious conviction of the solemn truth of the righteousness of God, in the "wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18), and that it is impossible that sinners, if not justified from their sins, should escape, since Christ could not when He took them. But while Christ's suffering for us thus confirms this most solemn truth, that there is and must be judgment against sin, still it carries with it the value of Another's taking it on Himself, and brings hope and encouragement by the love shewn in it, if not perfect peace yet. It makes us, if believed in, hate the sin that has made One who has so loved us suffer for it, and ourselves for it; but it is not dread it inspires.

But I continue. You say, "They think that God is so severe that He would not pardon mankind without inflicting a most awful punishment either upon them, or

upon Jesus Christ His Son as their substitute. But this is not the meaning of Christ's sufferings and death. Christ came into our world to assure us that God loves us dearly, and that He is ready to pardon and justify… Now in shewing mankind this lovely image of God, He fell a victim to the wickedness of self-seeking men, who put Him to a violent death. In this way He suffered and died for us. Some persons say, that Christ's sufferings and death were a payment to God to liberate mankind from the charge of sin. But this cannot be true, because we are told by the apostle Paul, that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself [not reconciling Himself unto the world], not imputing their trespasses unto them.' If God does not impute or reckon men's trespasses unto them, He could not be supposed to have made Christ suffer by way of reckoning for them. Besides, God says, 'I will be merciful to their unrighteousness [not I will exact satisfaction] and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more.' God forgives sin, and therefore cannot have received any compensation for sin. If it were written in the Bible, instead of Christ suffered for us, Christ suffered as a punishment for us, then such doctrine would be clear; but no such language occurs anywhere in the Bible. This doctrine of satisfaction for sins represents Christ as having stood in our place to do something for us to God; but the true doctrine is, that Christ was in God's place to do something for God concerning us. Thus 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them' (2 Cor. 5:19). 'We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.'"

Were you really serious when you wrote all this? Did you really weigh your statements? For one hardly knows

where to begin with such a multitude of mis-statements and errors. But, first, I shall separate out what is true in whole or in part.

First, I fully admit that “Christ came into our world to assure us that God loves us dearly, and that he is ready to pardon and justify us.” I might not thus express it perhaps, but in the main substance of the thought I heartily agree. I only desire in my own spirit and testimony to be able better to bring out, that Christ was in the fullest way God’s blessed witness of love to the world. Would to God it were more testified of, and more fully and freely, to this poor sinful and perishing world, which has such false ideas about God!

I regret that I should have to turn to errors, when I have touched on this blessed subject; but your leaf forces me to do so. Further, although persons often mean substantially right in saying so, it is not scriptural to say Christ reconciled God to man: that He made propitiation is, and that is doubtless what preachers mean when they say so: but it is an unhappy expression, because it gives the idea of love being in Christ, and that, by His work, He has turned the mind of God towards us, who did not love us: whereas, though the righteous majesty of God did require the expiation for sin, and that the sin should be put away, still it was His own love that gave Christ for it, and thus brought the renewed and repentant sinner back to Himself, according to the power of the redemption accomplished by Christ—his sins, his conscience, purged to enjoy the love witnessed in that redemption.15 Thus far, then, I am content to receive what you say: it is always well to clear our ground of that which is not in question.

But now let us ask, Have you told us all that is said of Christ's death? Is what you have told us correct? Is it true that scripture does not say what you say it does not? Where you have quoted it, have you quoted it according to its intention as shewn by the context? We will examine these questions: I would take the second of your statements first, because it is a negative one.

You say, that no such language as that Christ suffered as a punishment for us occurs anywhere in the Bible. This connects itself with His bearing sin. But as to the fact: did you ever read Isaiah 53? Allow me to quote it: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." And again, "For the transgression of my people was he stricken… Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin," etc. (Isa. 53:5-10). I thought this passage was well known to every one who reads the Bible. Does it not speak of punishment for us? You will remember that the apostle Peter applies it directly to Christ, quoting the words, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed "(1 Pet. 2:24). How could it be expressed more clearly that He suffered punishment for us? Stripes, chastisements, bruises, wounds, inflicted on Him, and that by Jehovah being pleased to bruise Him, surely speak of punishment, and punishment for us; for it was for our iniquities, our transgressions; and it was that which made our peace and healed us, if indeed we

are healed. And this is the more distinctly and remarkably brought out, because it is in contrast with the false judgment the Jews had formed of Him—that He was stricken and smitten of God, as suffering under His disapprobation. “We hid as it were our faces from him; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” Now they found out He had borne their griefs, and carried their sorrows: and, lest the thought might stop short at His only bearing them (for He did so bear them in the sorrow of IDs heart), the Spirit in them adds, “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities,” etc. And lest there should be any mistake as to whence this came, we read further, “It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief” (v. 10). Indeed it would be mere folly to say that the wicked Jews had wounded him for their iniquities; nor could they, nor would they, say they were healed by His stripes.

No, the language is as clear as God could make it for poor sinful man, for me, for you, if you do not persevere in rejecting it; and so truly sufficient, that this your sin against this wonderful testimony of divine goodness would itself be forgiven, if you turn to and trust in it. It is so for you, my reader; for, blessed be God! the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanses from all sin: not because self-seeking men killed Him when He was manifesting God’s image; but because “he made his soul an offering for sin” and “God hath set him forth a propitiation through faith in his blood … to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom. 3:25, 26). Why is it said “through faith in his blood,” if only suffering a violent death from wicked men, when in

God's place, declaring God's love? That has happened to many saints. For the dignity of His Person does not effect this, if He be not a propitiation. You say, it has not this value at all. Was any one ever called to put faith in the blood of the saints? Would it not be monstrous? Why in Jesus', if it was not a propitiation?

Another passage shews how unfounded your assertion is. In Galatians 3:13, it is written, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Were they man's curses that fell on the blessed Jesus on the cross? No: turn to Deuteronomy 20:23, and you will find that "he that is hanged is accursed of God," for the believer can say, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6).

Further, if you wish to see the connection of bearing sin in Isaiah 53:12 with the punishment due to it, you have only to compare Leviticus 5:1, 17; ch. 17:16; ch. 20:19; ch. 24:15; Numbers 5:31; ch. 9:13; ch. 14:34; ch. 30:15; in all of which you will see it signifies coming under all the consequences of the sin committed, to be answerable for it before God. So it is spoken of particular sins, as idolatry, Numbers 14:33, Ezekiel 23:35, and in this case clearly in its consequences on the people (so see Job 34:31). Scripture does then speak most clearly of punishment for us; unless chastisement, stripes, a curse inflicted by God, be not punishment.

But there are a multitude of texts which shew what is the meaning of Christ's suffering for us; which prove that the way in which Christ's death is carefully, constantly, systematically presented in scripture, is quite different from the way in which you do—that the

opposite is true. I have quoted some, I will now adduce others. We have already seen Him spoken of as a propitiation for sin; that we are to have faith in His blood; that it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; that the Lord has laid our iniquity upon Him. He has made His soul an offering for sin; He, His own self, bore our sins in His own body on the tree. I proceed: He "gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:6). "Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26). He "hath once suffered for sins" (1 Pet. 3:18). Now, from the hands of man He suffered for righteousness only; from God He suffered only for sins. "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10). "He offered himself through the eternal Spirit to God" (Heb. 9:14). God "hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). That is, His death was not merely the effect of the wickedness of self-seeking men, but He offered Himself as a sacrifice to God. He was made sin there—He bore our sins there—He suffered for sins there—the Lord bruised Him there—and put Him to grief. Wicked men had nothing to do with this, save as ignorant instruments of the outward act.

You forget, in stating that Christ presented God's love to man, the numberless passages which shew Him suffering under God's hand on the cross. What was His sorrow in Geth-semane? Sufferings from wicked men in glorifying God were cups He never asked to pass; but God's wrath to the object of His eternal love was another thing. Was it mere dying and going to paradise He so feared as to sweat great drops of blood? Then indeed others have borne a happier testimony. Or was it

death as the wages of sin—as the wrath of God? He was then to be made sin. He meets the troop come out against Him in peace, and they fall to the ground. Was their violence there His terror or agony on the cross—was it then all His suffering? Was what He describes of these dogs and bulls of Bashan that surrounded Him its only source? No; He was sensible of it all. But in it He looked away, to say, “Be not thou far from me, O Lord”: but He was: and the Blessed One had to say in the midst of it all, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Ps. 22). Was this suffering from self-seeking men? In what way did this shew the love of God to men, unless it was His own blessed Son suffering wrath for them? Why was He abandoned of God? He had done no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. Why? Had you never any conscience of sin which needed it? Are you too righteous to be willing that God should set Him forth to be a propitiation through His blood? /am sinner enough to be glad that God’s love was so great that He should put away the sin, which He could not—ought not—to bear, by the sacrifice of His own blessed Son: are you not? Have I less learnt love by this? “Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us” (1 John 3:16). The willingness of Christ to do it and suffer was the same divine love which gave Him for us. Then said He, “Lo, I come… to do thy will, O my God” (Ps. 40).

Let us consider a little the nature of sacrifice. “Christ our passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Cor. 5:7). Now, how was this done? Was it by simply shewing love to Israel, in that there was One willing to suffer in this work of love? Nothing of the sort. God was going through in judgment to smite the guilty. Why should not Israel be

smitten? They were guilty; they had even fallen, as Ezekiel 20 shews us, into the idolatry of the Egyptians. They were to put the blood on the doorposts, that, when judgment passed, they might be safe. “When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.” That is, the blood of the slain victim—the figure of the true Lamb—secured them from judgment. Do you deny that Christ was our true paschal Lamb?

This circumstance, that the blood was always presented to God, shews the true character of this suffering and death. It was sprinkled on the people, on the leprous man; but it was presented to God, not to the people. It was not something presented to the people, but something presented to God. On the great day of atonement it was sprinkled on the mercy-seat within the veil; on other occasions at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; but always presented to God as the token that expiation had been made for sin. Now if it was merely a testimony from God to the people of love, what was the meaning of all this? If it was an offering for sin, an expiation made, then indeed it was to an offended God the blood was to be presented, that He might righteously bless without passing over sin as nothing—which would be real indifference to it. And this was what was done. In all cases it was presented, offered up to God; and without shedding of blood there was no remission. Certain purifications were made by water (for the Spirit and the word have their place in cleansing too); but there is no remission without blood. Hence Christ is said to have come “not by water only, but by water and blood” (1 John 5:6)—that is, to expiate as well as to purify.

Will you say, these are Old Testament figures? They are so. But figures of what? What is the answer to this universal conscience, that has introduced sacrifices all over the world; and which God has taken up and sanctioned as a great principle of truth in the Old Testament? Is it not Christ? Blessed be God, it is. He has appeared "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26). If self-seeking men were the instruments of this wanton self-destroying wickedness, that their hatred to God and His goodness might fully come out, was it their thoughts and counsels that brought it about? No: "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). It was not their sin which was so determined; it was Christ's death which was. Why did God predetermine this death of His Son? Had He no intention, no meaning in it? If it was merely to shew a love which would suffer on to the end, why was Christ abandoned on the cross? That abandonment was not the wicked men's act.

The New Testament does not leave a shadow of doubt on the divine purpose of the passing shadows of the Old: the blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin; but, instead thereof, Christ came, had a body prepared Him to do God's will: "by the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10). "Christ being come an high-priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the

purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb. 9:11-15). Now here the doctrine of the Jewish sacrifices is clearly applied to Christ's death: He offers Himself to God. By means of death there is the redemption of transgressions; conscience is purged by this offering. "Nor yet," adds the apostle, "that he should offer himself often … for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself: and as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. 9:25-28).

The apostle explains this largely in the following chapter, of which I have already quoted some principal verses. "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God" (chap. 10:12), as it is said in the beginning of the epistle, "When he had by himself purged our sins" (Heb. 1:3).

Now allow me to ask you, Have you read all this? Do you believe it? Has it nothing to do with Christ's suffering for us? Is it only "His falling a victim to the wickedness of self-seeking men who put Him to a violent death?" Is it not an immensely all-important truth, giving a definite character to Christ's sufferings; on which redemption, the purging of the conscience, putting away sin, purging our sins—in a word, all that reconciles us to God, and

gives us peace—is made to depend? which is totally omitted in and set aside by the view you give of Christ's sufferings, and the meaning of them. You may tell me it is suited to Hebrews and their thoughts. It is giving to Christians, who had been Jews, the true value of Christ's death, and the real end and meaning of all their typical sacrifices.

But do other parts of the scripture not teach the same truth? We have already seen Peter declaring that Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree, and that by His stripes we are healed. So he tells them they were "redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19).

Turn to John, one who peculiarly speaks of the manifestation of the love of God in Christ, who makes it, one may say, the very topic of his epistle, and who raises Christian doctrine to its highest tone of spirituality:—what does he say? "And he is the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:2). Again, in teaching us what this manifestation of love in God is: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Yes, that was love; it was not self-seeking men did that; it was (may I be bold to say it?) a man-seeking God who acted thus, one who gave His Son, and one who gave Himself. "God is love." He proved Himself love, but in that which wrought out righteousness, and put away sin, and purged our consciences, and enabled us to enjoy His love, with the consciousness that sin is put away—being judged in all its heinousness. Does Paul differ from this? No: "in whom [Christ] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Eph. 1:7). "God has set

[Him] forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood" (Rom. 3:25).

But it is useless to multiply the number of quotations. It has been abundantly shewn that He "gave himself a ransom." According to the purpose of God, the Son became a man, not only to manifest God amongst men, which He surely did, but to suffer as a victim, to bear our sins, to make propitiation for sin, to put it away, and purge our conscience. It pleased the Lord to bruise Hun. He offered Himself to God, and entered into His presence for us according to the power and efficacy of that blood which He shed upon the cross. The scripture is as plain as plain as can be; it is so, not in an isolated sentence or two, but in multiplied passages in various ways. It is treated as a fundamental doctrine, nay, as vital: no forgiveness of sins without this offering. God from Adam's time had been pointing to it; men's consciences had taken it up everywhere; in the Jewish system it was elaborately developed, that its accomplishment in Christ might be fully understood. And in the New Testament it is explained both as a positive truth that our souls need, and that God is glorified by; and as the meaning of all the remarkable figures of the Old on the subject. Prophets proclaim it; Jesus announces it, saying, the Son of man was come to give His life a ransom for many; and, in instituting that which was to be so sweet and solemn a memorial of Himself, He tells them that the cup was the new covenant in His blood, shed for them and for many for the remission of sins.

What have you done with this maintenance of divine righteousness—this proof, above all else, of divine love—this subject of divine testimony in the willing, yet

ordained, death of the Lamb of God? It is gone. There is left us but the act of self-seeking men putting Him to death when accomplishing His service; and thus He suffered for us. I must repeat, Have you ever read the New Testament? Do you believe it? What is your hope of forgiveness? Is it through the blood of Jesus? Do you believe in a propitiation through faith in His blood?

And allow me here to make a remark or two on Christ's sufferings. The believer sees in the death of Christ the great and solemn work of expiation for sin; he sees Jesus drinking the cup which the Father gave Him to drink. When Jesus cries, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" he can tell, with his face between his hands, that it was because of our sins which He bore on the tree, to glorify God in putting them away. But this you do not admit; this is not the meaning of Christ's suffering. He fell a victim to man's wickedness, and "and in this way He suffered and died for us." The believer in the atonement can at once understand His cry to God. He was indeed drinking the cup of wrath from God, having been made a curse, made sin for us. But you, who do not attach this meaning to Christ's death, what do you make of this cry? His death, in your way of putting it, would be a far feebler testimony than that of thousands of saints. They, dying naturally or burning in the flames, have poured out their souls in triumph and in joy, assured that God never would, and finding He did not, forsake them, nay, gloriously sustained in the hour of trial. Was Christ in your mind in an inferior state to them? He declared He was forsaken of God. What testimony was this to God's love or to His faith? How many have given a brighter one! If His death was atonement, this cry gives it all its value: it declares He did fully drink that cup, of which

not one drop is left for me. He suffered, was forsaken, that I might be full of joy—assured that I never shall be forsaken. But the state of Christ in death, on your shewing, has no sense; nay, it has a contrary sense. It was a declaration that He was not sustained of God in going through the last act of faithfulness in service. No; there is no meaning in scripture if Christ's death be not really His offering Himself, and an offering for sin; and so it was—He bare our sins in His own body on the tree. As the high priest confessed Israel's sin on the scape-goat, so has Jesus confessed ours as His; as the blood of the other was sprinkled on the mercy-seat, so is His a witness before God that sin is put away.

I have reserved one or two passages till the close, because you quote them. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Your comment is, "not I will exact satisfaction." Allow me to give you the apostle's, for he also has commented on this verse; "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us … and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," etc. (Heb. 10:14-19). Here the apostle connects this blessed assurance with the offering of Christ. You tell us that there cannot be this satisfaction for sin, for it would not then be merciful — "He cannot as such receive any compensation for sin." Compensation is an invidious word I should very much object to; but there is an efficacious offering which puts it away, and Christ was offered for sin, peri amartias (that is, an offering for sin), one who stood as

the victim laden with the sins of another, of which He bore the judgment, and for which He suffered: “for Christ hath once suffered for sins” (1 Pet. 3:18). Were He only God’s witness put to death by wicked men, He would have suffered for righteousness; but He has suffered for sins. Paul’s reasoning on this passage, then, is exactly the opposite of yours. Would it not have been well to have looked to it? You say that that is impossible which he declares to be what gives peace to the conscience, and glory to God.

I turn to your second quotation. You deny the doctrine of satisfaction for sins, which represents Christ as having stood in our place, because it is said, that “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them” (2 Cor. 5:19). “We pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” We have seen that Isaiah—that is, the Spirit of God—tells us we had all gone astray, and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Now this is standing in our place. “The chastisement of our peace was upon him.” This is the same truth.

But let us examine the text you produce. Have you quite finished the passage? On what ground did the apostle pray them to be reconciled to God? What ground had he to take which could assure them that, in returning to God, all would be right? Was it that He was so merciful He would not impute sin to them, and therefore could not to Christ? Is that his ground for beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God? It is yours. Far from it; he takes exactly the ground you reject in the passage you quote for so rejecting it. “We pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for

us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Forgive me if I say your quotations of scripture astonish me. Are these the passages you quote for proving that Christ did not make atonement for sin on the cross? On one of which the apostle remarks, that He offered His body once for all, and perfected us for ever by that one offering for sins; and in the other, lays as the ground for his exhortation to come to God, that Christ had been made sin for us.

Is it not plain to you that 2 Corinthians 5:19— "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" —depicts Christ's work, when in the world? God was in Christ down here—not in judgment, but reconciling the world, not imputing their trespasses. But how was He received when He so came? Did the world receive His overtures? No; they rejected Him, put Him to a cruel death, proved that they hated both Him and His Father. They were in sin, and shewed their enmity against God. What was to be done? His seeking them was useless. Man cared not for Him. His people did but cumber the ground. How could men be brought to God? Christ is made sin for them. Thus they can be entreated by others, as His messengers, to be reconciled to God. This was done by Christ in Person, while He was here; but when made sin, He had to undergo death. Hence, raised and glorified, He commits to others the ministry of reconciliation; and that ministry is founded on the thing you reject. Those who have received it entreat sinners to be reconciled to God, because Christ has been made sin for us. Without that, how would the sinners who had rejected and crucified Him venture to return to God? But this sin had, through

Christ's death, become the occasion of the display of the greatest mercy, linked with perfect righteousness.

You say, in another of your "Leaves," that God was already reconciled. It is hard to know what this means. I have spoken of the term already. God was not already reconciled. What had done it, if it was so? He was acting in love to reconcile man, in His own sovereign goodness in which He gave Christ; but there is such a thing as putting away sin before Him who is of purer eyes than to behold it.

Further, you say "Christ's death was to propitiate man." What does this mean? Are you really serious? Has God to propitiate man? Where it is said, He was a propitiation for our sins, was it man was to be propitiated for our sins? No doubt the true love of God in this attracts man by grace, but that is not the meaning of propitiation. I propitiate an offended superior, or render him propitious to me. Does God do that to man? To whom, as the offended person, was the blood always presented and offered? It is revealed to man, that it has been presented to God, and accepted; so that we may come boldly to God through faith in it. But it never was presented to man. Mark that. God says, "When I see the blood, I will pass over." We are justified freely by His blood. If Christ came to reconcile men to God (if that is the whole meaning of propitiation), that was true when His blood was not shed. Why then is it attributed to His blood? Does propitiation mean to beseech man to return to God? You know it does not. Where is propitiation used in this sense? Have you a single passage?

Propitiation is found three times in the New Testament. In one it is ilasterion, that is, mercy-seat, on which we know the blood was sprinkled before God (it was His throne of judgment, the footstool at least of it, where He sat between the cherubim); to that man might approach, because the satisfaction for iniquity was offered. In the two others, Christ "is the propitiation for our sins "(1 John 2:2)—a passage which has no sense whatever if it means to propitiate man. How is he to be propitiated for his sins? It is mere nonsense so to talk. The other is, He "sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Here again it is for our sins, shewing the well-known scriptural use of the word, God sending His Son as an ilasmon peri ton amartion emon, can by no possibility be referred to propitiating man. Indeed it is foreign to every thought of scripture—the use made of the blood—Him to whom it was presented—and the whole order of ideas about propitiation. Moreover, the term is borrowed from the Old Testament, which had not the idea of reconciling the people, nor their wanting to be reconciled; but is perfectly familiar with the thought of propitiation—the propitiatory being the very centre of their religious service. It was the name of the covering of the ark, on which the blood was placed before God, as it never was before the people. They offered it through the priests to God.

The verb is twice used in Greek, though otherwise translated in English. "God be merciful to me, a sinner" —be propitious: was this propitiating man? (Luke 18:13). Again, "To make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17). Here again the expression "for the sins" precludes such an idea. Besides, it is spoken of here as the work of the priest, "that he might be a

merciful high priest … to make," etc. What had a priest to do with propitiating the people? It is an idea, as I have said, foreign to the whole subject. He carried in the blood within the veil, or outside sprinkled it before God —the Israelite (where it was not common to all the people) having himself brought the victim, to offer it to God. The idea in every case is the opposite to what you say, exactly opposite, and proves what you seek to deny.

You say "Atonement always means in the Bible making two or more persons at one or agreed." Does it? It is used once in the New Testament, where it really means "reconciliation." We have received reconciliation with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:10, 11), where the apostle speaks of our being justified by His blood, and then saved from wrath, being thus also reconciled by Christ's death, and then saved by His life —hence joying in God through Jesus, by whom we have received the reconciliation (that is, were brought back to God in peace). Here, while founded on justification by blood, and very different indeed from setting two persons at one (for it is bringing back a guilty sinner saved from wrath to God), still, if you had merely said, it ought to have been translated "reconciliation," no one could have complained; but you say, "always means in the Bible." One is tempted to believe (to hope almost) you have scarcely ever read the Bible. Is it indeed so? The word used in Hebrew is caphar—it is used ninety-eight times in the Old Testament. One has no reference to this matter. Of all the rest, perhaps one (though it has there much more the sense of propitiate) might be alleged to have such a sense, and that only by straining the expression: that is, Genesis 32:20, "I will appease him with the present… and afterward I will see his face,

peradventure he will accept of me." But making two persons agreed is never its sense; and in a vast number of the passages the attempt to introduce such a meaning would make the grossest nonsense, because it is used of iniquities—purging them away—making atonement for them. You will not produce one text in which caphar means what you say it always does. It is not the meaning of the word—it means "to cover." Hence it is used for pitching the ark, i.e., covering it with pitch.

Again I have proved your doctrine by scripture, and I find you have left out that on which the whole relationship of God with Israel was based. Secondly, that which in the New Testament is elaborately applied to Christ, which the Lord applies unto Himself, and one apostle after another applies to Him—I find that your doctrine totally denies this fundamental truth. And, thirdly, in quoting the one or two passages of scripture you do, you again omit the context or some part of the passage, which, if it were admitted, makes the passage mean just the contrary of what you quote it for.

You deny a doctrine which is most certainly one of the most prominent and important in the whole Bible, and perhaps the most insisted on in it j and that both in the Old and New Testaments.

And now, my beloved reader, let me add, that this matter is not a question of the justness of Air. Ham's reasoning merely, but of your and my salvation. You are a sinner; lama sinner. We are defiled by sin; we are guilty, for we have sinned against God, and against a God of love. Now sin must be put away, and we must be cleansed, if we are to dwell with a holy God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look at sin.

He may look on us in compassion, sinners as we are; but He cannot allow uncleanness to abide in His presence and you (unless you are already washed in the blood of the Lamb) are unclean—you know you are. You are guilty—you know you are. You would not like to hazard your salvation upon the judgment God ought to form of you. I know well our proud rebellious hearts may rise up against God, and reason against Him; but your conscience knows you have sinned against Him, and that if He be a holy God, He cannot—ought not to allow of sin, and let it into His presence. Yet there alone you can be really happy; and there, whether you will or not, you must come. It is not your reasonings about it which will prevent it. When there, reasonings will cease; your conscience will speak (as Adam's did when he sought to hide himself in the trees of the garden) and louder too; he had broken God's commandment, but he had not yet despised God's goodness and grace to a sinner. May you be kept by grace from doing so!

Now I have no desire to weaken (God forbid!) your thought, that God is love. It is my only hope, for I also am a poor sinner; my only hope is in God's free and perfect love. But then, that you may enjoy that love, you must have your sin put away, you must be cleansed. You could not be happy in God's presence, were it not put away; you could not, if your conscience always told you, I am unclean in the presence of this holy God, and He sees it. Would your child be happy with you if he had a bad conscience, be you ever so loving a father? Would it be true love if you were to allow him in the evil, and pass it over as no matter?

Now God tells us this plainly in order to act upon our consciences; He tells us He is light, and that darkness

can have no communion with Him; that nothing defiled can enter into the heavenly Jerusalem as it is called. He warns us that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. He says there is oppression and wrong, but encourages the Christian to the patience which Christ Himself shewed. And how? By the solemn word, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord” (Rom. 12:19). He is a righteous Judge, as well as a God of love. He takes notice of good and evil, and hence necessarily judges. Yet we are sinners, and, as regards such, what can righteousness do? But He is love. Does His love destroy His judgment against sin? does it put an end to His righteousness? No: that would not be grace and love, but indifference to evil; and would lead our hearts alas! to be indifferent to it too. Why should not we be, if God were? But it would be a real curse to us, and He would not be really the true and holy God.

How then, if He be righteous, and judges sin, can He exercise love to us in all its fulness—towards us who are sinners? Now here it is the death and atonement of Christ come in. The blessed Lord willingly undertook this task, to glorify God perfectly, and prove infinite love to us, and yet maintain God’s perfect righteousness. He bore our sins—was made sin for us. He drank the bitter cup of death and judgment which our sins had filled. He gave Himself for us, and was bruised for our iniquities, and wounded for our transgressions. Was not this love? Oh! reader, was it not? Yet there God’s righteous judgment against sin was fully maintained, so that what I see there was not the least allowance of it. What could shew it like the death of the Son of God when He was

made sin for us? Could He not be spared? How then can any, persevering in rejecting mercy through Him? Was it possible this cup could pass unless He drank it? It could not. For whom then shall it, if not drunk by Him?

And see how the notion of mere dying under the hands of wicked men destroys all the glory of the cross. I read, Christ gave Himself, offered up Himself. Here I find the holy perfectness of His own soul in a way that nothing else shews. What love! What devotedness! What giving Himself up to the Father's glory! "No man taketh it from me," says He, "but I lay it down of myself" (John 10:18). "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me; but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, even so I do." (John 14:30, 31). You will say, How could this glorify the Father—to give Himself up to a cruel death and wrath? Because of your sins: they made it necessary. If love was to be shewn to you, it must be in this way; God's holiness must be maintained—the impossibility of allowing sin. You (if indeed through grace you believe) are not to be taken away from before Him, because of your sins and defilement. Instead of that, as they could not be allowed, they were taken away, that you might be in peace before Him and know this God of love. "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

And see how the cross glorifies God in everything, if I look at it as a sacrifice for sin, as Christ giving Himself up, that God may be fully glorified. And how glorious Christ Himself is there, by His doing it! for, remember, if it was indeed a bitter cup, yet Christ never was so glorified as there. Never was His glorious perfection so shewn out; so that, though it may seem a hard task to

impose on Him, yet it really was, as to His work, His greatest glory: as He says, “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him” (John 13:31). For it was a glorious thing to Him who accomplished it, that, so to speak, God should be debtor for His glory to Him who thus gave Himself. For indeed it was a common counsel between the Father and the Son. God’s will was He should come, and His will was to come. “Lo, I come to do thy will” (Heb. 10:9).

But see how He was glorified in it. Is God righteous in judgment against sin? The cross has fully shewn it forth. Is God perfect love to the poor sinner? The cross has shewn it forth. Did the majesty of God require that it should be vindicated against rebellious sin? The cross has done it; yet the sinner is spared. Is God truth, and has said that death should follow sin, the devil saying, as he yet does, it should not? Where such a witness that it musty as when the blessed Son of God died as man on the cross? yet He has obtained for us life by it, beyond all the power of death and judgment. Were our sins pressing upon us, so that we did not dare look up? They are gone. I can see God in the light without fear: He has nothing to impute to me; He has proved His love, and I can enjoy His love. And just when man shewed his hatred to God in slaying His Son, God has shewn His love to man in giving Him to put away the sin shewn in slaying Him. Where was obedience shewn as on the cross? He was “obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:8). Where love to us? Where the desire to glorify His Father? Thus the Son of man was glorified, and God, in every part of His nature, glorified in Him: His love, His righteousness, His truth, His majesty, all displayed.

And what is the consequence? The power and fear of death is gone to the believer. It is but the entrance into paradise for him. The sins that he feared as bringing judgment are taken away and blotted out. He knows God loves him— so loves him that He has not spared His own Son to save him; he knows that He has nothing to impute to him, for Christ has borne all. God is righteous and just to forgive him his sins.

And yet, is sin a light thing to one who has this perfect peace with the God of love? It has cost the death of the Son of God. True, it is put away; he is justified; he has perfect peace with God. But how? By that which makes sin the most frightful thing to his soul that possibly could be, and knits his heart to Jesus, who was willing to suffer thus to put it away.

Whether we think of God's glory, or Christ's glory, or the practical effect on our hearts, it is Christ's cross, as being a real sacrifice for sin, that is really efficacious. It glorifies God, infinitely honours Christ, and perfectly blesses man; telling him he is the object of God's infinite love, and yet maintaining righteousness in his heart. Jesus was God manifest in the flesh; and, as to His Person, supremely glorious in dignity. This indeed enabled Him to do such a work; but never, as to His work and service, was He so glorious as He was upon the cross. I speak to you feebly, beloved reader; but is it not the truth? words, as Paul says, of truth and soberness. And this thing was not done in a corner.

And now mark too the blessed efficacy of it for me, a poor sinner. There stood sin, death, judgment, just wrath, in my way. My conscience told me it was so, and God's word plainly declares it. Satan's power bound it

down, so to speak, upon my soul; while his temptations encouraged me to go on in what led to it. God's law, even, did but make the matter worse for me, if I pretended to meddle with it, for its holiness condemned my transgressions. And now, for him that believes, all is taken out of the way. Sin gone, death gone as the terrible thing I awaited (Christ has turned it into a gain) —I shall be with Christ; judgment, Christ has borne it; wrath, there is none for me: I am assured of perfect love. Christ, in making me partaker of the efficacy of His death, has set me beyond all these things in the light, as God is in the light (having loved me, and washed me from my sins in His own blood, and made me a king and priest to God and His Father). In rising He has shewn me this new place into which He has brought me, though as yet, of course, I have it only by faith and participation in that life, in the power of which He has risen. Yes, dear reader, the believer is saved, he has eternal life, he is justified; he waits no doubt to be glorified, but he knows Him who has obtained it all for him, and that He is able to keep that which he has committed unto Him until that day.

There is a judgment (terrible it will be to them that have despised mercy and rejected the Saviour); but to those who, as poor sinners, have submitted to God's righteousness, believing in His love, "Christ will appear the second time, without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). That is, having quite put sin away from them the first time, He will come the second time without having anything to say to it as to them, for their full possession of the glorious result. As He said Himself, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that

where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3). That is a judgment, if such you will call it, which shall be the everlasting and infinite joy of them that share in it.

Weigh that passage I quoted just now. Christ has appeared "once in the end of the world … to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment"—there is the natural portion of the sinner—" so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:26-28). The first time He came, He bore the sins; the second, He comes apart from that for the full salvation of them that look for Him.

Reader, are you prepared to give up all this for the notion that He fell a victim to self-seeking men who put Him to a violent death? Did He not offer Himself up as a sacrifice to put away sin? Did not the Lord bruise Him? Did He not say, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46). Does not your soul need to have sin put away? Is not the love of God shewn in the way you need it, by Christ's being thus given? Has He not glorified God in it? Has He not been glorified in it and by it, bitter as it was? Is it not peace to know He has done it, and put away sin for us by it? Does not the word so present it to us? The Lord give you to believe it in truth. It has given me peace, perfect yet increasing peace, these five-and-twenty years, while He has all the glory; and I know God is love, who has purged my conscience from sin. May you, dear reader, be enabled so to know it, and with as much joy! If you do, you know what I say is true. May the grace of God make Him, who has wrought it for us, more precious to us both! It is a

blessing and a joy to think we shall have an eternity in which to praise Him for it.

Even if I think of the way good and evil were brought out by it, there is nothing like the cross. Everything moral is there brought to a glorious centre, from which it flows down on every poor believing heart, in the proof that evil has been met and put away, and that good has triumphed. Where has death been shewn in its terrible power as in the cross? Where has sin, in all its terrible character and effects? Where do I see man's hatred against goodness itself, and the Son of God bearing sin before God, yet where was eternal life obtained for us, such as death can never touch? Where were goodness and love displayed as there? Where were righteousness and obedience accomplished in spite of all? Where was sin brought so immediately under God's eye and punished, as there? Yet where was it put away, and His perfect delight in absolute obedience at all cost, so drawn out? Where was the bowing in weakness under death shewn as in Him whose soul was melted like wax in the midst of His bowels? yet where the divine strength which carried through all that weakness, death, man's hatred, Satan's power, and God's wrath, could accumulate on His head who drank that bitter cup? All this is told us in scripture. "He was crucified through weakness" (2 Cor. 13:4). "This is your hour and the power of darkness," said the Lord (Luke 22:53). "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38). "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46).

In a word, would I know what sin is? I look there; righteousness? I look there; hatred without a cause? I look there; love without bounds? I look there; judgment

and condemnation of sin? I look there; deliverance and peace? I look there; divine wrath against evil? I look there; perfect divine favour and delight in what infinitely glorified God? I look there. Weakness and death, though willingly bowing under it, it is there; strength, divine strength, which has met and removed evil, it is there; peace and wrath, it is there also: the world under Satan's power rising up, to get finally rid of a God of love; and God, by this very act, delivering the world and making peace by the blood of His own Son. As it is said, "That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14, 15). As I have said, good and evil in all their extremes and forms meet there for the triumph of love in once suffering the evil, that good may have its full force.

Do you ask, reader, Why then are we in such a world still? I will tell you. Scripture tells us, God in grace is still leading souls to profit by and enjoy this. It is a world of misery, and sorrow, and oppression. Did God interfere to change it, He must come in judgment and close the time of mercy; and that He does not do, while yet any have ears to hear. He allows, therefore, the evil which He will judge, to go on meanwhile. And we, though we may thus have to suffer awhile in the world, ought in this sense to rejoice that it is yet allowed; because it is still a time of mercy extended to others. The end will be everlasting joy in a much better world. Christ is gone to prepare a place for us, and He will come again and take us to Himself, that where He is, there we may be also. Thus Peter says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is

longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).

Finally, my reader, you may not have, in peace of soul, been able to contemplate all the glory of the cross. You have a blessed portion yet before you; but remember, it is presented to you just as you are, for your need in all the grace of it towards a poor sinner. It meets you in your sins, if it infinitely glorifies God. A Jesus dying on the cross for the vilest meets the wants and the burdens of the vilest—comes home through grace to his heart. If his sins are a burden to him, he may see Christ bearing them, that he may be free and have peace. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "And by him, all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13:39). Were his "sins as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18). If you are heavy laden, come to Him who came in love to give you rest, and has died in love for you.

The Lord's peace be with you, dear reader—be with you, whoever you may be. May you be washed in that blood which cleanses from all sin, and the Lord will preserve you for His heavenly kingdom.

Your affectionate servant in Christ,

J. N. D.

15 You say also "Christ was in God's place to do something for God concerning us." The language is obscure; but I will not suspect evil. Christ was God manifest in the flesh, as He was God before all worlds. However, if you merely mean that He did, when man down here, manifest God to man, and shew forth in all

His ways what He was in love, I heartily agree with this too.

On Worship

The habits of a vast number of Christians, and the moral atmosphere in which they are placed, have tended to produce very vague notions as to worship. Having turned away from formalism and superstitious views, which left the care of their religion to others, and feeling the need in which they stood of the truth, they have found in the recognition of the truth—in hearing and owning it—the sum total of their ordinary religious exercises. But surely this is not all that should be included in our religion while here below. In heaven, doubtless, the truth will be known in all its perfectness. Truth, now received into the heart, will be actually realized there in the presence of the glory of God, and of the Saviour, about whom the truth treats. There will be no longer any need of hearing the truth—we shall live in it, and the power of it in our hearts will be expressed in adoration. Such is the characteristic of heaven. And, undoubtedly, this should be realized in some measure while on earth, by those who have received the truth, and who by it enjoy the knowledge of God who has communicated it, and of the Saviour who came to accomplish his work of love and of righteousness on our behalf; it should be realized by those who have received, not only the truth, but the very Spirit who gave the truth its place in their hearts, and who gives them the desire of glorifying Him whom it has revealed. When the Holy Spirit communicates heavenly truth to the renewed heart, it always re-ascends in thanksgiving and praise. True worship is but the grateful and joyful response of the heart to God, when filled with the deep sense of the blessings which have been communicated from on high.

The Holy Spirit causes the feelings produced by the revelation of God—of His glory—of His love in Jesus, and of all the blessings with which He loadeth us, to re-ascend to God in adoration. And, surely, the heart which is penetrated with the grace of God, will find delight in rendering back to Him the homage of its adoration and gratitude for all these blessings, which are so many proofs of the infinite and eternal love which He has for us.

Let us, then, examine this subject according to the scriptural light which the Spirit has given us.

What, then, is worship?

It is the honour and adoration which are rendered to God, by reason of what He is in Himself, and what He is for those who render it.

Worship is the employment of heaven; and a blessed and precious privilege for us upon earth, if the enjoyment of it be vouchsafed to us. One might, indeed, add to the above definition, by describing it as rendered in common.

In so speaking, I would not overlook the possibility of worship from an isolated individual.16 But it is not, therefore, the less true that, in point of fact, worship is a homage rendered in common, whether by angels or by men; and hence communion in adoration partakes of the essence of the act, because the blessing is a common blessing; and the joy which one has in the blessing of others is part of one’s own. Their blessing forms part of the grace to which my heart responds; and love, which is the source and spring of it all, is defective, if I enjoy not their blessing. If I praise not God for it, I am myself

incapable of worship; for to praise God supposes that I am sensible of His love, and that I love Him in return.

I do not desire to confine myself to an abstract definition — quite the contrary; but it is well to have a distinct idea of what the subject is of which we are treating.

No work of God towards man is worship; nor any testimony respecting Him and His grace. Preaching the gospel to the unconverted is not worship. It may produce it, as being the means of communicating that knowledge of God in grace which awakens the spirit of adoration in the heart; but the preaching itself, properly speaking (how blessed soever it may be), is not worship. 17 The gospel is a testimony rendered on God's part to man. Not recognizing it as worship does not derogate from the value of such preaching; without it, no Christian worship could exist, for the gospel makes known the God who ought to be adored, and, through the power of the Spirit, it leads the soul into the state in which it is able to render true homage to God, even that worship which is in Spirit and truth. But it is not, therefore, the less true, that no sort of testimony addressed to man from God is worship rendered to God by man. A sermon is not worship; though it may be the means of producing it. The ministry of the word is a distinctive characteristic of the Christian economy. The Jewish people were regarded as already in relationship with God; externally they were so. There was no question about bringing them to God. They were already His people; and God dwelt in the midst of this people as those whom He had redeemed. But now the kingdom of heaven and the grace of salvation are proclaimed to sinners; and there is a ministry of the gospel for inviting them to enter into relationship with God, as in Israel

there had been a priesthood for the maintenance of the relationship which had been already formed.

Prayers addressed to God, in order to obtain that of which we stand in need, are not worship, properly so called. They more immediately connect themselves with it, because they suppose the existence of the knowledge of God, and of confidence in Him. They suppose also that we draw near to Him, by virtue of that which He is, and which He is for the person who presents his prayers to Him. But supplications addressed to God (although founded upon confidence in Him, and thus intimately allied to adoration) have not the characteristic proper to adoration itself.

Praises and thanksgivings, and the making mention of the attributes of God and of His acts, whether of power or in grace, in the attitude of adoration, constitute that which is, properly speaking, worship. In it we draw near to God, and address ourselves to Him. To make mention of His praises, though not in an address to Himself, is undoubtedly connected with worship, and the heart refers them to Him; but thus doing so has not the form proper to worship, although it may enter into worship in a subordinate way, as also may the prayers which adoration itself suggests. And this distinction must not be treated as of little importance. Sweet is it to rehearse, the one to the other, the excellencies of Him whom we love; but the redeemed delight to have God Himself in their thoughts. They delight to address themselves to Him, to speak to Him, to adore Him personally, to converse with Him, to open the heart to Him, to tell Him that they love Him. To the Redeemer it is a delight that these communings pass between God personally and themselves. They delight to testify to

Him the sense they have of His greatness and of His goodness. In this case the communion is between ourselves and God; and God is more precious to us than are even our brethren. Such is the feeling of our brethren also. God is the portion of all in common. In short, in the former case, we speak to ourselves, or to one another, telling each other how worthy God is to be praised; in the latter, we address ourselves to God personally. It is plain—to him at least who knows God it is plain—that the latter is the more excellent employ; that it has a charm, a blissfulness, which the other possesses not. The spiritual affections are evidently of a higher tone; the communion is more complete.

Having presented these general thoughts as to the nature of worship—or rather having distinguished that which is properly signified by the word ‘worship’ from other acts, which are commonly associated with it in the mind—I will now enquire, What is Christian worship according to the word? I remarked, by the way, that there is a ministry in the Christian economy, as there was a priesthood in that of the Jews. I return to this observation, in order to develop my subject, strengthened by the recollection that the Lord connects what He says concerning the worship which the Father seeks with that which formerly existed at Jerusalem.

The worship of Israel supposed, it is true, that the people were in a peculiar relationship with God; it even assumed that God dwelt in the midst of them; but in all the circumstances which characterize that worship God made it plain, that the people themselves could not draw near to Him. Moreover, this was a thought which was essential to all the relationships which existed between God and the people. God had redeemed them out of

Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm—had borne them as upon eagles' wings, and had brought them even to Himself. He had given them, as a token of their deliverance, the promise that they should worship Him upon Mount Sinai, to the foot of which He in truth conducted them with proofs innumerable of His patience and His goodness. There God manifested Himself to them; but it was amid thunders, and fire, and the voice of a trumpet, which made even Moses to tremble, familiar as he had already been with the wondrous manifestations attendant upon the presence of God. In harmony with such a revelation of His glory, the Lord commands that bounds be set around the mountain, and that if even a beast approach unto it, it should be stoned, or thrust through with a dart. He spake, indeed, directly to the people, but in such a way as made the people ask that He should speak unto them no more: and God Himself approved the request.

The ordinary worship of the people in the tabernacle and in the temple, while wearing an appearance more gentle and calm, and less terrific towards the worshipper, contained in its basis the same character. If God did not shake the earth with His voice—if His presence did not cast terror amid the people, it was because He was hid behind the veil, which concealed Him from their sight. He made Himself known only by His acts of blessing and of judgment, and did not reveal Himself to the hearts of the people. The consequence of this was natural and evident. The people came to acknowledge His benefits, and to humble themselves in the acknowledgment of His just judgments, while they drew near towards the holy place; but to Himself, within the veil, they never drew near. They did not even enter

into His house. Within the veil the high priest alone was wont to enter once every year, in order to carry in the blood of the ram and of the bullock—the propitiatory victims—in order to make reconciliation for the people with a God who could not endure iniquity, and thus to renew their relationships with Him, who demanded that His abode also should be purified from the defilements of the people, among whom He vouchsafed to dwell. Doubtless, if, dwelling between the cherubim, He judged from His throne that which was evil, He also heaped up blessings upon the people whom He had redeemed, with the assurance that, if they were faithful, they should be protected from all their enemies. The people sought His protection, and worshipped Him for the benefits He had conferred. The faith of the individual seized, perhaps, more immediately the glory of the Lord, but it did not go, and could not go, beyond the revelation which He had given of Himself in the government of Israel. The institution of the priesthood was the natural consequence of such a state of things; but the priests themselves fulfilled their service outside the veil, which hid from them the God whom they adored. The way into the holy place, says the apostle, was not yet made manifest, while the first tabernacle was yet standing.

Here, then, we see the character of Jewish worship, as God established it. But all is changed now. Christian worship is founded upon principles which are in direct contrast18 with all that we have been describing. There was, as to Jewish persons and circumstances, a foreshadowing of the facts and truths in connection with which worship is now carried on; but the principles of its exercise at that time were in perfect opposition to those upon which Christian worship is based.

The honour and adoration to be rendered to God on the ground of that which He is, and that which He is for us, depend necessarily upon the revelation which He makes of Himself. God changes not: but no one draws near to Him in the light to which no man can approach. It is when He reveals Himself to us, that our relationships to Him begin, whether the revelations be partial or perfect. Now God, under the law, manifested Himself as requiring of man that which man ought to be, and having placed him, by divine power, in a position in which he ought to have brought forth fruit to the glory of Him who had chosen Israel to be His own vine. He blessed man, if he was faithful to his duty, and He judged him if he was not so. Under such circumstances God could not fully reveal Himself. Man was capable of bearing neither the brightness of His majesty nor the light of His holiness. His sovereign love, as Saviour, did not accord with the peremptory demand for services under pain of a curse—a just demand, nevertheless, which served to manifest man's need of that grace which brings salvation. In that dispensation, God might act—bless or punish; but if He fully revealed Himself, it must needs be in order to be known in a relationship which perfectly responds to that which He is in Himself; and this was impossible under the law. If God did not reveal Himself in a manner which reconciles His attributes of holiness and love, He would either tolerate iniquity, or have to banish those involved in it absolutely and eternally from His presence. Under the law, God did not reveal Himself, but put Himself in relationship with man as a sinner, though responsible; He acted, but concealed Himself.

Now Christianity is based upon an interposition of God altogether new—an interposition arranged in His counsels before the world was. The accomplishment of His purpose waited, not only for the development of sin in man, but for its arrival at its full height of enmity against God, in the most perfect manifestation which was possible of His goodness and of His authority. Christ appeared, and man crucified Him!

What relationship, then, was possible between man and God? All must be judgment, or all must be grace. Judgment, which will surely be exercised against all iniquity, and specially against the rejection of grace, is not, I thank God, our present subject. It forms only the dark and solemn background of the picture, and throws into relief the perfection and brilliancy of grace.

It is with grace (blessed be God!) that we are now occupied. Now, if man crowned his iniquity, in rejecting, in the Person of Jesus, not only the authority, but also the goodness of God, the same act, which perfectly manifested the sin which was in the heart of man, and fully developed the positive evil which flowed thence, accomplished at the same time all that the justice of God required with regard to that sin, whilst manifesting also His perfect love to man. The cross has fully manifested what man is. There also has God acted in all the plenitude of His holy justice against sin. In Christ He was perfectly glorified in that respect. The majesty of God has no longer aught to claim from him who comes to God by Jesus Christ. His love is free to bless. The holiness of God is an infinite delight to those who can draw near to Him; for there is no longer any question about guilt between the worshipper and God. Christ has abolished it by the sacrifice of Himself. Entirely cleansed

from sin—cleansed according to the efficacy of the work of Christ Himself—we draw nigh to that meeting-place between God and the sinner, where there is no guilt, where His love has free course, there to enjoy all that God can heap upon us of blessing. Being reconciled unto God through the work of Christ which has put away sin, and being introduced into His presence in the light, God has brought us into the nearness of a new relationship, that we may enjoy that which He is in Himself.

We have a striking expression of the consequence of the death of Christ in the rending of the veil of the temple. The veil which hid the sacred enclosure was a sign that no one could draw nigh to God. It having been rent from the top to the bottom, we have now full liberty of entrance into the most holy place. The stroke which rent the veil, and made manifest the God of holiness, who cannot endure iniquity, but who must needs smite the very Son of His love when He took our sin upon Himself —that same stroke removed the guilt which would have barred our approach to Him, because sin could not appear in His sight. Thus, cleansed from all guilt, the light of that presence shines upon us. The cross, which throws out into prominency all the holiness of His justice, has rendered us able to abide in the presence of that holiness without spot and in joy.

All that God is, has thus been manifested in the cross; and we can now enjoy God Himself as our portion according to His infinite love in Christ. Such is the basis of worship; and no one recognizes as he should the glory of the work of Christ, or of the love of his God, to which he is debtor for everything, who does not recognize this place as his. No one can render worship worthy to God on any other ground. Indeed, no one has rightly

recognized himself as a sinner who pretends to offer worship to God otherwise than in this liberty; for who would dare to present himself before God if all guilt had not been removed? Who would dare to place himself in the presence of God without a veil, if his sin be not put away, knowing that God will not, and cannot, endure sin in any manner or degree in His presence? Who out of Christ is free from sin? On whom, of those who are in Christ, does it rest? None. In Christ sin is no longer ours, since He has cleansed us from it— cleansed us by a work which could not possibly be done a second time; the efficacy of which is at once perfect and eternal. And this alone gives freedom to the spiritual affections. For us God is perfect love, and He introduces us into “the light, as he is in the light.” But who can fully enjoy that love if there be a bad conscience? Attracted he may be, but find enjoyment he cannot. His affections cannot have free play, if his conscience reproaches him with offences against Him who loves him, if it produces fear in his soul. The heart must be free, if the affections are to be in exercise. But the work of Christ cleanses the conscience, and the heart is set free by the knowledge of that perfect love of God which He has for us, of which Christ is the proof and the fulness. The light of His holiness is thus the joy of our souls. It is in that light that we see all that we love.

This relationship of God to the Church, exceeding, as it does, all our thoughts, is presented to us in the most striking manner in the title “God of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This title has peculiar significancy. When God is called the God of any one, it indicates that a tie of intimacy is formed between that person, and him who bears His name super-added to his own; it indicates a

relationship based upon what God is to the one whose name He has thus assumed, and it implies a purpose to bless and honour according to that relationship. This purpose must stand. God cannot be unfaithful; and hence the relationship becomes the source of enjoyment, by faith, to him whose name is added to the name of God; at least, he has the right to appropriate it as pertaining to himself on the part of God. Thus the title "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," not only indicates that they were specially the objects of distinctive blessing, but it indicates also that which God was for these patriarchs, according to the revelation which He had made to them of Himself—a relationship upon which their faith could count, and which they were called to realize. God placed Himself in relationship to them, according to that which His name expressed. Their spiritual privileges had this name for their character and measure. Thus God in relation to us is that which is expressed in the title "God of our Lord Jesus Christ"; because we, as believers, are one with Him, and are brought into the same relationship to God. It is thus that God reveals Himself to us, in order that we may be in relationship with Him according to the import of this title.

When this truth is understood, we can comprehend what a wondrous and glorious position is ours by virtue of this title— "God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory." For here Christ is viewed as a man, as being the head of a new family, and as having ascended to His God and our God. This God to whom we draw near is for us all that He is for Christ, who, having perfectly glorified Him upon earth, has entered into His presence, His beloved Son, in whom we are accepted, and in whom He

is always well-pleased. This truth stands out in full prominency in chapters 1 and 2 of the Epistle to the Ephesians. The apostle in chapter 1 prays that, the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, we may know what is the hope of the calling of God, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints (v. 18). He then speaks of us as one with Christ in that which he shews to be the true power and extent of that glory, and tells us that the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe is according to the mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from among the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, etc. And you, says he, who were dead in trespasses and sins, He hath quickened together with Him—raised up together, and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ, in order that He might shew, in the ages to come, what are the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us by Christ Jesus. And what are the relationships which God has with Christ Jesus? What is it that belongs to Him on God's part in justice, in love, even as a man? Who can tell the love of God towards Christ? What are His claims upon the affection of His Father? Now all that is His is ours in Him. What a wondrous place then is ours in the presence of God! The glory even, which God has given unto Him, He has given unto us, in order that the world may know that we are loved, even as He is loved (John 17:22, 23).

These words of the Lord also will be remembered: "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." The two prayers of the apostle in the Epistle to the Ephesians (that of chapter 1 and that of chapter 3) will be seen to be respectively based upon

these two titles. The prayer of chapter 1 is founded upon the second title, viz., that of “God of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 17); and that of chapter 3 upon the former, viz., that of “Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 14). The first title is used in relation to glory, the second to communion in love.

The passage just cited from John 17 shews that the communication of the glory, wondrous as it is, is but the proof that we are loved, even as Jesus is loved. What simplicity in this truth, but what love—what divine depth, even in proportion to its very simplicity! I was as the first Adam, I am as the second Adam; I have borne the image of the first, I shall bear the image of the second. Yes, this truth is simple; but who could have conceived it but God? In it we recognize the God of all grace. The names of the tribes of Israel were borne upon the breast of the high priest, as was also their judgment, according to the light and perfection of God; but this was only a shadow, as says the apostle, of such blessings (Heb. 10:1). Therefore Paul, in speaking of the true circumcision, says, “We worship God in spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. 3). We are “in Christ.” That is our position before God. All that puts us out of this position, and supposes the need of anything as a means of drawing near to God, puts us out of Him and places us in Judaism, which, as a system, has been nailed to the cross, and is no better than any heathen ordinance. (See Gal. 4:8-10). We are in Christ, or we are out of Christ. We are one with Him, or we are separate from Him. If separate from Him, the distance matters not—we are not in union with the fountain of life. The body separated from the head by anything (even though thinner than

the beaten leaf of gold, or by a space more minute than the imagination of man can conceive) is a body without life. In Christ, we are the objects of God's delight in Him, and "we are as he is." Out of Christ, we are but objects of His judgment. Therefore are we "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ"; but to follow out the glorious consequences of our position would lead us away from our subject.

But there is yet another truth connected with the work of Christ, on which worship necessarily hangs. Not only has Christ borne away our sin, cleansed us from all defilement, and made us fit for the presence of God; but, in order that we may enjoy this blessed reality, He has gained for us, at the same time, the gift of the Holy Spirit. Not only do we, when being born again, receive a new nature, which is holy and capable of sentiments suitable to the position in which grace has placed us before God, but we receive the Holy Spirit, who shews, and reveals, and communicates to us divine things, and inspires sentiments such as they should awaken. We are strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man, in order that, being rooted and grounded in love, Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, and that we may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God (Eph. 3:16-19). The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us (Rom. 5:5). He takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto us; and all that the Father hath is Christ's (John 16:15; ch. 17:10). That which eye hath not seen, which ear hath not heard, which came not into the heart of man—the things which

God has prepared for him whom He loves—God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God (1 Cor. 2:9, 10).

The Holy Spirit is “the unction” which we receive of God, by which “we know the things which are freely given to us of God “(1 Cor. 2:12); by which we “know all things” (1 John 2:20). He is the seal which God has put upon us unto the day of redemption; God has set His appropriating mark for that day of glory on those who believe. The Holy Spirit is also “the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.” He gives us the full assurance of the efficacy of the work of Christ. He imparts to us the knowledge of the position in which we are placed, as cleansed by the blood of the Saviour, and therefore without spot in the sight of God. By the Holy Spirit, the love of God, whence all these accomplished blessings have flowed, is shed abroad in our hearts. He is the originator in us of all the thoughts and all the affections which respond to this love. But He does more—He is more than all this for us. “He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit” (1 Cor. 6:17). This is not merely an imagination—a feeling; it is a fact. The same Spirit, whose fulness is in Christ, abides in us, and we are united to Christ as members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones (Eph. 5:30). By one Spirit we have all been baptized, that we might be one body (1 Cor. 12:13). Not only is He the power, the link, of this union, but He gives us the consciousness of it. “At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you” (John 14:20).

The Holy Spirit, then, gives us, first of all, the assurance of our redemption. Where the Spirit is, there is liberty. He reveals to us the glory of Christ as presented in the scriptures, as He once did to Stephen, who, full of the Holy Ghost, beheld the glory of God, and the Son of man at the right hand of God. Moreover, He gives us the consciousness of our union with Christ on high. We know that we are quickened together with Him, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Besides all this, He sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts—the spring and fountain of joy to ourselves, of pity towards this poor world, and of love to all the family of God. But I enter not into this happy consequence, our subject being worship.

Another truth of minor importance, but very precious in its place, depends upon this presence of the Holy Spirit: we are of the same body, and thus “members one of another” (Rom. 12:5). If Christ is the Head of the body, each Christian is a member of it, and consequently united by the Holy Spirit, who forms the bond of the whole in every other member. The same Spirit dwells in each Christian; his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). And believers being quickened and united together, they, as a whole, are also His temple (1 Cor. 3:16). God dwells there by His Spirit in a manner less palpable but far more excellent than in the temple of Jerusalem.

Now it is in their position, according to this glorious revelation of God, and by the Spirit which He has given, in order that we might enjoy all the blessed privileges which are ours, that true Christian worship is offered to God.

Knowing what God is, and what He is for us—beholding Him, without a veil, according to the perfection of His love and of His holiness—rendered capable of abiding in the light, as He Himself is in the light—the objects of that love which spared not His well-beloved Son, that we might be made partakers of it; and having received His Spirit, in order that we might comprehend this love, and thus be enabled to adore Him according to the desires and affections of His hear, toward us, we render Him worship responsive to the revelation which He has made of Himself in that mystery of love into which the angels desire to look, and by which He will make known, in the ages to come, the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

But there remains yet another element of our intelligent service—the character of “the Father.” God must be worshipped in “spirit and in truth,” for He is a Spirit: but it is as “the Father” that He “seeketh such to worship him.”

To worship “in spirit” is to worship according to the true nature of God, and in the power of that communion which the Spirit of God gives. Spiritual worship is thus in contrast with the forms and ceremonies, and all the religiousness of which the flesh is capable.

To worship God “in truth,” is to worship Him according to the revelation which He has given of Himself.

The Samaritans worshipped God neither in spirit nor in truth. The Jews worshipped God in truth, so far as this can be said of a revelation which was imperfect; but they worshipped Him in no respect in spirit. Now to worship God both are needful. He is to be worshipped

according to the true revelation of Himself (that is, “in truth”), and according to His nature (that is, “in spirit”).

Yet this is not all that is presented to us in this passage: in it is found another precious element of worship. The Father seeks such worshippers. It is grace which makes such now—grace flowing forth from love to themselves. Worship, therefore, is not rendered under a responsibility imposed by the flames of Mount Sinai, which, whilst demanding worship in the name of the holy majesty of the Lord, placed a barrier in the way of access to God, which no one could pass, under penalty of death; and which left the worshipper far off from God, trembling under the sense of responsibility, although encouraged by the benefits received from Him whom he dared not approach. No. Love seeks worshippers, but it seeks them under the gentle name of “Father.” It places them in a position of freedom before Him as the children of His love. The Spirit, who acts in them and produces worship, is “the spirit of adoption,” which cries, “Abba, Father.” It is not that God has lost His majesty, but that He, whose majesty is far better known, is known also under the more tender and loving character of Father. The Spirit, who leads to worship the Father, leads us also into the knowledge and enjoyment of all the love of God, who would have us to worship Him as His children.

The enjoyment of this love and of these privileges, God be thanked, belongs to the most simple and the most ignorant among Christians. The Christian, when once he has understood what the grace of God is, and has received the spirit of adoption, is entitled to enjoy them without any reasoning; as a child knows and loves and enjoys his father before he can give any account of that which he enjoys. “I write these things unto you,” says

John, addressing himself to the little children in Christ, “because ye have known the Father” (1 John 2:13). The feeblest Christian is therefore perfectly competent for worship. At the same time, it is sweet to be able to estimate and explain this relationship with God. The more we think of it, the more we examine the word on the subject, the more shall we see the import, the deep blessedness, of it. The simple fact that God is our Father, and that we possess the enjoyment of such a relationship with Him by the Spirit, is in itself an immeasurable privilege for creatures such as we are. Every child of God has this privilege in unquestioned right; but it is in Christ, and with Christ, that we possess it. He is “the first-born among many brethren.” He is gone to His Father and our Father, to His God and our God. What a sweet and blessed relationship! what a family is that into which we are introduced! And how are we, who were formerly strangers to these affections and to this love—how are we to learn these things? How are we to learn what the Father is, the knowledge of whom gives birth to these affections in our hearts? It is the only-begotten Son, the firstborn in this new relationship, who reveals Him unto us. Eternal Son of the Father, enjoying the infinite love of Him in whose bosom He dwelt, it is He who reveals Him as He Himself has known Him. Become man upon this earth, Jesus ceased not to be the object of the same affection—affection which, when challenged, could not remain silent. “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.” Nor did Christ in anything put Himself at a distance from this love. Upon earth, from the cradle to the cross, He was the object of it in all its fulness, and He revealed Him in whom it was found. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father,

he hath declared him" (John 1:18). Jesus, a man, but also the Son of God, in the enjoyment of the fulness of this affection, dwells, even whilst upon earth, in the bosom of the Father, to originate and make known here below all the beauty—all the force—of that affection. As man, He was the object of this infinite love, in order that we might understand it in its application to men. So He associates us with Himself in the joy of this love, and He reveals it to us as He Himself knows it.

What grace in Him! and what a position for us! How does Jesus Himself, who by His death and resurrection has planted us in this blessedness, become to us an object of love;, of adoration, of devotedness of heart! The very glory which is given to us is presented to us by the Saviour as a proof of this love. "The glory," said He, in John 17, "which thou hast given unto me, I have given unto them … that the world may know that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Such is His affection towards us, that He desires that we may enjoy the Father's love. So He renders us capable of this enjoyment by revealing to us the Father's name. "I have declared," says He in the same chapter, "thy name unto the men thou gavest me out of the world; … and I will declare it, in order that the love, wherewith thou lovedst me, may be in them, and I in them." Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus. This fellowship expresses itself in adoration towards Him who is revealed, and towards Him who reveals.

It will be easily seen how the work of Christ is the foundation of all this blessedness, whether in order to introduce us without spot and without fear into the presence of the God whom we adore, or in order to place us in the relationship of children towards the Father. It

was after His resurrection that Christ could say, “I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God.” Then it was that He could say, “Go to my brethren.” Now the Spirit which He gives from on high answers to this blessing. He is “the Spirit of adoption,” as He is the Spirit of liberty; because we are “accepted in the beloved,” and we enjoy a redemption which has made us “the righteousness of God in him,” and therefore placed us in God’s presence without a spot or stain of defilement.

Thus we have reviewed, at least in principle, the great foundation truths of Christian worship. Perfect in Christ, united to Him, brought into the presence of God, whose love and holiness are manifest without a veil; as children beloved of the Father, and objects of the same love with Christ the first-born, we worship together, according to the power and affections which the Spirit, who has been given to us, inspires. We worship the God of glory, whose presence is the stay, instead of being the terror of our souls. We worship the God of love, whose will it is that we should be perfectly happy in Him, that He Himself might enjoy our happiness, Himself finding more joy in it that even we ourselves. We adore our Father with endearing confidence in His kindness, which blesses us with all spiritual blessings, and counts the very hairs of our head, while thoughtful of all our present need. We adore Him for that which He is in Himself. We adore Him for that which He is to us, the children of His house for eternity. We thus present ourselves in sweet communion before the same Father—our common Father—as His beloved children; so that brotherly affections are developed, and, the joy of each being reciprocally the joy of all, multiplied praises ascend to

God. Hence we see in the New Testament, that, while indeed the consciousness of this relationship must necessarily be individually realized, in order that we may enjoy it together; yet, at the same time, the Spirit constantly associates us, and uses the words “we” and “us,” when speaking of Christian affections and feelings. The Holy Spirit shedding abroad the love of God in our hearts, it could not be otherwise.

But the effect of the presence of this “one Spirit” goes yet much further. Not only does He give us the consciousness of being in Christ—of being perfect before God, according to the efficacy of the redemption which Christ has accomplished; not only does He witness with our spirits that we are the adopted children of the Father, but He gives us also the consciousness of being but “one body”—the “body of Christ,” and “members one of another.” The Church, which God has newly-created in Christ—that “one new man”— the redeemed who have been “all baptized into one body,” offering worship in “the unity of the Spirit,” necessarily offer it as but” one body,” and that” with all the saints.” They are the “habitation of God through the Spirit”; and, that Spirit uniting them all in the unity of the body of Christ, adoration ascends on high towards God, who formed them to be but “one new man” in Christ. If Israel, as a whole, was represented by the priests who officiated in the tabernacle, the faithful now, who render direct worship to God, do it in the unity in which they are all “one body in Christ.” In this worship there is more than brotherhood. There is unity, not of nation, and not only of family, but of the members of one body formed as such, and indwelt by one Spirit. This is the endowment, privilege, and position of the Church, which

is baptized into “one body in Christ,” the Head being ascended up on high, in order that the members of the body may render worship freely and with joy before God, by that unction which descends from Him.

Let us state some of the practical effects which flow from these truths:—

First, it is evident that worship is the privilege only of the children of God. Being offered “in spirit and in truth” and being offered to Him who cannot admit sin into His presence, they, and they alone, who are washed in the blood of the Lamb, and who have received the Spirit, can draw near to God to adore Him. That a man who is not converted should render worship to God is simply impossible; for “without faith it is impossible to please God.” Such a one may be blessed in temporal things. He may, perhaps, ask such a blessing, and be heard. God may have tender compassion for him, as a poor sinner; but as yet he knows not God, as yet he has not the Spirit, as yet he is not washed in the blood of Christ; and therefore it is utterly impossible for him to worship God. That he thinks he can draw nigh to God is but the proof that he is ignorant of what he is in himself, and of what the God is whom he thinks to serve. Who can enter into the sanctuary, save he who is sanctified? Who can address himself to a father, as such, save as a child? Worship, moreover, being offered in the unity of the body of Christ, and by the Spirit who has formed this unity, and who dwells in the body as in a temple, he who is not of the body is necessarily excluded. To suppose that a person who has not the Spirit can be a member of this body is to deny its existence, its end, and its nature; for, if a man who is not converted can enter into the presence of God, and worship there, there is no need

that there should be either a body in which God dwells as in a temple, nor is there need of redemption, which is the basis of everything. Why should there be a redeemed people, if the worldling can serve God in His presence? Wherefore adore God by the Spirit, if he who has not the Spirit can adore just as well? Worshipping in common supposes persons united in one body by the same Spirit, and that each can say, We, in sincerity, when addressing God. A hypocrite may be present; he will be a hindrance in the worship; but its validity will not be thereby destroyed, when the worshipper says, We, in truth, in the name of all. It is believers who worship God.

To render true worship to God supposes that a soul is set at liberty, and is free to draw near to God, in virtue of the efficacy of the work of Christ. If a person who loves God, and who has no other hope than the work of Christ, is timid in drawing near, it is right to encourage him; but if such a one has no real knowledge of the efficacy of the work of Christ, he will be ill at ease even in drawing near to God, because God's presence will communicate to him rather the conscience of sin, than of the joy which that presence inspires, to him who enjoys it in the peace which Christ confers. Nevertheless, in such cases of doubting and trembling, right affections often precede the being set free, and are more true to Christ than the reasoning of the mind; but this state of soul is not the normal state of worship. To be consciously in the presence of God, purified from all sin by the blood of Christ—in the light as He is in the light—such is the position of the true worshipper. This is the standing of the believer in Christ: and, in order to worship truly, this standing must be known and enjoyed. Sometimes bad teaching neutralizes this liberty,

although the soul all the while, in its secret communings with God, cries, “Abba Father!” As a principle, however, whatever allowance be made by charity for these cases of ignorance, true worship supposes that we can draw near to God without fear. This freedom of access is a necessary and absolute effect of the complete and triumphant work of Christ, of which every true believer has the benefit; but it is the presence of the Spirit which enables us to realize it.

How delightful to be able thus to adore God! What a source of joy is He whom we adore! How great the blessedness of finding oneself in His presence, no cloud between Him and us, no tinge of fear, because no vestige of sin! Being made “the righteousness of God in Christ,” the presence of God becomes but an inexhaustible spring of happiness for that new nature which He has given us, and which finds its enjoyment in Himself. What joy to be able to express one’s acknowledgments, to render to Him one’s thanksgivings, knowing that they are acceptable to Him! What a blessing to have His very Spirit, the Spirit of liberty and of adoption, as our power of worship, as the inspirer of praise, of confidence, and of adoration! What joy thus to worship in unity, as members of the same family and of the same body, sensible that this joy is a joy common to all; knowing that those whom we love are infinitely precious and acceptable to the Lord, and that they all find their pleasure in praising Him who is worthy—the God who is the source of all our happiness—the Lord who gave Himself for us, in order that He might be our eternal portion! The perfection of all this will be known only in heaven. But Christian worship is the realization here below—in weakness, without doubt—of that which

will constitute our eternal blessedness. We have the privilege now of feeling ourselves for a little while separated from the world, withdrawn even from the work of faith, in order to enjoy that state of things, in which Christ will see all the travail of His soul and be satisfied. I repeat, worship is now offered in weakness, but it is in truth through the Spirit, and therefore on the principle of the unity of the whole body. It may be there are but “two or three” present; but, being assembled in the name of Jesus, He who is the centre and bond of all the members is found there; and, being offered through His Spirit, we are necessarily, and in love, bound up with all the other members of His one body. “We comprehend with all saints” (be the number of those uniting together what it may) “the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.” The truth that spiritual life is cultivated in private abides in undiminished force; but it is called into exercise before God in all the common joy of the Church. I believe there will be in heaven itself an individual joy and communion with God, which will be known only to him who is the subject of it. This precious truth, I think, is taught in that which is said to the Church of Pergamos: “To him that overcometh will I give a white stone, and a name written thereon, which no one knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” I add, that the ability actually to enjoy worship in communion depends upon the maintenance of the inner life; for how can we enjoy worship if God is not known and enjoyed in the soul? I add these few words, lest any should suppose that the joy of fellowship may lead to a neglect of the individual, secret, hidden walk with God. This is far from my thought; if the latter be not maintained, either the worship will be cold, or the joy will be carnal. The true blessedness of worship depends upon the presence of

the Holy Spirit, and, therefore, upon the spiritual condition of those who are present as taking part in it, save so far as the sovereign goodness of God interferes.

These observations lead me to refer to a very important principle; namely, that the Holy Spirit is the energy, the sole living source, of all that takes place in worship so far as it is genuine. This principle, indeed, is true universally; it is true of all the exercises of spiritual life. We live by the Spirit. We walk by the Spirit. We worship in spirit and in truth. It is the Spirit who contends against the flesh. It is the affection of the Spirit which is the expression of the whole of the inward Christian life. But in Christian worship, the members of Christ being united together, the Spirit acts in the body. All that which is real and blessed comes from Him. Sovereign in action, but acting according to the spiritual capacity of each, He uses this sovereign power in order to express the feelings which are suitable to the assembly before God, to nourish and strengthen them by His grace. That which takes place ought to be according to the spiritual capacity of the assembly, raising it up, however, in the tone and spirit of worship, and leading it into the sensible enjoyment of the divine presence. It is thus that the Holy Spirit acts, for He acts in man, but according to the energy and grace of God. When Christians are thus met together as members of Christ's body, each acting in his place through the Spirit, the opportunity is presented for the exercise of the gifts of the members, which are for the edification of the body. I say, "of the body," because evangelization is necessarily addressed to the world. That is, an assembly which has worship for its primary object is the occasion, by its very nature, for the exercise of the gifts which tend to the edification of

the body, although such exercise be in nowise the object proposed.19 This is clearly established by 1 Corinthians 14, which speaks in the most express manner of the exercise of gifts, when the assembly is gathered, and gives directions as to regulating the order of such exercise. This is easily understood. The assembly being formed as the body of Christ, and the Spirit acting by the members of this body, the body edifies itself by that which is furnished by each member, according to the gift which is distributed to each, the Spirit guiding all, in order that it may be for edification. But the principal matter is to draw near to God Himself. The exercise of gifts is but a means: the joy of love in the presence of God in worshipping Him is our eternal aim. Gifts will cease in heaven, as also the ignorance which needs instruction, and the slothfulness which renders exhortation necessary. Worship will, thank God, never cease. Under the law the service of the priest was more excellent than that of the Levite. The Levite served; the priest drew nigh to God according to the anointing which he had received. In the use of gifts we are Levites: in worship we are priests. Moreover, he who, through the Spirit, takes part in the worship itself, does not do so on the ground of having a gift,20 which is in general a faculty given of God to act among men. At the same time it is the measure of spirituality which gives the capability of being the organ of the assembly. The Spirit, then, acting in spiritual men in order to express the spiritual affections of the assembly, is the mode’ in which worship is rendered to God.

We have remarked, as every Christian admits, that the sacrifice of Christ is the necessary and fundamental basis of all Christian worship. We know that it is by

means of this sacrifice alone that we can draw nigh to God, whose demands could only be met by its divine perfection. But this is not all the relation which exists between worship and the sacrifice of Christ. Christ having opened to us this new and living way through the veil, that is to say, His flesh, we have full liberty to enter, through His blood, into the most holy place. But is that all? Do we forget the precious sacrifice, when once we have entered by virtue of its worthiness? No. It is there that we recognize it; it is there that we learn to appreciate its full value. Before entering, we might measure the value of the work of Christ by the need into which sin had plunged us. But now, happy, brought into communion with God, tasting the sweetness of His love, instructed in His thoughts and affections, we measure—what yet surpasses all measure—this work of Christ, by the grace of God which it unfolds. Instead of seeing in it only that which the sinner sees, all precious as such perception is, we see in it that which God sees in it. In the enjoyment of peace by virtue of this sacrifice—in spirit already in heaven—we contemplate its value with the eye of God, and are nourished with all its perfectness according to God's estimate. For these thoughts and this vision are given to us by the Spirit to sanctify us—to bring our hearts into harmony with the mind of heaven. We see also, in the offering He made of Himself, how great has been the love of Christ for us.

The death of Christ has such a value in God's sight, as to constitute, so to speak, a new claim on the affections of His Father. Thus, He who, as only-begotten Son of the Father, was all His delight before the world was, could say, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." His devotedness

to the glory of His Father was in this act seen to be absolute. All that belonged to the moral development of that glory was therein accomplished at the cost of Him who suffered. All that mysterious evil, by means of which Satan had sway in this world, and by which misery, death, and condemnation had entered, was turned to the manifestation of the glory of God. The righteousness, majesty, and love of God, irreconcilable in the midst of sin, were, through the intervention of Him who consented to be "made sin for us," thrown out in relief by sin itself. On the other hand, if we consider the personal perfection of Christ, His devotedness to the will of His Father, His love, obedience, submission, sacrifice of all, even to life itself, in order that the Father might be glorified, and that those whom He loved might be saved, His perfect patience, His confidence in God, which never failed even when He was forsaken, all found united in the cross; and then to think who He was, and that it was for us He did and suffered all— what a value ought His death to have in our sight! Add to all this, the power of Satan overcome; death destroyed—made even a gain for us; the veil removed from before the presence of God; a perfection, beyond the possibility of a taint, introduced into the whole wide universe, which it fills with peace and light, and of which it has made us the heirs; and, more than all, the perfect enjoyment of the love of God! What moral worth, then, has that cross, by which all is consummated, however feeble may be our ability to proclaim it—however feeble our hearts may be, as vessels, to contain the sentiment it inspires! Our adoration necessarily links itself with the cross. There the God whom we adore was glorified; without it His glory could not be fully displayed. There it is that we have learnt what God is.

But is the glory of the cross a glory which dazzles us and which forces us to a distance by its very greatness? Quite the contrary. Christ hung upon the cross for us—in our stead—as the very lowest from among the children of men. “His visage was marred more than any man’s.” His cross is the expression of tender affection towards us, of love stronger than death. He loved us even unto the end. He undertook to render us happy in the presence of the Father. He counted nothing too dear to Him that He might accomplish this end. And His heart, perfect in love, rests on those whose cause He has undertaken. He has associated them with Himself. He, who had need of nothing, has need of us. “I go to prepare a place for you,” said He; “and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” “Whom seek ye?” said He, in the garden of Gethsemane; “if ye seek me, let these go their way,” that His word might be accomplished— “of those whom thou gavest me, I have lost none.” He gave Himself for us. “With desire,” said He, “I have desired to eat this passover with you, before I suffer; for I will eat no more thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” As the passover was Israel’s memorial of the deliverance out of Egypt, so the supper is the memorial, not only of our deliverance, but, moreover, of the love of Him who has delivered us.

If Jesus attaches value to our remembrance to Him—if He presents Himself to us with so much tenderness in the memorials of His dying love, that love, at the same time, produces in us the very deepest affections—affections which are connected with what is most exalted in the grace of God, and which express

themselves in the adoration of the heart. We can understand, then, that although worship is offered in various ways, by hymns, by thanksgivings, in the form of prayers, in praise, etc., we can understand, I say, that the Lord's supper, as representing that which forms the basis of all worship, is the centre of its exercise, around which the other elements that compose it are grouped. The worshipper is thereby reminded of that which is the most precious of all things in the sight of God—the death of His beloved Son. He recalls the act in which the Saviour has testified His love in the most powerful way. Other considerations add their weight to those which we have just presented with regard to the Lord's supper. The worshipper eats in the house of God, as the priests ate of the things with which expiation had been made; he enters with spiritual affection into the perfection of that expiation— of what Christ has been in the accomplishment of it. "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." I apply not this exclusively to the Lord's supper, although the most vivid expression of it.

The peace-offering presents, with the passover, the most lively images of the true character of the Lord's supper. The former was a feast consequent upon a sacrifice; in the latter, Israel fed upon the sacrifice, the blood of which was their safeguard against judgment. In the former, the partakers were, God, the priest who officiated, the priests, the worshipper, and those who were with him. The fat burnt upon the altar was called "the food of God." This expresses the full satisfaction of God in the sweet odour of the work of Christ. The priest who offered the blood had his part. That is, Christ partakes in the joy of those that are His through the

efficacy of His death. The other priests ate another part. They represent Christians in general. Lastly, the guests of him who makes the sacrifice represent united worshippers. Thus God Himself has His part in the joy; so has Christ; so has the Church in general; and lastly, the assembly which participates therein.

This figure of the peace-offering is realized in a manner more precious in the Supper. Through faith, we feed on, and are nourished by, that holy victim already offered, the sweet savour of which ascends to God. Christ has His joy in our joy. We share in it with all the Church. Already in spirit in heaven, our hearts dwell on that which has given us title to enter there—on that which will be precious above all to our souls when we are there. United in one body, we shew forth the death of Jesus, which is the foundation of our salvation, “until he come,” and we are for ever with Him on high, where remembrance will be lost in the immediate presence of Himself. The praises and thanksgivings of the worshippers are necessarily associated with the acceptance by our God, in heaven, of the sacrifice of Christ. This is ever true as to the heart; but the Lord’s supper is the special definite expression of the fact.

In the Old Testament this truth is expressed in figure in a remarkable manner. In the peace-offering, if any one ate the flesh of the victim on a day which was too far removed from that on which the fat was burnt upon the altar as a sacrifice to God, instead of being communion, it was a sin. In the case of thanksgivings, a man might eat of the flesh only on the same day; in the case of a voluntary offering, on the morrow also. The joy of the worshipper, expressed by his eating of the sacrifice, must be in immediate connection with the offering made

to God; otherwise, it was profane. In general, therefore, the flesh was to be eaten the same day; and even where greater energy of piety, indicated by presenting a voluntary offering, gave more force to this association, the repast on the morrow was not really separate from the sacrifice.

Reflection upon the truths we have been considering will shew the importance of the Lord's supper in worship, whether we view it in connection with the sacrifice offered to God, as the foundation of all our relationships with Him, or in connection with the affection and the devotedness of Christ for us— the two themes which form the sphere of the spiritual affections that are exercised in worship. But there is another point also connected with it.

We have seen that the Holy Spirit being the source, the power, and inspirer of all true Christian worship, the unity of the body formed by Him, and in which He acts, necessarily holds a prominent place in the worship which He produces in its members so united. Love, which is the soul of it, is defective in one of its most perfect forms, if conscience as to this unity is wanting. The presence of the Holy Spirit produces the consciousness of this unity, of which He is the author and the bond. Now, considered in one aspect, the Lord's supper is the expression of this unity. We are all but "one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread" (or, as in the original, "of that one loaf"). If the bread broken represents, on the one hand, the broken body of Christ, the unity of the bread represents, on the other, the unity of His spiritual body. As the Spirit embraces all saints, so do the hearts of believers. Thus, "When I knew," said the apostle, "your love unto all saints." And again, "That ye

may comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge."

How sweet to find oneself united to "all saints," wherever they may be, in the unity of the body of Christ, as members together of that body, according to all the privileges which attach to it by reason of the love of Him who "nourishes and cherishes" it, as a man does his own flesh. How sweet to feel, through the Spirit, one's union with all that are Christ's, accompanied with the thought, so full of joy, that all those dear to us, as belonging to Him, are cherished by His constant love. Thus it is that intercession connects itself so intimately with worship, properly so-called, being inspired by the affections which are generated by the Holy Spirit. The petitions made by worshippers for grace for themselves are scarcely farther removed from worship, because the consciousness of what we owe to God, which is expressed in worship, necessarily produces the desire of glorifying Him, and of receiving the grace which alone can render us capable of doing so.

With regard to the Supper, we find indeed that not only does it form the prominent feature of the religious exercises of believers, but that, with this end in view, they were wont to unite in the occasional and solemn assemblies. Thus, we read, "they continuing daily with one consent in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house [margin, at home]" —that is, in their private houses, in contrast with the temple. Again, "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

It appears, then, that the early believers partook of the Supper even daily, and that, being still Jewish, in many respects, they diligently frequented the temple; but then they had, in their houses, in remembrance of Christ, this special service, as to which He had said, “Do this in remembrance of me.”

In Acts 20 we read, “And upon the first day of the week [the resurrection-day], when the disciples came together to break bread.” This passage implies that this act, though others might accompany- it, was the object of their meeting.

It has been supposed that “the breaking of bread” might apply to something besides the Supper, since there is proof that they made a meal at the same time. There is no doubt as to the meal. Christ instituted the Supper at the time of His own last evening’s repast; and at first the disciples partook of a supper at the same time that they broke bread; but “the breaking of bread” had a character proper and distinctive to itself, even as it had its formal appointment. Not to perceive this, when it is celebrated, is what the apostle calls “not discerning the Lord’s body”; and in the Epistle to the Corinthians he corrects this abuse. The passage shews that they came together to eat; but, alas! their feast had at Corinth set aside the spiritual service, and some came to take their surfeit in eating and drinking, and left the poor in want. The Supper was not observed in their private abodes, but in a building common to all, and every one brought “his own supper,” and the service had entirely lost its character as the Lord’s supper. The passage plainly shews that they came together in order to eat, and that they supped together in the common place of meeting, but that the Supper of the Lord was the avowed object

of the meeting. To maintain this last institution in all its importance the apostle ordained that the repast, which previously had accompanied the Lord's supper, should be separated from it, that so they might come together in the spirit of devotion, and not bring down chastisement upon themselves.21 The two grand elements of Christian worship are the presence of the Holy Spirit and the remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ, which is commemorated in the Supper.

But in this worship the affections which are connected with all our relationships with God are developed. God, in His majesty, is adored. The gifts even of His providence are recognized. He who is a Spirit is worshipped in spirit and in truth. We present to God, as our Father—the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—the expression of the holy affections which He has produced in us; for He sought us when we were afar off, and has brought us near to Himself, as His beloved children, giving us the spirit of adoption, and associating us (wondrous grace!) with His well-beloved Son. We adore our Saviour-God, who has purged us from our sins, and placed us in His presence without spot, His holiness and His righteousness, which have been so marvellously displayed in our redemption, being to us a source of joy which passes not away; for, through the perfect work of Christ, we are in the light as He Himself is in the light. It is the Holy Spirit Himself who reveals to us these heavenly things, and the glory which is to come, and who works in us so as to produce affections suitable to such blessed relationships with God. He it is who is the bond of union between the heart and these things. But in thus drawing out our souls He makes us feel that we are children of the same family, and members of the

same body; uniting us in this worship by means of mutual affections and feelings common to all towards Him who is the object of our worship. Jesus Himself is present in our midst, according to His promise. In fine, worship is exercised in connection with the very sweetest recollection of His love, whether we regard His work upon the cross, or whether we recall the thought of His ever fresh and tender affection for us. He desires our remembrance of Him.

Sweet and precious thought! Oh! how joyous to our souls, and yet, at the same time, how solemn ought such worship to be! What sort of life should we be careful to lead in order to render it! How watchful over our own spirits! How sensitive as to evil! With what earnestness should we seek the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order to render such worship suitably! Yet it should be very simple and truthful; for true affection is always simple, and at the same time devout, for the sense of such interests imparts devoutness. The majesty of Him whom we adore, and the greatness of His love, give solemnity to every act in which we draw near to Him. With what deep affections and thankfulness should we at such times think of the Saviour, when we recall all His love for us— abiding through Him in the presence of God, far removed from all evil, in the foretaste of our eternal blessing!

These two great subjects about which Christian worship is occupied (namely, the love of God our Father, and the love of the Lord Jesus, in His work, and as Head of His body the Church) afford slight changes in the character of worship, according to the state of those who render it. At times the Lord Jesus will be more specially before the mind; at times thoughts of the Father will be more

present. The Holy Spirit alone can guide us in this; but the truthfulness and spirituality of worship will depend upon the state of those who compose the assembly. Effort in such things has no place. He who is the channel of worship, let it be observed, should not present that which is proper and peculiar to himself, but that which is truly the exercise through the Spirit of the hearts of those who compose the assembly. This will make us feel our entire dependence upon the Comforter—the Spirit of truth—for truthful service to God in communion. Nothing, however, is more simple or more evident than the truth, that the worship which is rendered should be the worship of all.

There is another observation which the consideration of scripture would suggest, namely, how much the worship will be affected by all that grieves the Holy Spirit; every impediment, therefore, even in an individual, will make itself felt, if there be spirituality; for we are there as but "one body." It is of the utmost importance that this delicacy of spiritual feeling should be cultivated and maintained, and that we should not habituate ourselves in worship to but little sense of the presence of God and of the power of the Holy Spirit. If there is true spirituality, if the Holy Spirit fills the assembly with His presence, evil of every kind is quickly discovered. For God is a jealous God, and He is faithful. A single Achan was discovered at the commencement of the history of Israel—a single he in Ananias in the beginning of the Church's history. Alas! what things afterwards occurred in Israel! And what things afterwards took place in the Church, without anyone having even the consciousness that evil was present! May God make us humble, watchful, and true to Him, and enable us to bear in mind

that His Spirit abides with us, in order that we may be able to render spiritual worship! It is by the Spirit's powerful testimony to the efficacy of the work of Christ, that we can abide in the presence of God, without blame and full of joy, and thus present to Him worship which is a witness before the angels of heaven to God's gracious and unfathomable love, and which presents to God Himself the most acceptable proof of the efficacy of that work which takes from us all fear in His presence, and which opens a channel, otherwise eternally closed, for the outflowing of that love in which He finds His delight.

The privilege of being able to render worship to God is granted to two or three gathered together in the name of Jesus. Disciples are so gathered, when it is the power of His name known amongst them as the common tie, which is recognized as the principle of their assembly. Jesus, in accordance with His promise, is there as the joy and strength of their common service.

The Lord said to Israel, "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee" (Exod. 20:24). Again, it is said (Deut. 12) that they should offer their offerings in the place which He would choose to set His name there; which had its definitive accomplishment at Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:29). But now God is known in the blessedness of His presence, where two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus. There Jesus Himself has said He would be in the midst of them. Sweet encouragement for the feebleness of His people! If there were thousands of disciples gathered in one place, how great soever the encouragement given by such a work of the Spirit, the presence of Jesus Himself —the most precious of all things—is vouchsafed even to two or three of the least of those that are His, if it is

truly in His name that they are met. Let it be only His name in which it is done. The fleshly pride which loves to make much of a gift, and would claim lordship over God's heritage— human arrangement which would seek to avoid simple dependence upon God—the narrowness which would welcome upon the ground of peculiar views —none of these is in the name of Christ. Those who unite in the name of Christ embrace, in heart and mind, all those who are His—all the members of His body; they embrace them in the principle upon which they are met: otherwise it would not be in His name that they were united; for one cannot exclude from the power of His name those that are His. His heart embraces them; and we are not united according to His heart, if, in principle, our assembly does not embrace them. Clearly His name does not embrace the world, nor sin, nor that which denies the truth which that name reveals.

The name of Jesus unites in one those that are His. He that gathers not with Him scatters abroad.

Christians are bound to maintain holiness and truth, and to make constant progress towards the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. To hinder this, and to seek to fashion souls according to the mould of particular views, tend towards the destruction of practical unity.

Nothing but spirituality subject to the word—and regulated by grace, in a word, the guidance of the Spirit of God—can, in certain cases, discern between that which is a step forward, and that which is the insisting upon some private view. For the spirit of the world, which is opposed to progress in divine things and to that which presents more of Christ, will stamp with the name

of “particular views” all that which tends to make our responsibility to Christ deeper and more felt; and a spirit of sectarian narrowness will treat as progress all that makes much of its own notions. Moreover, supposing an assembly of worshippers is truly founded upon the basis of the unity of the Church of God, if the mass of the assembly is not in a state to bear that which would be a true step in advance, it is useless to insist upon it; to do so would tend to division rather than to progress. Such was the case of the Corinthians. The apostle had to nourish them with milk. They were not able to bear stronger food.

On the contrary, when it is a return to a judaizing spirit, which would compromise the gospel, the apostle refuses to stop (Heb. 5:12, 14; ch. 6: 1, 4). The energetic wisdom of the Spirit of God is needed by the Church. It is not the intention of God that she should be able to do without it, or be exempt from dependence upon Him who gives it.22 But I desire to revert to the foundation of the subject of which I treat. What I have said relates to the assembling of the children of God for worship. Sweet and precious privilege to anticipate that which will be our eternal employ in heaven! There our worship will be perfect. There, all the Church, in its completeness, will be assembled to render worship in the midst of the general assembly on high. There, without distraction and without fear, worship will be its eternal joy in the perfect favour of God. What a privilege, even here below, to close the door for a moment upon all the distractions of this nether world, and by the Spirit to satisfy the desires of the heart in rendering to God the thanksgiving which He is worthy to

receive, and which in His grace, He has breathed into our souls!

I would notice a few more passages which may help individuals to seize the true idea of worship. The first is Philippians 3:3: “We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” We may remark that the question here is not about sin, or the flesh, but of “confidence in the flesh” —that is, about the religion of the flesh, which is altogether as evil as its lusts; for, after all, religiousness is but one of them, though covered with the veil of works and of holiness. The touchstone of the religion of the flesh is that it does not tend to the glory of Jesus, or that it does not glory only in Jesus. It can be much occupied in good works; it can be without reproach as to conduct; can have much of self-denial, much of piety, plenty of humility; can talk much of the love of God; but while pretending, perhaps, to found its services upon His love, it will be conversant rather with that love of God which is in our heart—with our love to Him, and not with His love to us. It may be asked, “But if all these things can exist in a person, and be nothing but the religion of the flesh, how can we discern the true circumcision?” Scripture tells us: “it rejoices in Christ Jesus.” Nothing is easier than to judge as to these things, if Christ is our all. The fact that He is so makes us feel, without hesitancy, that all this religiousness is of the flesh, and yields its help to that which destroys Christianity from its foundations. Is another mark desired, by which one can judge of this religion of the flesh with all its pretensions? It does not hold the Head; that is, he who has confidence in these religious actings of the flesh never has the

consciousness of his own union with Christ. He knows not what it is to be raised up together with Him and made to sit together with Him in the heavenly places. He knows not what it is to be a member of His body—bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh—one spirit with the Lord. Such a one will, perhaps, recognize this as true for the Church, in an abstract manner (for the religion of the flesh can be orthodox), but he has not faith to recognize it as true of himself. Faith is an individual thing; and it places him who possesses it in the enjoyment of the object which it regards, or under its effects. Colossians 2, as well as the chapter cited above, judges all the fair but specious appearance of fleshly religiousness. The Lord, in His addresses to the scribes and Pharisees, judged it in its grosser forms.

Another thing which marks carnal religion is that, however apparently elevated be its piety, it accords with things which are not of heaven; it seeks not, in every respect, “things above,” which is the characteristic of one who is dead and raised up together with Christ (Col. 3:1, 3). The religion which is of the Spirit serves God in spirit, and has no confidence in the flesh. The religion of its forefathers, even though it may be true, is not held by the true “circumcision” on the ground of having received it from natural progenitors. It confides not in its zeal, nor in any devoutness which it can offer to God, nor in its love to Him. It rejoices not before God, save in Jesus Christ alone. The soul that has truly learnt that it was dead in sins, but that the Saviour has come down and been made sin for us and has died for us and been raised up for us, knows in God’s sight but one sole thing; and that one sole thing, which it puts forward, in which it rejoices, in which it glories before God, on which it

knows that God has placed all His delight, is Jesus Christ. One cannot fail to observe how this practical description of the true circumcision, that is, of God's people, who are truly set apart for Him, and who are dead as to the flesh, connects itself with the great foundation principles upon which, as we have already seen, the true Christian stands in the service which he renders to God.

Let us bear in mind also, that it will profit nothing to mingle carnal religion with that of the Spirit. The flesh of the Christian finds in such a course its aliment. The effort of the adversary, at the commencement of the Church, was, not to substitute the law and circumcision in the flesh, in place of Christ, but to add them. But the apostle saw clearly, by the Spirit, that were this admitted, all was lost. Make anything else an essential, and Christ shall profit you nothing. The Christian is one with the Head—one with Christ; let in the least thing between them, and the body is a corpse. The work of Christ is not sufficient, if anything is to be added. And not only so, but thereby the Christian standing is completely swept away. For then, instead of being in Christ, happy in God's presence by virtue of a work already accomplished by the glorious Saviour alone; instead of being "complete in him," "accepted in the beloved," man has still to seek means of rendering himself acceptable to God; he has still to find a way by which he may present himself before Him. Under such circumstances, the word declares, "ye are fallen from grace." The nature of Christianity is thereby changed. It is virtually denied, though professed in word. The truth of the gospel is lost.

May God grant us to have “no confidence in the flesh,” but “to rejoice in Christ Jesus.”

It may again be asked, “But is it not possible to maintain these truths in all their height and yet still to be carnal?” I answer, Doubtless; but when this is the case, the flesh takes the form of licentiousness, its real character, and not that of religiousness. The flesh is very pious, when it acts the pious, for it always desires to rejoice in itself.

There is another passage, which formally applies to things on earth, but which beautifully exhibits the spirit of worship. I refer to Deuteronomy 26. In type, Canaan represents heaven. Israel, arrived in Canaan, enjoyed the promise. Read the chapter. The worshipper, already come to the good land which God had given him as an heritage, presents himself with “the fruits of the land.” This is what we have to offer to God, even the grateful and joyous effusions of hearts filled with heavenly blessedness. For, in spirit, we are in heaven. We are in Christ, who fills it with His glory and His perfections, and we dwell in the love of God Himself, who has introduced us thither. Holiness and love and joy characterize the land. They are the fruits which grow there spontaneously, as are the thanksgivings that arise in the hearts of those who are there through redeeming power.

The worshipper professed aloud that it was God that had accomplished everything for him. It was thus he presented himself. This acknowledgment was due to God, since Israel was indeed there through His faithful sustaining grace, and there would have been failure in recognizing his true position, if he had not come as an unconditional debtor to God’s grace. Is it then that he

forgot his own wretchedness? No. But he was in it no longer; and it served to exalt the greatness of his deliverance. “And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became a nation, great, mighty, and populous: and the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage: and when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression: and the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders: and he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey. And now, behold, I have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God, and worship before the Lord thy God.” All this applies in spirit to the Christian. He was the slave of Satan, and miserable in himself. God looked with compassion on his affliction, and delivered him with “a mighty hand.” He has rescued him from this Egyptian world, and made him an heir of glory in the heavenly places. Already seated there in Christ, has he nothing to offer? Does the heavenly land, which the Lord our God hath given us, produce nothing which we can offer to God, in testimony of the value of His gifts, in token of the sense which we have of His goodness? The Israelite, redeemed by God, was constituted a worshipper. He addressed God directly, rendering to Him the worship which was His due—the fruit of a heart happy in His bounty.

Thus the spirit of grace and of love was shed abroad in his heart, and he enjoyed all in simplicity and with gladness. Inviting the desolate and the stranger to partake with him of God's goodness, he made them also happy. "And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you. When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled; then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me; I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them." Pure in walk, maintaining the holiness of God, and carefully preserving that which was hallowed for Him from being profaned, he could, from his heart, implore a blessing upon all the people of his God, and ask that it might rest upon the whole state of things in which God placed them. Here was the memorial of a tie between God and His people.

In examining also Deuteronomy 16 we shall find, in the directions given for the celebration of the feasts of the Lord, an unfolding of the spirit in which they were to be observed. These directions furnish, in measure, an instructive contrast between the states of soul which the different feasts respectively inspired.

At the Passover, when the Israelites celebrated the fact of their having been spared, the joy of the other feasts

was not found. Doubtless, they recognized the deliverance accomplished, but the unleavened bread (type of purity and simplicity of heart) is called “the bread of affliction.” They had gone out of the land of Egypt in haste to save themselves. How could they think of tarrying there to perish? Such was their haste that they “took their dough before it was leavened,” and made their escape. In commemorating their deliverance after they had reached the land, it was remembered by them as a deliverance—an escape; and thus everyone turned in the morning, and went to his own tent. Thus it is also with the believer. It is grace to be delivered, but so long as there is barely the consciousness of deliverance, and deliverance from such ruin—from slavery, holiness is felt as a requirement, and this is not the joy with which the Holy Ghost afterwards fills the heart. We may see the purity of Christ, demanding that the leaven of sin be entirely put away; we may be thus in a true position of heart. Deliverance was needful for such slaves. Holiness is obligatory: without it no one shall see the Lord. We may have a solemn feeling of the grace which has saved us—of the truth—of the profound reality and need of that sacrifice, the blood of which has stayed, at our threshold, the sword of the holiness of God. But all this, however salutary and however needful, is not joy; it is not communion. Everyone retires apart by himself.

In the feast of Pentecost (prefiguring the gift of the Holy Spirit) there was joy; a voluntary offering was presented to God according to the blessing which the Lord had vouchsafed. There was joy in communion. They raised up the downcast heart of the widow, of the orphan, of the Levite, and of the stranger. They rejoiced before the

Lord their God in His presence where He had set His name. They recalled the thought that they had been slaves, but it was while enjoying their freedom before God, who had shed abroad His blessing upon the people whom He had set free. Here again, we find the true spirit of worship. It will be noticed that they offered according to the blessing of the Lord.

The feast of Tabernacles went a little farther; they rejoiced in like manner, and the joy diffused itself over others, whose heart God would lift up. The spirit of joy and of peace still characterized the worshippers gathered together in the presence of their God; it marked the communion which is the effect of that presence, and of His people's drawing near to Him. But the feast, the spirit of the feast, was to be kept up during all the seven days; "thou shalt rejoice," it is said, for now they are in the full consciousness of "the rest" of God. The ingathering of the corn-floor and of the wine-press was complete. In full and abundant enjoyment of all the fruits of the land, in the rest of God, they celebrated the bounty of Him who had given them these things, not according to the blessing He had given them, but because the Lord their God had blessed them in all the works of their hands.

This feast is typical of the rest which Israel shall enjoy from all their toils in the age to come; but for us, doubtless, the accomplishment of it will be in heaven. Yet now, in so far as we realize our portion, we anticipate that joy, and we bless God accordingly.

I will next direct the reader's attention to Revelation 4 and 5.

In Revelation 4:8, we find the four living creatures ascribe to “the Lord God Almighty “the glory of all that which He is in His holy and eternal majesty. This ascription of praise leads those who represent the glorified saints, in their character of kings and priests, to take their crowns from off their heads, to leave their thrones, and to fall down “and worship him that liveth for ever and ever.” They are thus more exalted morally in appreciating and recognizing the glory of Him to whom all majesty belongs, than by being clothed with the insignia of their own glory. They are more exalted in employing the measure of glory, which had been conferred on them, only to exalt His, than by bearing it before the armies of heaven or the inhabitants of the earth. That which characterizes us in drawing near to God is more excellent than that which distinguishes us from His creatures. The crowns, by which these elders were distinguished from their fellow-creatures, were the symbols of a real glory, because it had been given them of God; but to esteem this glory as nought save as an offering, because they understood the more excellent glory of Him who had loved them and who was placed far above them, was certainly a position more exalted than highly to appreciate it, and to clothe themselves with it in sight of those who were beneath them. The object was more excellent—the spirit of a higher order; for they thought no longer about themselves. They were really exalted Godward, although He alone was glorified. Their attitude and act exhibit the perfection of the creature’s state and position, viewed as such before God.

Another element however enters here, in order to make the picture complete—an element, the existence of

which is presupposed in what I have just said, and which is plainly presented in this passage. Precious privilege for us that it is so! It is, that these twenty-four elders (representatives, as I have said, of the saints), as kings and priests, possess the understanding of what it is which makes the Lord worthy of praise: “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” The Lord is the source and final end of all that exists. That which He is, and the fact that He is worthy to receive all glory, because of the manifestation which He has made of Himself, is what we see to be the subject of the homage rendered by the saints to God—the Creator.

Chapter 5 has redemption for its subject. The elders worship the Lamb that was slain, as worthy to take the book of the ways of God in government, because He has redeemed them. Here again the recognition of the glory which will result in the official dignities of the redeemed, and in the dominion confided to them, is apparent in the praises addressed to the Lamb by the heavenly saints. Their praises are directly addressed to Him who is the object of them. The prayers of saints accompany them. The praises of angels, not directly addressed to the Lamb, are called forth by the adoration of the saints. Lastly, all that inhabit the universal creation, of God together celebrate in chorus the glory of God most high, and of the Lamb, with the “Amen” of the living creatures (direct adoration of the Lord being proper to the twenty-four elders, who are also characterized by intelligence as to the foundation of the glory of God, as manifested in His acts of power and of grace). We may observe here, that these passages do not

present God in the character of Father, but as Ruler and Sovereign. This is in accordance with the character of the book.

I cite these various passages, not as giving us the precise revelation of what Christian worship is, but as furmshing many precious elements to enable us to seize the thought of worship in general. The Psalms furnish other examples: only we must bear in mind that God is there also presented as Governor of the earth, and not as Father of His beloved children, who participate in His nature of love. In our proper position, we adore “the Father in spirit and in truth,” in the sweet confidence of being the children whom He loves, while at the same time we overlook not any feature of His majesty.

16 I doubt, however, whether, in point of fact, it is possible for an adequate worship to be rendered to God by one alone. An innocent man might bless God for His goodness; but God Himself is now revealed in Christ, and for such worship as should rise to the height of this revelation to be rendered by a solitary being would suppose such a capacity in the worshipper as would put him almost upon a level with Him whom he adores. God would not be in the place proper to Him for worship; for who alone could glorify God suitably, if himself the sole object of His favour? Here the intervention of Christ is of great importance for the foundation of worship; because God is so glorified as that worship can be rendered to Him; and those who adore Him do so by virtue of that which He is for them in this intervention of Christ. The worship is based upon the fact that God is fully glorified; and we adore Him in acknowledging Him as thus glorified.

17 The more, however, we ourselves enjoy the spirit of worship, the better fitted shall we be to testify to others; for it is only in the intimacy of communion with God that we are fit to render suited testimony as to His love.

18 It will be found, consequently, on examination, that the Epistle to the Hebrews bears throughout the character of a contrast rather than a comparison.

19 Worship is every whit as perfect without the exercise of the gifts of teaching or exhortation, and, indeed, in itself, more so. If these gifts are habitually used in such a way as to falsify the character of the assembly, and to deprive it of its true character of worship, we are always losers thereby. For if the Spirit of God, who acts, finds it meet to exhort and to teach the members of the body on such occasions, it still remains true, that to be able to adore God, without the need of being exhorted, is a more excellent condition of soul. One is, in this case, more simply and entirely engaged in communion with God—in the enjoyment, by grace, of Himself.

20 It seems that the gift of tongues was used in prayer as well as in teaching. This is easily understood, the spiritual man being required to take part in an assembly, the language of which he understood not but by revelation. This only confirms the general idea as stated above.

21 The apostle does not suggest the idea of examining themselves whether or not they should partake, but in order that they might partake aright, that is, in a proper spirit. The Supper being the expression of the unity of the body, not to partake of it is to excommunicate oneself. No one had an idea that a Christian would do such a thing with regard to himself.

22 I have said this much concerning things which are but accessory to my subject, because they refer to difficulties which are constantly occurring in the Christian’s path. My remarks are applicable only to an assembly based upon the eternal foundation of the unity of the Church of God; if that is compromised, there is no ground for any union at all according to God.

Deliverance From Under The Law, As Stated In The Holy Scriptures

Editor's Note 23

In our relationship to God, there are two points of primary importance for us to remark: their responsibility as men, and the power of that life in which we live before Him. Both these were set forth to us by God in the garden of Eden, in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and in the tree of life.

First, as to our responsibility, man has become a sinner; consequently he has in him no spiritual life at all (John 6:53). Sin brought in death and condemnation. After the fall God gave the law by Moses in order to prove the state of man. The law of God must exact righteousness according to the nature of him to whom it is given; but the law does not give life (Gal. 3:21). It is the very nature of the law to exact and not to give. Since it is the question of righteousness in man, God cannot lower the requirements of the law; and if we have the divine nature, we shall not desire its requirements to be lowered. The law is the measure of responsibility of the natural man, but it does not give life, and (because man is a sinner) the law, instead of being a resource, becomes the cause of death and condemnation. A mixture of law and grace, in so far as this last is found working in us, does not change this state. Grace does not destroy our responsibility, and that which the law requires is not fulfilled.

Christ came to be our Saviour and our Deliverer. He is the source of life to those who believe. He became

subject to the death under which we were, and He bare upon the cross our sins, and the wrath of God which they deserved. But this is not all. In the person of this Saviour, man enters into a new position. He is the man who is risen and glorified before God. The righteousness of God is accomplished in Him, and He has received that glory as a reward. Let us now see how we are made partakers of this amazing position before God.

God cannot endure sin. The responsibility of the creature cannot be destroyed. At the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans the apostle unfolds the condition of sin under which both Jews and Gentiles are. Without law—man is without restraint (ungodly), debased by sin; he has lost every right thought about God, being given up to things not even suitable to man in nature. Under the law, he not only has corrupted himself through his lusts, but he is disobedient by reason of his own will—a transgressor. The law condemns not only sin, but also the sinner. The Saviour appears, born of a woman, and placed under the law; He shed His blood in order to purify us before God—to justify the sinner before God, the just Judge. Grace, rich and deep, is also presented to us in this work. It is the instruction of the Epistle to the Romans down to the end of chapter 3.

In chapter 4 he begins to examine another truth—the effect and the result of the resurrection of Christ. In chapters 5, 6, and 7 we have the effects of this truth; and in chapter 8 the result in full.

The history of Abraham is introduced in chapter 4. If the Jew found “himself condemned by the law, he could fall back upon the relationship God had established between Himself and Abraham. It was to this end that the apostle

set forth what were the foundations of this relationship, and shewed it was built upon faith and the promise. Righteousness was by faith, and it was given to Abraham before he was circumcised— “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.” There is yet another principle taught us in this chapter. Abraham was as dead, as also was Sarah his wife. But God had promised to him a seed. Abraham did not doubt His word because of the impossibility to man of the thing, but he believed in the power of God, whose part it was to fulfil His own promise, and that was counted to him for righteousness.

And so it is with us, only with this most remarkable difference: we do not believe that God is able to fulfil His promises, but that He has fulfilled them. “We believe in God who has raised up from the dead our Lord Jesus.” Observe, the apostle does not say here, We believe in Him who is raised, but in Him who has raised. It is thus that he teaches us the meaning of this doctrine. In the resurrection, God does not present Himself as the just Judge, satisfied as such by the work of Christ; but He acts according to His own power in the sphere of death’s power, in bringing forth His beloved Son from under it, and bringing us now, in Christ, into a new position where death and sin are not. It is God who works for us, to save us perfectly, and to set us before Him in truth and in righteousness. Man being dead as to that which concerns spiritual life, and living in sin as to natural life, it is only in Christ he has died and risen again, and finds his place before God in grace, where sin is taken away and righteousness is accomplished: “He was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification.”

From chapter 5 to 8 is the application of this truth to our own condition; in chapter 5 to our justification; in chapter 6 to the new life of the believer in Jesus; in chapter 7 to the law; and chapter 8 describes a soul in perfect liberty.

In chapter 5 he shews that the believer enjoys peace with God; that he lives in the sense of God's favour, being heir of His glory, and rejoicing even in tribulations, which work for his spiritual good. Much more, he rejoices in God Himself, who is his source of endless joy. As man, he was under the first Adam, and, as a necessary consequence, an inheritor of the consequences of his disobedience; the believer is in the Second Adam, through whose obedience he is righteous. But because he is righteous through the obedience of another (that is, even Christ's), the flesh says, No matter what I do—I can do what I like. But I say, Thou hast already done enough; all thou hast done has been to destroy thyself; and thou acknowledgest, without being aware of it, that thy will is to sin. But let us go on with our subject.

The apostle is not here speaking of the all-important motive which the believer finds in the blood of Christ to cause him to cease from sin, nor of the power which he finds in the love of God; but he shews that he cannot live in sin to which he is dead. The Christian partakes of the fruits of the obedience of Christ, because He is dead and risen. How can he live in sin, being already dead to sin? A dead man does not live. He is not a partaker of the blessing which is in Christ, if he has not the life of Christ. Though, as to the natural life, he is still living in the world, he ought nevertheless to reckon himself as

dead to sin, since he lives by the life of Christ who is dead and risen.

In chapter 7 he considers the consequences of the same truth as to the law. The law, he says, has dominion over a man so long as he lives; he then gives the tie of marriage as an explanation of it. As long as the first husband lives, the wife cannot be to another man without guilt. The first husband then represents the law, the second is Christ raised from the dead (Christ when living on this earth was Himself under the law); and thus we cannot be at the same time under the law and united to Christ raised from the dead. However, it is not the law which dies, but Christ died under the law; for as many as have sinned under the law shall be condemned by the law; and the law is good if a man use it lawfully (Rom. 2:12; 1 Tim. 1:8, 9). If it were ourselves who were dead under the law, we should be lost; but Christ died for us. And because He is risen from the dead, our souls are united to Him, the law having no longer a hold over a dead man. Therefore, now, Christ, He who is raised from the dead, is our only husband. Thus the resurrection of Christ has delivered us from the law, as well as from sin and condemnation.

Romans 5, then, shews us our position in Christ, the Second Adam, who is risen; chapter 6, our new life in Him, a life of which the strength lies in reckoning ourselves dead to sin; chapter 7 is our complete deliverance from the law, which hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth. As to us we are dead and risen in Him. It is the new man in Christ which bears fruit unto God, and not the old man under the law. Yet the fault is not in the law; but, because sin is in the flesh, the effect of the law is to bring home guilt upon the

conscience, and to become an occasion for exciting the desire to sin.

But, to return to the leading subject of the chapter, we see that we cannot be at the same time under the law and with Christ risen. This would be to have two husbands at once. In the second half of the chapter we are given the experience of one who wants to fulfil the righteousness of the law, and to bring forth fruit to God as standing under the law—the first husband. Awakened by God, and under the influence of the new life, he understands the spirituality of the law; he understands its requirements; he desires to keep the law, and bis conscience cannot be satisfied unless he does so. The new nature loves the righteousness of the law; but by reason of the opposition of the flesh it does not fulfil it (chap. 7:14, 16, 22). Sad state of a soul which, by reason of grace working in it, desires to do good; but because it is under the law, knows not how to do it! Now, let it be observed, that while in this state the soul is in its relationship with the first husband, and consequently has nothing to do with the Second. We have seen that no one can have two husbands at once: therefore in this passage there is no mention made either of Christ or of the Holy Spirit. It is the ordinary Christian experience of the spirituality of the law which we meet with. The conscience of the individual, being renewed, knows that it cannot fulfil the requirements of that spiritual law. The will renewed makes every possible effort to do so, but it cannot succeed. All the while it loves the spiritual nature of the law; it does not desire that it should be less perfect. It knows that God cannot give up His authority, nor lower His holiness. It tries with all its might to attain the end; but it has no power. The law demands perfect

obedience; the conscience and the will assent; but the law gives no power: the end will never be attained. The awakening of the conscience in one who is sincere never produces in him the accomplishment of righteousness, but, on the contrary, despair. It is much more difficult to know and acknowledge that we cannot do a single good thing, than to know and acknowledge that we have sinned. The experience which the soul passes through under the law is a means of convincing it of its powerlessness; but holiness cannot be a subject of indifference, either to God or to the new-born soul; and as we find that we cannot work out righteousness, we are obliged to seek deliverance elsewhere. Yet, though God will convince a soul that is sincere of its powerlessness, He takes no pleasure in leaving it in this wretched state; but as soon as it acknowledges its state, and that it is, and knows itself to be, without any hope in itself, so that it can never attain to the righteousness of the law, then God reveals to it its perfect deliverance in Christ. Then at once the soul gives thanks to God for what He has done for it; it sees where its new place is in Christ risen—its true husband, that it may bring forth fruit unto God (v. 24, 25). Henceforth, it is not only a new position (in Christ risen) which is its position, but also strength and liberty. The flesh is there still, its nature is not changed; but our position before God is in the Spirit and not in the flesh. The power of the Spirit is present hvingly in us, so that we walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Christ in heaven is the expression of our true position before God. Christ living upon the earth is the representation and example of the heavenly man upon earth. Walking after the Spirit, we fulfil the law (by loving God and our neighbour) because we are not under the law.

The close of verse 25 is brought in by the Holy Spirit in order to shew us that, though we are seen in perfect liberty, the nature of the flesh is not changed; but the law (which means here a principle acting always in the same way)—the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has completely set us free from the law of sin and death which reigns in the old man. In Christ we live in the new man (there the old man has no right), but the Holy Spirit is the power which works in it. As to the question of righteousness, the Christian is in perfect peace, because he knows that God, instead of condemning him, has done what the law could not do—that is, "condemned sin in the flesh," by means of Christ come in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as the atoning sacrifice for sin. A soul who is in earnest will always mourn more over the sin which he finds working in him, than on account of the sins already committed; but he knows that Christ has died in his stead, not only for sins but for sin itself. So, then, in chapter 8 we see Christ as the sacrifice upon the cross, then alive in resurrection, and then the blessed testimony, as the living power^ of the Holy Spirit is fully unfolded to us.

From verse 5-11 of this chapter the Holy Spirit is declared to be the character and the power of the life. From verse 12-27 He is in us the personal witness of our adoption and of our right of inheritance, and the helper of our infirmity. From verse 28-39 the Holy Spirit is proving that God is not only working in us, but, much more, He is for us, in His own power and faithfulness, so that the happy believer is assured that nothing can separate him from the love of God—a love which he knows by the Holy Spirit which dwells in him.

The height of the glory, the depth of humiliation in death, are in Christ the proof and the means of our being everlastingly blessed in the presence of God Himself—in the blessedness which grace has given us.

But there is still more instruction to be drawn out of chapter 8:8. Verses 1-3 are a summing up of the three preceding chapters, and three things are taught us in them. First, the position of the guilt of man when considered in the light of responsibility. The answer to this is His being justified by God. This is the subject of chapter 5. Secondly, the nature of the old man and that of the new is the subject of chapter 6. Thirdly, God, in order to put to the proof the ability of man to work out righteousness for himself, brought in the law, and man, through the fall, being a sinner, could not fulfil righteousness. Even before he was a sinner, when his obedience was put to the proof by a law, it became the occasion of his fall. But when, by means of the new birth, he understands the spirituality of the law, then he knows not only that he has committed sins, but that the law of sin is in his members. This is the subject examined by the Holy Spirit in chapter 7.

The power and the nature of the new life in Christ, who has died and is risen from the dead, is the answer of God’s grace to the wickedness of the flesh. This is taught us in chapter 6. The soul set free, through fully knowing the work of God in Christ, is the answer of grace to the experiences of chapter 7. By considering attentively the first three verses of chapter 8 it will be easily seen that verse 1 corresponds to chapter 5, verse 2, to chapter 6, and verse 3 to chapter 7. Chapters 6 and 7 are closely connected, because the soul that is born again finds out the true character of the old man by

means of the law. We have, then, the summing up of these two chapters in verses 2 and 3 of chapter 8. All hope of deliverance is shewn, in chapter 5, to flow out of justification. But this is not man's thought. He would wish to deliver himself actually from the law of sin by his own effort, and thus be without fault before God; but God will not have it so, and it never could be according to His truth, because that, on the one hand, the work of Christ would have been in vain, and, on the other, man would not have known what is the true nature and sinfulness of sin. If by efforts in the conscience we could find deliverance before God, the work of justification, though it might not be by strength of man, would at least be by the work of the Holy Spirit, and not by the work of Christ. But God will not; and for man it is impossible to have it so; because the work of the Spirit of God is to shew him how intolerable sin is to God, and that the nature of man is not changed. Now his very nature is sin. Man must submit himself to the righteousness of God. Convinced of sin, condemned by the law, he must find his righteousness in another—in Christ, who died for him, and is now risen and in the presence of God. This is the reason why chapters 3 and 5 come before chapters 6 and 7, and verse 1 of chapter 8 before verses 2 and 3.

After the Holy Spirit has described the conflicts of the soul that is born again, and shewn its helplessness, then the "there is no condemnation" (chap. 8:1) is the first want of the soul, and the beginning of God's answer to it in His grace. But, because we have this privilege ("no condemnation") in a risen Christ, this does not separate from life, and cannot be separated from it; so it is not simply a doctrine upon a particular subject expressing

the thoughts of God, but it is a change in what passes in the soul within—a change wrought through the knowledge of this subject by means of faith. The soul has learned its own helplessness by means of the law; the law of God has discovered to it the law of sin that is in the members. The man sees the sin that dwells in him; he hates it, but he cannot deliver himself from it.

Whilst we are upon this subject of the law, it ought to be remarked, before going farther, that there are some who make a law of Christ Himself. They acknowledge His love; they see in His work on the cross, how great is His love. They find in it a reason why they should love Christ perfectly, with their whole hearts; but they cannot find this love in themselves. They ought to love Christ with their whole heart, but they do not love Him thus. Now it is precisely the law which commands that we should love God with all our heart. We have found in Christ a new motive, we have perhaps given a new form to the law, but we find ourselves still under the law, though we have clothed it with the name of Christ. The power of sin is still there; it prevents us from fulfilling the law, which requires that we should love with the whole heart. Sin is in the flesh; it harasses me, and gets the better of me. Where can I look for deliverance from this terrible and skilful adversary? Our very helplessness is our resource. We find that God Himself must come in, because we can do nothing. No sooner have I understood the work of God (not the promises), than I find that God Himself has done the whole work. This is what is meant by verse 3: God Himself has met and conquered the evil which was always too much for me. Christ, who knew no sin, having been made sin for us, has taken away, not only the sins which we have actually committed, but also sin in the

flesh, in the presence of God, because He died not only for sins, but also for sin.

In this the love of God has been revealed to us, that Christ came into the world when we were nothing but sinners; but this revelation of His love does not purify the conscience. Moreover, so long as the conscience is not purified, the heart cannot rejoice in His love; because doubt in the conscience causes fear, and this prevents the heart from resting with confidence on His love. It is most true that love is in God; but the heart cannot make this love its own, because conscience tells us that God cannot bear sin.

The Holy Spirit who speaks of love in the gospel, speaking by the same word is also light to convince of sin, and, this convincing, brings home to the heart not only sins committed but sin as in itself. A child may be convinced of his father's love, but he fears to meet him if his conscience tells him he has done anything wrong. "Fear hath torment." But if we are risen with Christ, not only is it true that God has loved us in our state of sin, but He has also raised us up into quite a new position—into the same position as Christ Himself is in before God, where we ourselves are the result of the mighty power of God, according to the power by which He raised up Christ from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places (Eph. 1:9-23; 2 Cor. 5:5).

The manifestation of the love of God in Christ whilst we were yet sinners is recalled to our attention in 1 John 4:9; but our perfect position in Christ, by being made partakers of His life, is set forth in verse 17 of the same chapter. Now Christ came into this position after having

entirely finished His work—a work by which the conscience is purified; and thus love is shed abroad without hindrance in the heart. Because I am united to Christ, who has died and is risen again for me, sin can no more be imputed to me than it can be imputed to Christ; His position before God is quite the same as mine, and (let us remember: it is a solemn thought!) to have any other would be nothing short of damnation. There is no middle place between the first and Second Adam; and we well know that Christ's position now before God is without sin, not only as to the perfection of His Person (which was always perfect), but besides as it regards the imputation of sin. What then? Has God become indifferent to sin? Did Christ do nothing as to it? Did He shrink back on account of the difficulty of the work? Did He claim at His Father's hand twelve legions of angels to deliver Him? or did He follow the counsel of the chief priests by saving Himself as He had so often saved others? No! we know it well; He is the Head, without sin, of those who believe on Him, because, as the One who has stood in their stead, He has made an end of sin upon the cross, and, having finished this work, He has united them to Himself by a new life which flows from Him, and by the power of the Holy Spirit which has made them one with Him. And now what does this truth say as to believers? Not only did Christ bear our sins upon the cross, but He was there personally our substitute before God. For all that which the Holy Ghost now shews us as sin before God, in the light of His countenance— for all that Christ died upon the cross and He has borne it for us. He is Himself in the presence of God, judged of according to the light of His glory; He is there who knew no sin, yet who was made sin for us.

Now, thanks be to God, all is over— the work is accomplished.

The cloud whence the lightning of God's judgment came forth, the tempest of His wrath, has passed away, taking out of the way our sin; and now the sunshine of God's love rests on us without a cloud—that perfect love which gave Jesus to finish the work. The conscience is purified according to the holiness of God who has Himself judged the sin.

Before this, though God sent the law among men, yet He Himself was hidden from them; but the same stroke which tore the veil, so that God was revealed in His holiness, has at the same moment taken away the sin which forbids our standing before His unveiled face. The full light (for the true light has now shined) which shines around us, and in which we are, shews that we are without sin before the face of God; and that our garments are washed in the blood of the Lamb. The nearer we are to the light, the more clearly will our perfect purity before God be seen.

It is thus, then, that what the law could not do (because it condemned the sinner without being able to change the flesh) God has done, because Christ has not only borne our sins, but has come in the likeness of sinful flesh, and become the sacrifice for sin. Thus God has condemned sin in the flesh. Let this be particularly noticed. It is not said, Sin shall be condemned, as a thing that is yet to be done; neither is it by the power of the Holy Spirit, but it is by the atoning sacrifice of Christ.

Christ has given Himself up as the atoning sacrifice for the sin of which the Holy Spirit has convinced thee, O

believer. God has condemned the sin which has been thy constant sorrow; but He has condemned it on the cross of Christ; He has taken it away; and thou art free. Thou hatest it—it cannot be otherwise, if the Holy Spirit is at work in thee. Now it is no more imputed to thee than are the other sad fruits borne by this corrupt tree. Thou art before God in Christ, in whom sin has been condemned on the cross.

Now, as regards holiness, what is the effect of this truth? What have we to say of the position of the believer? He is set in the light, even before the face of God. He has a life which rejoices in this light; he has the Holy Spirit to enjoy it. Holiness is measured by this light. Since we are in the presence of God, all things shall be judged according to the perfection of His presence. “We have communion with the Father and with His Son.” Therefore, when the apostle speaks of sin in Romans 3:23, he does not say, “We have sinned, and we come short of what men ought to do,” but we “come short of the glory of God.” And because we are on the ground of grace, it is not merely that holiness is expected from us, but we are made partakers of His holiness. And not only so, but because God is for us, we find power to realize in our life this setting apart to Him; and because we know He is for us, we have the assurance that He will give us this power when we draw near to Him. Holiness is realized by communion with God; but with the conscience of sin, communion is impossible. Where shall we find strength for practical separation to God, unless in God Himself? How can we ourselves walk in this practical holiness if we have not His strength? How can I seek this strength from God if I have not the assurance that He is for me, and if my conscience prevents me

from approaching Him? Efforts made after holiness may be sincere before the soul is set at liberty, because the tendencies of the new life are there; but such efforts are always mixed up with the felt need of justification, and thus the true nature of holiness is overthrown and lost, or, rather, it has never been known.

As to our rule of life, in accordance with our position of being in Christ, it is His life on earth which is our model. “He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked.” These two things were seen in Him. He was the righteous man before God, and before man He was the revelation of God’s character. Such ought also to be our life upon earth; walking in the presence of God, we ought to manifest His character before men. And the reason for this is, because Christ Himself is already our life, as the apostle says, “That the life of Jesus might be manifest in our mortal flesh.”

And herein is the important difference between the law and the commands of Christ. The law promises life if we fulfil its commands. The commands of Christ, as with all His words and works, are the expression of the course of that life which we possess already in Him. And what were the principles of this life in Christ Himself? First, He could say, “the Son of man which is in heaven.” It was love from which all His service flowed. Even as man, He was born of God; and He could say of Himself, that for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross and despised the shame. The same thing is true of us, with this necessary difference, which there must be, because of His glorious Person, for He is God Himself. United to Him, our life is hid with Him in God.

Then as to our life on earth as believers, it begins with our being born of God. The love of God in our hearts is the spring of our walk; and the glory in Christ which is set before us strengthens us in all the sufferings of our pilgrimage on earth. And, moreover, there is the power of the Holy Spirit, by whose fulness He lived and acted whilst on earth, and which is our strength to follow Him. Thus we have two rules by which to measure good and evil: on the one hand, the Holy Spirit dwelling in us; and, on the other, the life and fulness of Christ Himself glorified. Concerning the Holy Spirit, by which we are sealed unto the day of redemption, we ought not to grieve it; rather ought we to be filled with it, that we may realize our communion with God with perfect joy. From our connection with Christ, we ought to put off the old man and put on the new, created in righteousness and true holiness; and in addition to all this, in sight of the fulness of His glory, we ought to grow up unto Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ, unto a perfect man—unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

23 [This paper appeared originally in German.—Ed.]

The Sufferings Of Christ

Editor's Note 24

Preface To The First Edition

The numbers of the “Bible Treasury” containing the papers on “The Sufferings of Christ,” having been widely sought after, are out of print, and not to be had. Recently, an attack has been made on the doctrine contained in them, and in other articles to which I will just now refer.

The real character of that attack is such that I do not feel it possible to take the smallest notice of it. It seemed to me the best reply to it was to publish the articles incriminated in it. The reader will find them here exactly as they were originally published, with the exception of the correction of errors of the press. I might, I dare say, have made some passages clearer; but it is evident that, under the circumstances in which their publication comes before the reader, my only path was to publish all exactly as it had already appeared. It seems to me that, as it stands, it is quite sufficiently clear to any upright mind. I am not so foolish as to think that all the expressions in it are the best, or absolutely exact or just, as if I were inspired; but what is taught (taught I think sufficiently clearly for any one willing to learn) I believe to be the truth, and hold and maintain as the truth now. To the humblest and weakest of God’s saints I should gladly explain my meaning, and should be bound to do so. Here it would be out of place. I have only to beg them to take my doctrine from my own papers.

Two main subjects are involved in the attacks made: the sufferings of Christ in Gethsemane; and Christ's laying down His life. In both I maintain fully the doctrine I have taught in these papers, and I think what is opposed to it is ignorance or fatal error. The first—the connection of Christ's sufferings with the state of the remnant of Israel in the last days—I do not expect those not versed in scripture to enter into; and I would add, that (though this is enlarged upon in an addition to the original article, because enquiries were made as to it) I have no wish to turn aside any one's mind from the deep intrinsic preciousness of the sufferings of Gethsemane to their application to that particular subject, as I think the original article may shew. It was enlarged on because enquiry was made as to it. I think, however, the Psalms will never be clearly understood till this is.

As regards the second point, I not only think that the doctrine taught in the "Girdle of Truth" is sound, but I think it one of the most important truths possible at the present time (one which in the present confused state of Christendom lies at the root of blessing), and am thankful that the present attack will spread it more and more. I republish, therefore, from the "Girdle of Truth" the article which has given occasion to the attack.

I have not republished the paper from "The Present Testimony," because only one sentence, which I reproduce here, was quoted from it. The paper in question is that part of the Synopsis of the Books of the Bible, translated from the French, which refers to 1 Peter. In a developed view of the whole epistle, these words occur in explaining at considerable length chapter 3:18, and following verses, "Put to death as to his life in the flesh, but quickened according to the

power of the divine Spirit." I have no remark really to make on it. I think it very just. As to what was He put to death if not as to His life in the flesh? I think it is exactly what the text says. For this sentence I did not think it worth while to print the whole article with the other papers. My worst enemies (I am sorry for their sakes that I have any) are at liberty to make anything out of it they can.

I have to add, though of course I may be mistaken in such a point, that I maintain the translation of the passage in Acts 20, "The church of God which he purchased with the blood of his own." The more I weigh it, the more I am satisfied it is right.

I do not know that I have anything to add, as my object here is not to discuss any point. I have hitherto in my answers on questions of doctrine (though judging some statements severely, because I thought Christ concerned in them) dealt quietly and courteously with my adversaries. But I do see another hand and mind behind what is going on, of which this pamphlet is a clear sign to me. As an attack on myself, I am glad not to answer it. If I have to take my adversaries up because they still carry on their warfare, and Satan is using them for mischief, I here declare I will not spare them, nor fail, with God's help, to make plain the tenets and doctrines which are at the bottom of all this. As regards myself, if I have one desire in my heart, it is that the blessed Lord may be glorified. It is my one joy now when He is. It may be my everlasting blessedness. If there be anything in these papers which dishonours Him—what I say is this: no explanation to defend myself. God forbid. Let them be torn to atoms. It will be easy to gather up anything that is good in them from the only source of it. I will be the

first to begin the work of destruction. They are days in which His glory and the truth must be kept clear at all cost: I will put the match to burn all if there be anything which is against it. I have already said, of course there may be expressions less perfect than they might be.25 It would be folly in an uninspired teacher or writer to suppose otherwise. Whatever they are, you have them here, my reader, just as they were. If, on the other hand, what engages us is an attack of enemies on them, and of the enemy because it is the truth as I believe, I will deal with the attack as such. I will take another opportunity to correct expressions if needed. The truth that is in question can be dealt with from the papers as they are. The reader has them before him. They were written for edification, not for controversy, though, in part, on controverted points, and not with the watchfulness against misinterpretation which controversy might awaken. But I am not aware of anything in them which, when taken as it is stated, requires much remark. I am not afraid of the conflict, if conflict I must have.

Note.—Since the publication of the tract containing the papers of the “Sufferings of Christ,” and that from the “Girdle of Truth,” I have been accused of suppressing the paper on Hebrews 5. My attention having been drawn to the articles in the “Bible Treasury” in 1858, and that in the “Girdle of Truth,” which the tract which gave occasion to their publication expressly notices (page 15 of the first edition), I directed the printer and publisher of the two journals to reprint the whole together. I had not remarked that one quotation came from another article in the “Girdle of Truth,” forming no part of the series on Christ’s sufferings, but on an entirely different subject—Hebrews 5. I therefore did

not write to the publisher to publish that. The truth is, I did not write that article at all, nor consequently send it to the “Bible Treasury.” It may have been given to me to look over for the press—I cannot say; but I have no recollection of having ever read it, certainly not since it was printed. It contains notes of a lecture delivered at Bridgewater, taken down by a person present. The reader will find nothing new on the present question; nor is there more than is already given in the accusing tract, the paper (which I could only know to be mine by its style and contents) being on a different subject: nothing at all, therefore, is suppressed. The truth attacked is in some respects more clearly stated here than elsewhere. I trust the tract may itself be useful on its own subject; so I publish it, though the reader will find nothing new on the point attacked. One or two expressions I think questionable, though the doctrine be right. But they are not on this point: so I do not notice them. I only see additional reason in the statement now brought under my notice, not to pay attention, in any other way, to what has given occasion to the separate publication of these papers. But I take away occasion from those who seek occasion.

I would add that a closer and fuller examination of Acts 20:28 has more than ever convinced me that my translation is the right and only right one. I reject entirely the ordinary one.

The paper on Hebrews 5 (“The Word of God and the Priesthood of Christ”) is published separately and can be had of the publisher, price id.

Introduction*

A new edition of the tract on “The Sufferings of Christ” being requisite, I take the occasion of making the observations that circumstances have called for. If I have suffered in my poor and feeble measure a trial which my blessed Master went through (and I have) I am not now going to speak of it or of those who have been the instruments of it, and for two reasons. First, if the glory of Christ be in question, it is better to sink oneself: He alone is to be considered. Secondly, I fear falling into any expression which, if God gives repentance to my accusers, might stand in their way on their return. This only I have to beg of my reader, as I had to do when attacked eight years ago on the same papers, that he will take my account of my doctrine from myself. Statements have been made as to it, giving exactly the opposite of what is expressly stated by myself; sentences, with marks of quotation, professing to be my teaching, which are not found in the article cited from, and my accuser’s interpretation of the doctrine given in some subsequent passage as my statement. I owe it to brethren who seek the truth to state on what ground I stand in this matter. Admitting the imperfections of poor human nature in my expressions, and immaturity too (of course, I had not scanned and weighed it all as I have since these attacks);26 I hold completely and fully the doctrine which it was my object to teach in these papers. If they had been studied with a willing mind, I believe true edification and profit would have been found—I have found the deepest and sweetest in what they seek imperfectly to expound. I am not terrified by my adversaries, nor do I shrink from the consequences of what I teach. I know many brethren have been profited

greatly by this unfolding of Christ's sufferings. I can say of my brethren, they are in my heart, if it may be, to live with them, if I can hold the truth here taught. I rejoice unfeignedly in communion with brethren who can receive me, avowing it and holding it. But this truth I hold, avow; and do not, and with God's grace, shall not, give up. I do not press their holding it. It may be truth they have not got hold of. It is not the truth on which fellowship and the testimony of brethren as witnesses for God rest, but instruction and profit for those who are in communion. Hence I in no way require its acceptance. I make it no term of communion at all. The testimony of the Church of God is to be maintained independent of it. I reject no one for rejecting it. The truest saint may be ignorant of what is edifying. I would not disturb the peace of any, but I shall hold to what I believe to be the truth, and the blessed Lord will decide the consequences. I should not think of making it a term or question of communion. I do not believe one fundamental truth is in question in it, though I believe deep and profitable instruction as to the sufferings of Christ will be found in it. I should not for a moment, consequently, have raised the question. I should be grieved if any one who thought me right should for a moment make it, or mix it up with, a question of communion. My earnest desire is that saints may quietly seek profit by it, not contend. Contention on such a subject does mischief.

But the question has been notoriously raised, and my part as a violently accused person is to be open and clear. I hold substantially, whatever imperfection of statement there may be, what I have taught in the tract I publish, gladly correcting any ambiguous expressions,

but maintaining the teaching itself. I have been in no hurry to publish on it. I have refused, and do refuse, to defend myself personally. I had rather cast my own part on the Lord than do so. Besides, with those I should have to say to, it would have been too painful. I desired to weigh the matter, my own papers on it, the scriptures, and my adversaries' objections. I desired that others should search the scriptures and have their time, for I was aware it was a subject which required spiritual discernment and the examination of scripture: many without this would be unable to judge of parts of it. I was in no hurry and could trust the Lord. I was both taunted and urged to action, but I was resolved to pursue my own course, though the urgency of friends distressed me: the taunts and attacks affected me little— they are common things. Meanwhile I answered every one who honestly enquired of me and demanded explanation. This I was bound to do. I had a correspondence, which I commenced, with Mr. Hall and Mr. Dorman; but since the Portsmouth meeting I never received a hint of objection from any one, nor an intimation on the subject, till I wrote myself. The favourers of Bethesda inundated the country with all sorts of publications to prove my doctrine was the same as Mr. Newton's (following T.R.), the ground on which my present accusers have openly placed themselves. But these efforts I never paid the slightest attention to. I am perfectly satisfied all, from beginning to end, is an effort of the enemy; and when this consists of attacks on oneself, the best way, if one has the conscience of being right, is to leave it to the Lord, and be as a deaf man that hears not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. So I have been. So I am as regards those who have now taken up this ground— have avowedly taken it up. On

this last point too, therefore, I shall speak out. I reject Bethesda as wickedness, as I ever did; and on the same ground I reject the principle, far more widely spread than that chapel, on which it stands. My experience of that principle in America, in connection with other doctrines, but which those called Neutrals have freely fallen in with and accepted communion with, has confirmed me in the conviction, that acceptance of fellowship with those holding any deadly doctrine is infidelity to Christ, and evil and unfaithful, and a work of the enemy. The Church is the pillar and ground of the truth. That which is not in principle this, is not the Church at all even in its principle—does not gather with Christ, but scatters.

When the blasphemous doctrine of Mr. Newton (one for whom personally I have nothing but kindly feeling, and whom my heart, if pained, only yearns over) came out, Bethesda deliberately sheltered and accredited it. I broke with Bethesda, and I reject it still. It is all one to me if it be a Baptist Church or anything else, it has been untrue to Christ, and no persuasion, with the help of God, will ever lead me a step nearer to it. I reject Mr. Newton's doctrine as blasphemy as I always did. The attempt to connect my doctrine with his is folly or worse — an effort of the enemy to palliate and cover his work. I do not quarrel with those who reject me when they think I hold like doctrine: what can I think of those who reject me to palliate what is associated with his? I must leave them at present to their own consciences.

I add, I reject entirely the principle on which Mr. Hall goes. It is, as I told him, the root and principle of Mr. Newton's system, namely, that a person must be in the state or relationship which brings sorrows on any one, in

order to enter into the sorrows the transgressor himself is in. I have been furnished with a passage which fully brings out his view, though it does not meet the whole question. In the case of the mother going into prison with a son (or if she never went at all, that would put the case more clearly), he says, “Now she could not share nor enter into either”—that is “first the penalty,” “and secondly the inward miserable feeling of having sinned and deserved it.” Now I affirm she could enter into it:27 it is a fatal denial of Christ’s suffering to deny His doing so. The more spiritually minded she was, the more (and that in connection with love to her son) she would feel in her own soul the dreadfulness of it, and learn what evil, that she was never in, was. Christ was not penally there (save vicariously on the cross); but He did enter into it. That is one important part of the question. I hold the doctrine, that Christ could not enter into our sufferings, to be mischievously false and falsifying Christ’s true place of sorrow.

But to pursue this point further still, that we may better enter into that sorrow, is it meant to be alleged that Christ did not taste death—death in itself, not in sympathy28 nor in atonement, but death—when He said, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death?” Mr. Hall admits two causes of suffering in Christ, atonement and sympathy. If suffering be not from one of these, it must, he tells us, be His own relationship to God. I reject this as fatal teaching. It is a denial of the truth of Christ’s suffering, and is but human reasoning in the teeth of scripture. I cannot conceive anything more destructive of Christian affections. He did work atonement, He did and does blessedly sympathize; but to exclude His own true sufferings as a man, as for

instance, “Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness,” desertion, betrayal, and a thousand sorrows of Christ, is utterly ruinous and repulsive to the Christian heart; yet these were not atonement nor sympathy. He suffered Himself that He might be able to sympathize. And this view is the whole ground of his system; and hence he makes anything else a putting of Christ necessarily into the state or relation which brought the sorrow on, which is exactly what Mr. Newton did. There are the true sufferings of a human heart, and such as never were anywhere else, which are neither atonement nor sympathy.

I reject then wholly, and with my whole heart as a Christian, the system Mr. Hall presented to me. I do not charge him with the statements of Mr. Newton nor with the consequences of his doctrine. I believe he is wholly unaware that he is on that ground. But he is on it, though unknown to himself. My object here is only clearly to state the ground I am upon, without entering into any formal discussion. The great principle is that which is important. It seems to me that every Christian (and that as led by the very instinct of Christian life, as taught by the word) must utterly refuse that propounded by Mr. Hall. Christ did enter into the sufferings of others without being in the state they were in, and He had deep sufferings of His own which were not atonement and were not mere sympathy.

I go on to state further my own views on these points. I hold as to expiation or atonement fully and simply what every sound Christian does: The blessed Lord’s offering Himself without spot to God and being obedient to death, being made sin for us, and bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; His glorifying God in the sacrifice

of Himself; and His substitution for us; and His drinking the cup of wrath. I believe, though none can fathom it, that what I hold, and have taught, and teach, makes this atonement clearer. I mean the not confounding the sufferings of Christ short of divine wrath with that one only drinking of the cup when He was forsaken of God. I see this carefully brought out in Psalm 22. In the midst of cruel sufferings, of which the Lord in Spirit speaks prophetically there, He says, “But be not thou far from me, O Lord,” twice over. Yet (and that is the great fathomless depth of the psalm) He was, as to the sorrow of His soul, forsaken of God. With that no other suffering, deep and real as it was, can be compared. But the Holy Ghost makes here the distinction in order to bring out that wondrous cup, which stands alone in the midst of all things, the more clearly. And this makes other suffering more true and real to the heart, and the drinking of the cup (that on which the new heavens and the new earth subsist in immutable righteousness before God, and through which we are accepted in the Beloved) has a truth and a reality which nothing else gives it. The mixing up accompanying suffering with this, in their character, weakens and destroys the nature of both. We come to the atonement with the need of our sins; once reconciled to God, we see the whole glory of God made good for ever in it. I add, as regards Christ’s relationship with God, I have no view but what I suppose to be the common faith of all Christians, of His being His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased, that, as a living man here below, divine delight rested upon Him. Though never so acceptable in obedience as on the cross, there He was as, for God’s glory, bearing the forsaking of God. That of course was a special case.

But two objections have been raised here to what I have taught, and to these I turn. One is, a certain change which took place in our Lord's position then, His being given up of God and giving up Himself into the hands of men to accomplish the purposes and glory of God and make propitiation for our sins. On this the New Testament is as clear as possible. We read, "No man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come." From His own lips, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." He tells them that the Son of man must suffer many things and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes … the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of men. Till His hour was come, hostile as they might be, this could not be.

Hence He tells His disciples, "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him take it … for I say unto you that this that is written must be accomplished in me. And he was reckoned with the transgressors; for the things concerning me have an end." And again, "When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hand against me, but this is your hour and the power of darkness." Now, though for the purpose of bringing about the work of atonement, delivering the Son of man into the hands of men was not atonement. The hour of the priests and scribes was that of the power of darkness. Before that, if the crowd would throw Him down from the brow of the hill, He passed through the midst of them and went His way. No doubt He gave up Himself. This side of the wondrous picture John gives, when he shews the band of men going backward and falling to the ground, and records the unspeakably

precious words of the blessed Lord— “If ye seek me, let these go their way.”

But up to this, in the accomplishment of the counsels of God, there was a hand that restrained the will or the force of the people. Now the Son of man was to be delivered into the hands of men. It was not the actual moment of atonement, though the path to it; but the hour of evil men and the power of darkness. Was it sympathy? With whom? To deny a change in the position of the Lord and God’s ways with Him as a man on earth (I do not say or think in His relationship with God) is flying in the face of scripture. It was not atonement, it was not sympathy, but the suffering of the blessed Son of God, now going to be delivered into the hands of men, whose hour as instruments of the power of darkness it now was, which it was not before.

But there was complicated sorrow. He was meeting indignation and wrath. He was not yet drinking the cup, He was not yet smitten, but He was going on to it, given up to that which was the instrument of it, pressed that it should be done quickly, was in the hour, which meant all that and meant all that to His soul. It had its own sorrow, but His soul was troubled— first prayed that He might be saved from the impending hour, but bowed to it as the hour He was come in,to the world for; then urged that it should be done quickly; then was sorrowful even unto death, because, now, just delivered up into the hands of men, He was meeting indignation and wrath. The very thing that made His sufferings then so deep was that He knew that He was meeting indignation and wrath. The wickedness of men was heartless and without conscience, but it led on step by step to the cross, to the cup which He had to drink. He was now as

Son of man delivered, or just about to be delivered, into the hands of men, rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, the leaders of Israel. The shadow of death from the cross was not merely foreseen in the sunshine of divine service and favour, but passing over His soul, though not yet drinking the cup. He tells us so Himself. He was in this not sympathizing with others. He looked for sympathy from others, and prayed His disciples to watch with Him. He was not actually drinking the cup, but He was meeting indignation and wrath, I repeat. This gave to His delivering up to man its force and sorrow of death. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and in the days of His flesh made supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death.

There are two collateral points which have been insisted.upon: the Lord's connection with Israel, and His full meeting and resolving the question of good and evil, so that deliverance might be absolute and eternal. I am not sure but that in the tract these two points are intermingled so as to produce possible confusion in the mind. The latter is far deeper and requires more spiritual apprehension than the former, which connects itself (not,with what is absolute and essential, eternal and perfect good, and putting away evil, fully judged and completely estimated in the ways and work of Christ, but) with God's government in the earth; of which Israel is the centre. God has made Israel that centre, as Deuteronomy 32 clearly states, and (while He has called the Church to be the witness of sovereign grace which associates her with Christ in heavenly glory) yet He has, from the moment He took Israel to be His people, never changed His counsel nor purpose in

that people. Enemies as touching the gospel, they are still beloved for the fathers' sake; for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. But God has always put men first under responsibility, and when they failed, accomplished, or rather will accomplish, His counsels in grace.

But as regards Israel, the trial was twofold, as indeed in a certain sense with all, their faithfulness to Jehovah, and their reception of Messiah, of Him who comes in the name of Jehovah and who is Jehovah Himself, but Jehovah come in grace. The one was the controversy with idols, brought out in Isaiah 40 to 48, where their comforting and Christ Himself withal are promised, but where the question is idolatry, Babylon, and Cyrus, but looking on to final deliverance for the righteous. On that I do not insist further. The other was the coming of Messiah, of Jehovah Himself in grace, as a test. This is treated from chapter 49 to 57 going on to final deliverance of the righteous, but turning on the rejection of Christ, introducing atonement, here especially for the nation, but embracing every believer. This question, I need not say, was brought to an issue in the history of Christ, the future result for Israel being still matter of hope and prophecy, yea, of Christ's own prophecy in Matthew 23 and 24. Christ died for that nation, or it could not have had the future blessing. Now we must remark that what is promised to Israel is fulfilled only to the remnant. The hopes are the hopes of Israel. It is Israel's blessing; but if God had not left a very small remnant, they would be like Sodom. This remnant, a third part, will pass through the fire, through the terrible tribulation such as never was, though in a large degree sheltered and hidden of God. Still they will

pass through the fire (Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:2, 3; Is. 26:20, 21 with what precedes). Abundant scriptures might be quoted to the same purpose. The prophetic part of the New Testament confirms this, in the Revelation and in the Lord's prophecy in Matthew; and it is diligently expounded in Romans 9-11 to reconcile the certainty of these promises with the no-difference doctrine of the apostle.

What part did Christ take in these sorrows in spirit? That their rejecting Him was the immediate cause of their own rejection is evident (Is. 50; Zech. 13, 14, and the Lord's own prophecy in Matthew 23; Luke 19:42, 44); that He died for the nation John tells us, as does Isaiah 53; that He wept over Jerusalem, the true Jehovah who would often have gathered her children. (Luke 13:32-34; ch. 19:42.) That it is in Israel God is to be glorified in the earth, Isaiah 49 makes perfectly clear. Equally so that His rejection was consequently felt by Christ as having laboured in vain and spent His strength for nought and in vain, though the answer brings out necessarily, a far fuller glory as the result of the work which He knew to be perfect.

This leads us at once to the truth that the Lord was deeply sensible of the effect of His rejection as regards the nation. The law had been broken, but idolatry given up, and Jehovah was come into the midst of His people with deliverance and blessing in His heart and in His hand—come surely to give Himself for them as an atonement, but first presenting Himself to them, the true Heir and vessel of promise, the minister and crown of all blessing, the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God. But He was the outcast of the people, and laboured as regards that in vain, nor (though the

remnant got far better things, as Christ's own glory was largely enhanced by it) could the remnant then have the blessings and glory promised in and with the Messiah—they were to take up their cross and follow Him. Jehovah sent, anticipating the great final deliverance, that Elias in spirit, who was to come before Him and the great and notable day of the Lord. They did to him whatever they listed, and the Son of man was to suffer. The New Testament, as the Old, brings, as to Israel, Christ's presence and the last days together: "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come" (Matt. 10). And "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," quoting Psalm 118, as He did for the rejected stone. At the same time the body of the nation was now apostate, crying, "We have no king but Caesar," rejecting formally their Messiah, and, in Him, Jehovah come in grace to speak a word in season to him that was weary.

Was the Lord indifferent to all this? Was He, because He was going to accomplish a greater work in atonement, indifferent to the setting aside of God's beloved people, to the present merging all the promises as regards them in judgment and long rejection (wrath coming upon them to the uttermost), to the entire setting aside of the promises looked at as resting on the reception of Messiah come in the flesh, His own labouring for nought and in vain, and being cut off as Messiah and having nothing, and the people apostatizing and joining the Gentiles against the Lord and His anointed so that wrath and judgment came upon them—was He indifferent, I say, to all this? or did He feel it? Sympathy with His disciples we can understand. But was all this no source

of suffering to the Lord? He could not sympathize with apostasy. He was in no such case, but faithful to the very end, perfect in it with God; but was it nothing to Himself, no sorrow, that God's people were thus cut off, cut off Himself instrumentally by that very apostasy, so that the then hope of Israel closed with Him, for that Isaiah 50 positively declares? He could not separate His own cutting off from theirs as the consequence of it. This Daniel 9:26, as well as Isaiah, plainly testifies.

Let us see how His Spirit works in His servants. The Lamentations of Jeremiah are the deep and wondrous expression of this; not only that what had been so beautiful under God's eye, how Nazarites whiter than milk had been set aside, but God had cast down His altar, profaned His sanctuary. So Isaiah would have Jehovah rend the heavens and come down (see Isa. 63, 64.) So Daniel in the beautiful pleading of chapter 9. Has Christianity removed and destroyed this feeling? There was one who had great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart for his kinsmen according to the flesh, Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, God over all blessed for evermore. That was the way Paul would know Christ no more; he knew Him in the glorious and heavenly results of atonement, but his heart groaned over Israel as God's people to whom the promises and Christ in the flesh belonged. He could wish himself accursed from Christ for them, as Moses had wished to be blotted out of Jehovah's book for their sakes—Israel according to the flesh, but God's people according to the flesh, and to whom according to the flesh Christ belonged. Israel was

responsible for receiving Him. He came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Did Christ's Spirit produce these feelings in His witnesses before and after His coming and rejection, and He Himself remain indifferent, careless, as to His people whom He had foreknown? It was not so. Indignation and wrath were coming upon them, and He felt it. It had well nigh been executed in Paul's time, and by Christ's Spirit he felt it, though his heart had known Christ in glory, and would only now so know Him.

This is the language of scripture: "And his soul was grieved," we read in Judges 10, "for the misery of Israel." "In all their afflictions he was afflicted," I read in Isaiah 63. That same Jehovah came as man. Did His humanity dry up His concern for Israel and His lost sheep? The same Jehovah then could weep over the beloved and chosen city, and say, "Oh that thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." He was not merely Jehovah, but as Messiah He took Messiah's place in Israel (not in its apostasy surely, but with the godly remnant who, as to earthly promises, could then as well as Messiah Himself take nothing). The Shepherd was smitten and the sheep scattered. He was the Head and bringer in of the promises. His cutting off was the setting aside, as then presented, all the hopes and promises of Israel; and as Messiah He was to be cut off, and, as the consequence of that, judgment, indignation, and wrath, were to come upon Israel.

Indignation is, I may say, the technical word used for the time of trouble in the last days. And Paul says wrath was come upon them. I believe Christ entered into this, felt it

all in connection with His own cutting off. No doubt He went infinitely farther. He made atonement for them, but He felt fully the rejection of the people, bore it on His heart, told them not to weep for Him but for themselves, for judgment was coming on them. He was the green tree, and this came upon Him. What would be done in the dry, dead, and lifeless Israel?

But this leads me to cutting off and smiting. Not only is the judgment of Israel Connected with the cutting off and smiting of Christ, as we have seen, but the condition of the remnant in Israel in the last days, and of the just as the remnant of Israel from Messiah's days, is deduced from this. It is so in Daniel 9. The weeks are not yet run out for the ceasing of Jerusalem's desolations and wars. The last terrible half-week is to come, of which the Lord tells us in Matthew 24, referring to Daniel 12. And why all this? Messiah was to be cut off and have nothing.29 It is not glory gained by atonement which is spoken of here, but Messiah's cutting off so that He had nothing of the glory and kingdom of Israel; but Israel on the contrary came under judgment and a desolator.

Zechariah teaches us the same thing. The blessed One who had been man's possession (servant) from His youth had been wounded in the house of His friends. His own were guilty of it. But there is more than this in His death; the sword is to awake against Jehovah's Shepherd— "the man that is my fellow," says Jehovah of hosts. "Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered." His sheep as connected with Him in Israel were scattered, and then the prophet goes on to the portion of Israel and the remnant in the last days; two thirds will be cut off and the remnant go through the fire. We have already seen that in Matthew 10 and 23,

the Lord connects the same periods, and in the latter case with His rejection. They stumbled on the stone and were broken; when it fell on them, it would grind them to powder. If I find the details and feelings30 more entered into in the Psalms, I find the teaching and history in the gospels of what brought it all about.

Now I fully recognize that the smiting was on the cross; that is distinctly stated in the papers I am republishing. But I affirm that Christ entered into all these sorrows and sufferings on His way to the cross, and that in a special manner as looking to be cut off, when His hour was come and He was to be no longer absolutely safe from the machinations of the people become His enemies, but delivered by them to men. Further: the charges and accusations made have led me to search scripture on the subject, and I do not find that smiting is ever used for atonement (though atonement also was wrought when He was smitten), but for the cutting off of Messiah in connection with the Jews. Forsaking of His God is that which in scripture expresses the work which stands wholly alone. Some passages may have escaped me, but I have searched. It does not trouble me that it should be so taken, because it is certain that, when He was smitten, atonement was wrought. But I prefer scripture to the sayings of men, and until they produce some scripture which disproves it, I shall believe that the act of cutting off the Messiah is spoken of in smiting, and not the work of atonement, to which nothing can be compared. The smiting or cutting off the Messiah is used in connection with another subject in scripture, though He was there wounded for the people’s transgressions, and with His stripes they will be healed. But the cutting off and smiting is referred to the setting aside of

previous hopes in the flesh, not to securing future ones in promise, though that work (blessed be God!) was done then. It is not that there was wrath inflicted on Christ for any state or relationship He was in besides atonement. I believe Christ never was in the state or relation which brought it, but that He entered into all the sufferings of Israel in spirit, passed through them in His own soul, felt what would be done in the dry tree, though He was the green one.

But what I have said leads me to another difficulty which has been raised: that governmental wrath would, but for atonement, be necessary condemnation. I hold so fully. Israel was the scene of God's righteous government, and indignation and wrath were coming on them in that way. Such is the positive testimony of scripture, these words being used, as they are both together, in the Lamentations of Jeremiah (indignation, as I have said, technically in Isaiah and Daniel for the great time of trial in Israel, and wrath by Paul, and more than one equivalent to them in the Lamentations). But if Christ had not wrought atonement, there could not have been indignation and wrath as chastening and teaching for good. It must have been condemnation. It could not be said, By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, referring to the last days; nor could Jerusalem be told that she had received at the hand of the Lord double of all her sins, nor by the Lord that she should not come out till she had paid the very last farthing, if atonement had not been made. God could exercise judgment as government because of the atonement. He could shew Himself righteous in forbearance as to the Old Testament sins by the blood-shedding of Jesus. He was long-suffering in that government, abundant in goodness

and mercy and truth, yet would by no means clear the guilty. But the cross laid the foundation for that. It laid the foundation for heavenly glory, but it laid the foundation for that, too.

Christ, therefore, while He saw and felt, entered into, all the sorrow and indignation on Israel in the fullest way—went on farther that it might not be condemnation, and made atonement. Indignation and wrath in His case was not merely governmental, but the full dealing of God with sin—which is atonement. I find both plainly revealed to me in scripture, for I have shewn that Christ in spirit did enter into the sorrows of Israel connected with His own cutting off. To smite, in Hebrew and patasso in Greek, is used for the cutting off of the Shepherd of Israel; but when smitten, He was forsaken of God, and made atonement for sin—was bruised for Israel's and our iniquities.

I have now to turn to another objection which was presented to me in my correspondence—Christ's resolving the whole question of good and evil. It is the one sole and whole foundation of blessing. The same gross mistake was made as to it as to all the rest. He must have known, it was alleged, evil in His heart to have gone through it. It is difficult to deal with such entire darkness of apprehension. Why, God knows good and evil perfectly: has He (the Lord pardon even the question) any evil in His heart? But there was more as to Christ: He had to learn it by going through every temptation by it—its bitterness in its pressure on His own soul. He had none of it. He was the Prince of life: did He not know what death was? He was Love in its expression: did He not know what hatred was? And just because, and in the manner in which, He was Love, was

the horribleness of hatred known to Him, even in detail. The love in which He sought the poor of the flock, made Him feel what was the spirit which sought to hinder their coming in. When He denounced the scribes and lawyers, did He not feel the evil they were guilty of?

The truth is, a holy soul knows what evil really is: only He went through it all as trial. Was not His horror of corruption and hypocrisy measured by His holiness and truth? Was not His perfect, absolute confidence tried and pained by the distrust and unbelief He met with, even in His disciples? Was not His delight in His Father's love (I cannot say the measure, for it could not be measured, but) the gauge of His sense of wrath? Was not the horribleness of Satan's asking Him to worship him known in the fulness of His own devotedness to His God? Was He not tested and tried by everything, save sin within, that could try a soul, and, had it been possible, turn Him away from God? Was not sin known to Him by the assailment of temptation and the holiness of His own soul? Did He not learn obedience by its costing everything that was possible from man, and Satan, and God? He knew evil, to reject it absolutely; to feel it absolutely by the tested perfection of good, which alone could perfectly feel what evil was; and die and give up self rather than fail in devotedness to His Father's will and holy obedience; and then be made sin for us, so as to put it away by the sacrifice of Himself. He died for sin, "but in that he died, he died unto sin once; in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." He has no more to do with sin, save to judge the sinner hereafter. The whole of God's glory, as compromised by sin in the universe, was made good, glorified, exalted, in the fullest trial—everything that could try holiness and love.

Hence the time will come when in heaven and earth righteousness will be established for ever, sin unknown, and God be perfectly glorified.

I am not aware I have any other point to treat which may cause a difficulty to any soul who seeks the truth and edification. I have only again to beg every righteous person not to take any statement but my own for my views. In Mr. Hall's letters to me almost everything, if not everything, was mis-stated through his own want of apprehension of the truth and preconceived notions. Christ did then fully enter into the difference between good and evil, and with God's judgment of sin before His eyes; partly in all His fife in the evil He met with every day, and specially at the end, when all evil was accumulated against Him, and the judgment of God against sin was immediately before Him; for, I repeat, this meeting indignation and wrath, then gave all its force to what His soul went through.

I had almost forgotten a statement made to me by letter, that I had stated, in answering Mr. Newton, that there could be no other suffering whatever than the first two mentioned in the tract. I answered that at the time. I merely repeat that answer in substance now. It is a very good plea for mere hostility, but has no true ground at all. In answer to Mr. Newton, what I have now spoken of as the third kind of suffering is fully gone into as a truth collateral to the two others, though not formally called a third kind of suffering. If my memory serves (I have not the tract by me), a third or half the tract is occupied with unfolding it. It was orthodox enough then.

A statement shewn to me is that I have said Christ was cut off under indignation and wrath not expiatory. I am

not aware of any such statement. It is contrary to my whole manner of apprehending the matter. He was cut off as Messiah and He entered in heart into the indignation and wrath that lay on Israel; but that is a different matter. I find in Psalm 102 in the "Synopsis" (which I am referred to) "Nor is it [the subject of the psalm] His expiatory work, though that which wrought it is here—the indignation and wrath," which is a very different thing. It states these to be expiatory work. But I have already explained my own thoughts on this point, and I prefer this to any discussion or taking up controversy with my accusers, and it would be endless to meet all the misrepresentations of what I have said. I can only repeat my request not to believe any statement of my doctrine but my own.

I do not see how it is possible for any fair mind to make Christ's passing through the three kinds of suffering mean that He was in any sense in the condition referred to. One of them speaks of a condemned sinner; the next, a saint by grace; the third is specially guarded because more obscure. Do my accusers believe that passing through the suffering, such as a saint by grace does, meant that He was a saint by grace? If not, why should the third kind suppose Him to be in the state referred to, where the supposition was more carefully guarded against, where in fact it was said it was not so? I am perfectly free now to change the expressions in the tract; but as so much has been made of it by my enemies, I suppose many might desire to see it as it originally was, so that I have only corrected mistakes and made a sentence or two clearer, and left the accused places as they were, and in the margin noted

any desirable changes as far as they are material to clear the sense. The first edition, reprinted from the “Bible Treasury,” I left as it was, because I gave it as such. Now I change what I think right. There are only a few passages of any consequence.

I will here add what may make plain how, from surrounding circumstances, Christ could enter into the remnant’s sufferings, and, in a certain analogy, ours when converted but dreading wrath still; and why I have said He entered into the sufferings, and passed through the sufferings, without its having anything to do with His relationship or state. In the last days the upright remnant will be oppressed by the Gentiles (the same Roman beast), rejected and persecuted by the apostate Jews, who own Caesar, and will, though looking in true faith to God, be fearing wrath before them. Now every word of this was true of Christ; and He felt it as come to bring blessing to Israel, which they rejected, not knowing the time of their visitation. He was persecuted by apostate Jews joining with Gentiles; He was oppressed cruelly by the Roman power. The remnant will feel it as the ruin and sin of beloved Israel; and so did He. They are fearing wrath; and the Lord was doing so too, with the difference that He really drank the cup. It is not that He had brought it on Himself as the nation had; but He passed through the suffering of it so as to be able to succour those that are tempted, to know how to speak a word in season to them that are weary. The analogy of an upright soul fearing judgment is that he is upright, and yet the fear of judgment is on his soul, and perhaps persecution his portion too. Christ can enter into the sorrows of that soul. But in Israel’s case the character of suffering perfectly corresponds. “This poor

man cried, and the Lord heard him," is put by the Spirit into their mouth. But these sufferings of Christ are distinct from atonement. It is not that Christ's feelings were not much more perfect; but He passed through, in His own case, the suffering which enables Him to enter into theirs. I would solemnly ask my reader, if He thinks Psalm 69:27, 28, is the fruit of atonement, and if atonement is contemplated there?

I may add a general remark which has suggested itself to me, which may help every willing mind. It is objected, smiting is spoken of before the cross, meeting indignation and wrath and the like. The error is that of my accusers and not mine. Had they been living in the mind of scripture, and its habits of thinking, they would have found it simply its way of speaking. And when it is stated that there are contradictory statements on my part, which produce confusion, it is also their unacquainted-ness with scripture. I dare say I may have followed the scripture mode of speaking without always accounting for it to myself. When called in question, the matter is specifically accounted for. But it is not my intention to give up a scriptural way of speaking and thinking because they think it wrong. I believe scripture more right than they.

Scripture speaks of the whole of the last hours of Christ's life up to and including His death as one period, and it is characterized as one event. It has His rejection and smiting stamped upon it, and to speak of it so is right. Yet to speak of atonement distinctly as wrought in the hour of His forsaking of God is right too. Smiting, indignation, and wrath, the whole of His rejection, and what was involved in it, attaches itself to the whole period in scripture language. Yet He was not actually

drinking the cup—not actually smitten. In John, who takes the divine side of these truths, even the time of His ascension is included, and so even in Luke as the blessed effect. And just the same contradiction may be alleged against scripture. Thus in Luke 9, His last journey up to Jerusalem, “when the hour was come that he should be received up.” So in the expression, His hour, “my hour is not yet come.” Again, “Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.” Now this is unequivocally applied to what preceded the cross by the Holy Ghost; yet the smiting was not fulfilled till the cross, but its effect and the whole scene characterized by it was come. Again, “When Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, and… knowing that the Father had committed all things into his hand” —was it come or not come? It could not be till after atonement, yet for scriptural language it was come. Again as to His work on the cross: “Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified and God is glorified in him [that is on the cross morally]; and if God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself.” Now here, was the Son of man glorified yet in the work of the cross? So “now is the judgment of this world, now is the prince of this world cast out.” It is treated as one whole time now come. That is the scriptural way of treating it, as a now in contrast with the previous state of things. And so one imbued with the scriptural way of speaking and thinking will treat it.

But scripture goes farther and contradicts itself, as my adversaries speak of contradiction, on this very point. In John 17 the Lord says, “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to

do.” Had He finished it? He contemplated the whole scene as present. On the cross He says afterwards, when He had drunk the vinegar, “It is finished, and gave up his spirit.” The treating the smiting as come, and the Saviour as meeting indignation and wrath, then, is perfectly scriptural and the scriptural way of speaking, and so is it to hold that the true atoning work and the fulfilment of the smiting too was on the cross. There, and there only, was the forsaking of God. The cavils of my adversaries, while I admit of course human imperfection in my words, are cavils against scripture. It speaks as I have spoken, and any alleged contradiction and confusion is that of scripture. A rationalist would accuse scripture as I have been accused.

But I feel pressed to add as regards Mr. Hall’s doctrine, on reflecting on it, my earnest declaration (without an atom of unkindly feeling) of rejecting it as fatal as doctrine and destructive of Christian affection. There may be better thoughts in his mind—I dare say there are; but what he has insisted on against me is a fatal denial of the true sufferings of Christ. For him it is atonement, sympathy, or Christ’s own relationship with God. Now sympathy is not a man’s own sufferings; hence Christ, according to Mr. Hall, never suffered but in atonement. I read, “It became him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering.” He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He began that course in the manger and went on to the cross through a course which was not atonement, which was not merely sympathy, though it made Him able to exercise it, able to succour them that are tempted. I do not doubt that Mr.

Hall has better thoughts, but all his accusations against my teaching are founded on this fatal and ruinous error. It is a singular circumstance that when a person very hostile to me abroad sought to profit by Mr. Ryan's tract against me, he fell into the same ruinous view as Mr. Hall. Saints cannot be too earnestly warned against it.

Finally, I do not think it possible that an unprejudiced mind would have found in my tract what has been put into it as its meaning. Jealousy awakened by previous blasphemies I can understand and not even regret. But those that have been active in accusing me have taken the other direction, a phenomenon which has its voice. Ignorance of the scriptural teaching on the Jewish remnant I am neither surprised nor troubled at. As I have already said, I have, save errors of the press and a word here and there for clearness, left the tract as it was, noting as far as I am aware the obnoxious passages. The general question and the objections drawn from other books of mine are sufficiently dealt with in the introduction. I feel that as it is, I have been (though seeking only to expound the truth) as a fool in saying so much of what others will take as self-defence. I have, of course, taken up the points pressed upon me by others in correspondence; and the Lord gave occasion to me just before writing this to go through the psalms and scriptures in question with brethren who had had all the difficulties my accusers' tracts could awaken in their mind furnished to them by their reading these tracts. My object, however, while taking notice of all the objections, is to treat of the subject for those who inquire. I have not entered into controversy by any answer to the papers of my accusers. I trust I may never be called on to do it. Their own correspondence with me and other

letters gave me substantially all the objections; and if scripture be made clear, accusations and reproach affect me with pain only for themselves. On that I do not enter.

I have no views as to the relationship of Christ, but the common faith of the saints. That by which false views on that point have been attempted to be proved as a consequence of my doctrine is founded on a fatal error in the teaching of him who seeks to prove it.

It has been stated currently and in print that I attribute to the blessed Lord the. exercises of the soul of a sinner or the experiences of an erring saint. Now I have not been able to find any passage speaking of the experience of Christ. The word is quite strange to my mind and heart. The passage I find referred to by one, I suppose by all, is in page 189, the third kind of suffering. Now that does not speak of the experiences of Christ, and it states the opposite to what is alleged. Alan is said to learn when a sinner, Christ to pass through the suffering as a perfect being learning it for others. Passing through suffering as a perfect being is the contradiction of learning when a sinner. I have noticed the passage in the notes to the tract. Perhaps the simpler way of clearing the expression would be to add ‘of it,’ and read, ‘Christ passed through the suffering of it in the last case as a perfect being’:at any rate, my statement is exactly the opposite of what is alleged.

I have sought to explain, as many have wished it; but I have not after all expressed my own feelings, which I must now be permitted to do, as the fruit of the enquiry I have pursued—feelings, I mean, solely as to the doctrine in question. I look with unmingled horror on the denial of the truth of Christ’s sufferings contained in

what is opposed to the paper on “the sufferings of Christ.” It is alleged, there are no sufferings of Christ but suffering in atonement and sympathy; or suffering in atonement for sin from God, and for righteousness from man. There is a vast deep of sufferings of Christ, inward sufferings, which are neither one nor the other. When it is said, ‘Who in the days of his flesh with strong crying and tears offered up prayers and supplications unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared,’ it was not atonement; for if it referred to the atoning sufferings on the cross (though, perhaps, it cannot be said to do so exclusively), yet He was not then undergoing it, but praying, before it was come, to be delivered from death. It was not persecution from man merely, as is evident in the words of the passage. See Gethsemane, where above all it had its accomplishment. This is confessedly not atonement. Persecuting man was not there. He was alone and begged His disciples to watch with Him.31 He sweat as it were great drops of blood. Was it persecution or atonement?

But I hear the chuckle of triumph, Why they are your own words that Christ suffered only from God for sin in atonement, and from man for righteousness! No doubt; and when the question was as to sufferings directly inflicted on Christ in respect of the state or relationship in which Christ stood, which was the question with Mr. Newton, that was quite true. He suffered from God in atonement for sin, and from man for righteousness. Leaving aside now this last, which all admit, Mr. Newton held the heavy hand of God was upon Him as being a Jew and a child of Adam, His relative position, and that He had to extricate Himself from it. That I denied and deny as ever. Inflicted sufferings for the state or

relationship in which He was, were only for sin from God and for righteousness from man.

But there was a vast scene of agony for Christ's soul neither inflicted by God for what He was made, nor by man for what He was; but the agonies of His holy soul in this world, His own sufferings, in which He ever looked up to God, and referred to God's will, and which in part were connected with the ruin of Israel and His own cutting off as Messiah, as I have already explained. That cutting off, in the ways of God, must come, but was in no sense suffering inflicted on Him because of the relationship in which He was, or as if He Himself had the sense of failure; but the effect of Israel's sins. Yet He could say He had laboured in vain and spent His strength for nought and in vain. Yet this was by no means the deeper part of His agony. I cannot help feeling that had my accusers been thinking not of me but of Christ, they would not have fallen into this awful chasm, for such it really is. I am inclined to suspect that, not being in communion with Christ in the matter, Satan has deceived them by the ambiguity of the word "suffering," which means both actually inflicted pain, and inward sorrow of heart where nothing is done to the person at all. But if they had been seeking the truth and edification simply, they would not have been thus deceived. It is very possible, writing not for critical controversy but for instruction and edification, this double meaning of the word may not be distinguished in my papers. For grace, if so, it would not have been a snare.

But this I say:—if utter and total rejection of the views opposed to me, and belief in the sufferings of Christ besides atonement and persecution, exclude me from

communion with my brethren in England and every other Christian in the world—I would not for a thousand worlds make a party on such a subject—I hold to my belief of these sufferings. I shall find them all again in His blessed face and in His glory when I see Him. I will dwell alone with Him, and mourn that Satan has succeeded in deceiving those I love, comforted with the thought that Christ will not give them up.

To The Editor of the “Bible Treasury”

A good deal that is current on the sufferings of Christ leads me to desire to draw the attention of your readers to this point, and to some simple yet important distinctions which it behoves us to make, as to their character and nature. The sympathies of Christ are so precious to the soul, His entering into our sorrows in this world of moral woe, so comforting, so softening, and yet so elevating, that we cannot treasure too highly the realization of them in our hearts, nor guard too carefully against anything that is spurious. That is the more important, because the character of His sufferings more or less connects itself with His Person and nature. I shall endeavour to be as simple as possible.

In the first place, we have to distinguish His sufferings from man and His sufferings from God. Their cause, and the result of them, are equally contrasted. Christ did, we know, surfer from men. He was despised and rejected of men,« man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The world hated Him before it hated His disciples; it hated Him because He bore witness of it that its works were evil. He was “light,” and he that doeth evil hateth the light, nor comes to the light, because his works are evil. In a word, Christ suffered for righteousness’ sake; even

as it was from the beginning, in that which was a type of Jesus' history in this respect, Cain slew Abel, because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. We may add, that the love which caused the Lord to minister to men in the world, and testify of their evil, brought only more sorrow upon Him. For His love He had hatred. This hatred of man against Him never slackened till His death, when, in the folly of human exultation, they could shout, Aha! aha! so would we have it. Righteousness and love, and what was indeed the manifestation of the divine nature and ways on the earth, brought out the relentless hatred of the human mind and will. Christ suffered from man for righteousness' sake.

But He suffered also from the hand of God upon the cross. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief; when He shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed. He was made sin for us who knew no sin, and then He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. There He suffered the just for the unjust; that is, He suffered, not because He was righteous, but because we were sinners, and He was bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. As regards God's forsaking Him, He could say, Why hast Thou forsaken Me? for in Him there was no cause. We can give the solemn answer. In grace He suffered the just for the unjust; He had been made sin for us. Thus He suffered for righteousness, as a living man, from men; as a dying Saviour, He suffered from the hand of God for sin. It is most interesting to notice the result of these two characters of suffering as expressed in the Psalms.

In Psalms 20 and 21 we see the Messiah prophetically viewed as suffering on the earth from men. It was the day of trouble. They imagined a device against Him which they were not able to perform. But He asks life, and has length of days for ever. Glory and great majesty are put upon Him. What is the effect of His being thus glorified by Jehovah, in answer to the scorn and violence of ungodly men? Judgment: His hand finds out all His enemies. He makes them as a fiery oven in the day of His anger; as He said, “Those mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.” The same thing may be seen in Psalm 69:1-24. The effect of His suffering from the hand of wicked men is judgment on themselves.

In Psalm 22 we have, besides all these sufferings from the hand of men, and when they had reached their height (see the whole psalm up to verse 21), His suffering from the hand of God. When under the pressure of the others, God, His only resource, forsakes Him. This is the great theme of the psalm. But what is the result of this? This was the bearing of sin—at least the consequence of His bearing it. It was the judgment, so to speak; it was the wrath due to us. But He came to put sin away by the sacrifice of Himself. Hence the result is unmingled and full of grace—nothing else. Who was to be punished for His having drunk the cup at His Father’s hand? He is heard. God takes the new character of one who has raised Him up and given Him glory, because He had perfectly glorified Him about sin. He is raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. This name of His God and Father He immediately declares to His brethren, “I will declare thy name unto my brethren.” So in fact He did, when He said to Mary

Magdalene, “Touch me not [He was not now coming to be corporally present in the kingdom], for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say unto them, I go to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.” The testimony was now grace, and Jesus leads the praises of His redeemed. Next, all Israel, the great congregation, is found in the praise also; then all the ends of the world. The fat eat and worship; all that go down into the dust; and the generation that shall be born, when that time of peace is come, shall also hear the wondrous story of that which the angels now desire to look into—that He hath done this. It is an unmingled stream of grace and blessing, widening to the ends of the earth, and flowing down the course of time to the generation which shall be born.

Such is the effect of the cross. No word of judgment follows the tale it has to tell. The suffering there was the judgment on sin, but it was the putting of it away. The judgment was borne, but passed away with its execution on the victim, who had in grace substituted Himself; and if, indeed, we shall be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ, He before whom we shall appear has Himself put away our sins; yea, we arrive there, because He has Himself come to fetch us, that where He is, there we may be also. In a word, it was suffering from God; and suffering from God is suffering for sin,32 not for righteousness; and the effect, un-mingled grace, now freely flowing forth. Christ had been baptized with the baptism He had to be baptized with. He was no longer straitened in the exercise and proclamation of love. When He suffered from man through the whole of His witness among them up to death itself, He was suffering for righteousness. Sin He had not, in His Person, to

suffer for. He was no substituted victim in the eyes of men. The result of these sufferings from the power of men is judgment, accomplished on His return—in a providential way already in the destruction of Jerusalem, but fully when He shall return.

But there is another point of contrast, consequently, very important for us. Christ suffered for sin that we never might. We are healed by, not partakers of, His stripes. What Christ has suffered from the forsaking of God as wrath, He has suffered alone and exactly, as to us, with the object that we never should taste one drop of that dreadful, bitter, to us insupportable cup. Did we drink it, it were as condemned sinners. But in the sufferings of Christ for righteousness, and in those which were caused to Him through His work of love, we are, poor and feeble as our faith is, to have a part. To us it is given, not only to believe on, but also to suffer for, His name. If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. If we suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are we, and yet more blessed if we suffer for His name. The Spirit of glory and of God rests upon us. We can rejoice that we are partakers of His sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, we may be glad with exceeding joy. The suffering for righteousness and for Christ, I may remark in passing, are distinguished by the Lord Himself (Matthew 5:10, 11); and by Peter (1 Peter 2:20; ch. 3:17; ch. 4:14).

The principle of these two kinds of suffering, however, as contrasted with suffering for sin or evil, is the same. The difference of suffering for good and for evil is touchingly contrasted in Peter's epistle, while both are attributed to Christ; and we are warned against the latter. Christ is presented as suffering as an example,

chapter 2:19-23, where we see, in verse 23, he refers to the revilings and violence of men; in verse 24, he adds His bearing our sins, shewing that it is in order that we may be dead to it, not suffer for that. But this is brought out, as I said, touchingly, chapter 3:17, 18, the force of which I take to be this: the apostle had been speaking of suffering for righteousness, and adds, It is better, if it be God's will, that you surfer for well doing than for evil doing; for, he adds, Christ has suffered once for sins. That is, this is not your part in suffering; He has done this once for all. Suffering for righteousness may be your happy portion; suffering for sin is, as regards the Christian, Christ's part alone.

I would notice two other characters of suffering in our blessed Lord. In the first place, His heart of love must have suffered greatly from the unbelief of unhappy man, and from His rejection by the people. We read of His sighing in opening the deaf ears and loosing the tied tongue (Mark 7:34); and on the Pharisees asking a sign (chap. 8:12), of His sighing deeply in spirit. So, indeed, in John 11 at the tomb of Lazarus, He wept and groaned within Himself at seeing the power of death over the spirits of men, and their incapacity to deliver themselves; and as He wept also over Jerusalem, when He saw the beloved city just going to reject Him in the day of its visitation. All this was the suffering of perfect love, moving through a scene of ruin, in which self-will and heartlessness shut every avenue against this love which was so earnestly working in its midst. It must have been—with bright and blessed moments where its exercise proved sweetness to itself, and led His heart out by times to fields white for harvest—a constant source of sorrow. This sorrow (blessed be God) and the

joy that brightens it, we are allowed, in our little measure, to partake of. It is the sorrow of love itself.

A weight of another character pressed upon the Lord, I doubt not, often through His life; and must and ought to have done so, though only shewing perfectness (that is, in blessed submission to the divine will). I mean the anticipation, when the time was there for Him to look at it (how often are we distracted by our little anticipated sorrows!), of His sufferings on the cross and their true and pressing character. On His path of life death lay. He could not, as we see, take His part with the excellent of the earth, and bring them into the purposed, or indeed, any real and permanent blessing, without going through death, and death as the wages of sin, for they were sinners. If the corn of wheat did not fall into the ground and die, it abode alone. There none could follow—not indeed the disciples, as He tells them, more than the Jews. And for Him death was death. Man's utter weakness, Satan's extreme power, and God's just vengeance, and alone, without one sympathy, forsaken of those whom He had cherished, the rest His enemies, Messiah delivered to Gentiles and cast down, the judge washing his hands of condemning innocence, the priests interceding against the guiltless instead of for the guilty —all dark, without one ray of light even from God. Here perfect obedience was needed, and (blessed be God!) was found. But we can understand, and just in the measure of Christ's divine, while human, sensibilities, what such sorrow must have been in prospect for a soul who looked at it with the feelings of a man made perfect in thought and apprehension by the divine light which was in Him.

We have examples of these sorrows of the Lord's heart in two remarkable cases, which, of course, though none were like the last, do not at all exclude the thought that others may have been, nor give full light on what He may have felt when in perfect calmness He spoke of His future sufferings to His disciples. The cases I refer to are those of John 12 and Gethsemane. In the former we read, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour." The coming up of the Gentiles had opened out before Him the scene of the rejected Christ passing into the wider glory of the Son of man; but then the corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die. This brings before His soul the true and necessary path of His glory—death, and all it meant, to His soul, and He looks for deliverance. He could not wish for, nor fail to fear, the forsaking of God and the cup of death He had to drink. He was heard in that He feared. That was truth, and true piety, in presence of such a passage for His soul.

So in Gethsemane, when it was yet nearer, and the prince of this world came, and His soul was exceeding sorrowful unto death; when the cup was just as it were being brought to Him, though He had not yet taken it (for He would take it from none -but from His Father's hand), when His will was that He should drink it, because it was not possible it could be otherwise, if the purpose and word of God was to be accomplished—there this character of sorrow and trial, or temptation, reached its fulness. The tempter (who on His entrance on His public service, and to hinder His doing so, had tempted Him with what was agreeable to the flesh in the wilderness and on the pinnacle of the temple, and had been baffled and bound, and during the Lord's life had

his goods spoiled) now returns to try Him with all that was dreadful for the soul of man, and, above all, for the Lord, if He persevered in His obedience and work unto the end. Power had been displayed capable of delivering living man from all the dominion of the enemy. Another awful, dreadful truth had now come out: man would not have the Deliverer. If the Lord was to persevere in interesting Himself in the wretched race, He must be, not a mighty living Deliverer by power, but a dying Redeemer. It was the path of obedience and the path of love. “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me; but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as my Father has given me commandment so I do.”

But in both the cases we are now considering, we find Him still with His Father, though occupied with Him about the cup He had to drink, and His obedience only shining out in its perfection. There was no forsaking of God yet, though there was dealing with His Father about that cup which was characterized by His being forsaken of God. “Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name.” Here He gets the answer, to obedience to death in judgment, of real and complete victory, and the widespread opening out of the revelation of love, though the world was judged therein. But in Gethsemane all was closing in. It was the power of darkness and the deeper agony of the Lord told itself out in few (yet how mighty) words, and sweat as it were drops of blood. But the obedience was perfect. The tempter utterly foiled, the name of Jesus suffices to make all his agents go backward and fall to the ground. He, as far as they were concerned and Satan’s power went, was free. But the

Father had given Him the cup to drink. He freely offers Himself to drink it, shewing the same unweakened power as ever, that of those given to Him He might lose none. Wondrous scene of obedience and love! But whatever the suffering may be (and who can tell it?) it was the. free moving of a man in grace, but of a man perfect in obedience to God. The cup His Father has given Him to drink, shall He not drink it? How utterly, though indeed there, do the unhappy instruments of this power of evil disappear before the offering up of Christ by Himself in obedience and love! The power of death, as that of the enemy, gone through with His Father, and gone, and He in blessed, willing obedience now taking the awful cup itself from His Father's hand! Never can we meditate too much upon the path of Christ here. We may linger around the spot and learn what no other place nor scene can tell—a perfectness which is learnt from Him and from Him alone. But I must turn now to other parts of Christ's sorrow, for I can only touch on its causes and character.

Sin itself must have been a continual source of sorrow to the Lord's mind. If Lot vexed his righteous soul with seeing and hearing when so practically far from God, what must the Lord have suffered in passing through the world? I doubt not that, being perfectly in the place God would have Him, He was, not only in degree, but in the very nature of His feelings, calmer than the righteous man in Sodom. Still He was distressed by sin. He looked about upon them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts. His perfect love was relief here, but did not hinder the sorrow it relieved. "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?" was met by,

“bring thy son hither.” But the unbelief was not the less felt. This was at the close, doubtless, and had special respect to their unbelief, which His own love instantly rises over. Still He was in a dry and thirsty land, where no water was, and felt it, even if His soul was also filled as with marrow and fatness. The holier and more loving He was, the more dreadful was the sin to Him (where His people wandered too, as sheep without a shepherd).

The sorrows, too, of men were His in heart. He bore their sicknesses, and carried their infirmities. Not a sorrow nor an affliction He met that He did not bear on His heart as His own. In all their afflictions He was afflicted. It was no light-hearted remedy that, even as a living man, the Lord applied. He bore in His spirit what He took away in His power (for all was the fruit of sin in man): only it was in gracious love. The sin itself He bore too, but that, as we have seen, was on the cross—obedience, not sympathy. God made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin. All the rest was the sympathy of love, though it was sorrow. This is a blessed character of the Lord’s sorrow. Love brought Him to the cross, we well know; but His sorrow there had not the present joy of a ministration of love. He was not dealing with man, but suffering in his place, in’ obedience, from God, and for man. Hence it was unmingled, unmitigated suffering; the scene, not of active goodness, but of God forsaking: but all His sorrow in His ways with men was the direct fruit of love, sensibly acting on Him—He felt for others, about others. That feeling was (oh! how constantly) sorrow in a world of sin; but that feeling was love. This is sweet to our thought. For His love He might have hatred, but the present exercise of love has a sweetness and character of its own which no form of sorrow it may

impart ever takes away; and in Him it was perfect. I do not indeed deny that righteous anger filled His soul when occasion called it forth—we know it did—yea, brought out such denouncement of woes, as I believe nothing but perfect love could produce; for what must He have felt of those who took away the key of knowledge, and entered not in themselves, and hindered those that were entering? Righteous indignation is not sorrow, but the love that gives birth to it, where it is righteous, stamps its own peculiar character upon it.

Another source of sorrow (for what has Christ not drunk at?) was, perhaps, more human, but not less true—I mean the violation of every delicacy which a perfectly attuned mind could feel. They stand staring and looking upon me. Insult, scorn, deceit, efforts to catch Him in His words, brutality and cruel mocking, fell upon no insensible, though a divinely patient, spirit. I say nothing of desertion, betrayal, and denial—He looked for some to have pity on Him, and there was no one, and for comforters, but found none—but of what broke in upon every delicate feeling of His nature as a man. Reproach broke His heart. He was the song of the drunkards. Doubtless, Jehovah knew His shame, His reproach, and His dishonour; all His adversaries were before Him; but He passed through it all. No divine perfection saved Him from sorrow. He passed through it with divine perfection, and by it. But I do not believe there was a single human feeling (and every most delicate feeling of a perfect soul was there) that was not violated and trodden on in Christ. Doubtless, it was nothing to divine wrath. Men and their ways were forgotten there; but the suffering was not the less real when it was there; and even when, at least, anticipating that cup of wrath, He

would have His too confident disciples watch by Him, He only found them asleep at His return. All was sorrow but the exercise of love, and that must, at last, make way for obedience in death, where the wrath of God closed over and obliterated the hatred and wickedness of man. Such was Christ. All sorrow concentrated in His death, where the comfort of active love, and the communion with His Father, could put no alleviating sweetness, or be for a moment mingled with that dreadful cup of wrath. There, promises, royal glory in title, all was given up, to have them infallibly anew, received in glory, from the Father's hand, with a better and higher glory, which He had ever had, indeed, but now would enter into as man.

The sufferings of our blessed Lord are too solemn, too holy, a subject to dispose one who feels he owes his all to them, to make them a subject of dispute or controversy. It is my desire to avoid this, yet not so as to let disastrous and fatal error overcome my heart.

I judge, too, that it is much to be desired that the "Bible Treasury" should not be a journal of controversy, but occupy itself with the positive putting forth of truths such as the Church of God requires, and which edify and enlighten it. I am satisfied that in the unwonted movement of mind, the intellectual craving, and that which always accompanies such a movement, the unsettling of the minds of thousands, upon all manner of important questions which exist at present, the most useful and necessary task for a servant of Christ in connection with such a publication is to furnish food to meet the requirements of men's minds with truth, which, by solidly satisfying their awakened desire, may peacefully guard them against being blown about by every wind of doctrine; while holding fast fundamental

truth, to give from the divine mind revealed to us in the word what can carry the soul, while steadying it at the same time, really beyond the most venturesome and dangerous flights of human intellectualism. The Christian, through grace, can hope to do this, because he draws not from his own resources, but from the word of God, from divine sources of truth. Such, I am satisfied, ought the “Bible Treasury “to be in order to be useful.

I am not unapprized, though happily living out of the reach of most of the religious warfare that is abroad in England, that an attack has been made, without naming them, on persons alleged to hold certain views as to the sufferings of Christ, and that they are declared to be semi-Socinians. I do not think that such an attack deserves an answer—at any rate it does not burden me much; and I do not feel disposed to mix up questions that relate to the sufferings of Christ with so small a matter as personal attacks of the kind. The Wesleyans (whatever the correctness of their views on other points may be) would be surprised to find themselves to be semi-Socinians for such a phrase as this in Bunting’s sermon on justification by faith, which I happen to have lying before me: “It is only as a Lamb slain that He takes away our sins.” Indeed, the errors, which are said to be renewed and declared to be evil in the passage quoted by the accuser, are blamed because they divide the orthodox. Do they count semi-Socinianism orthodox? But enough and too much.

Multitudes of saints, with perhaps undefined apprehensions of the manner of the application of the sufferings of the blessed Lord to their profit, look at all the sufferings of Christ with an adoring feeling of their

infinite value, and believe that all are for themselves, undergone, in love to them, and the means of their blessing. I can only pray God that this feeling may be deepened in them and in myself too. I do not believe one sorrow was wanting to Christ, nor one sigh of His which had not infinite value, nor which is not precious for me, and (blessed be God!) a part of my blessing. He has given Himself for us, and this was a part of that giving, or the fruit of it. We cannot feel it too deeply. The true question lies beyond all this, and is not touched on in the attack I have referred to, which is an additional reason for my not replying to it as such.

What I object to and judge to be evil in what is afloat among Christians is not even the doctrine that the sufferings of Christ during His lifetime were vicarious. Even where this is incorrectly stated, I might seek in such a case to make the apprehensions of the mind clearer, where it was needed; but in no case, that I am aware of, should I have an idea of treating it as heretical. On the contrary, the doctrine which I denounce as evil, where it has been carefully developed and justified (and the author of these views is in the good esteem of the writer of the article I refer to) teaches very specifically that the sufferings of the blessed Lord, during His lifetime, were not vicarious; that it is a mistake and an error to hold them so. It teaches that they were the consequence of His association by birth with man and with Israel, and that Christ had all the experiences which an unconverted man ought to have. It teaches that Christ was dried up and withered by Jehovah’s anger, not vicariously, but by reason of the place He was in. This is what I abhor. I do not find the persons so jealous of semi-Socinianism

moved to this jealousy by these and the like doctrines, nor others almost equally mischievous, in those they applaud and quote. And this abominable doctrine as to Christ has gone very far. Tracts are published, in which the darkness of unbelief in us, and an inability to pray, are declared to be the partaking of the sufferings of Christ; and that when a Christian doubts of his salvation, this too is the fellowship of Christ's sorrow.

"There were moments," I read, "when Jesus had fears for His ultimate deliverance and safety… He entreated, at least, that a way of escape might be left Him, that He might not be shut in in hopeless despair! Oh, what deep depths we may be led into through our own prayer to know the 'fellowship of his sufferings'; yet who that remembers what joint heirship with Him involves, can expect, or even desire, entire exemption from them? … "That is, in desiring to have part in Christ's sufferings, we may get into despair, or all but. Was this doubting His own deliverance vicarious in Christ? What is it in those who come into it after He has wrought a perfect redemption? Nor is this all. I read, "Jesus knew what it was to be apparently set fast in His onward course, as is strikingly expressed under the figure of miry clay. 'I sink in deep mire [margin, mire of the depth], where there is no standing.' 'Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink.' 'He brought me up also out of the miry clay, out of an horrible pit.' It was no light thing that made Jesus express Himself thus. He knew what it was, by painful experience, to be in such a position. Thus He says in Psalm 38:16, 17, 'When my foot slipped (who but knows the difficulty of walking in miry clay without slipping?) they magnify themselves against me, for I am ready to halt.' He would have shrunk back if He could

consistently with His Father's will. 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.' What comfort is this for believers when they are ready to halt (set fast)!"

What shall I say to such language? I know not with any certainty whose it is. I have understood that they are the statements of a deceased female, whose life and correspondence I have never seen. Wisdom might have corrected and set them right, if this be so, when she was living; but they have been published as tracts for edification by those who have approved of them, and I am entitled to treat them as theirs. Is suffering vicarious when it is our privilege to pass through the same, and doubt of our ultimate deliverance, as Jesus appears to have had fear for His? Did the Lord slip vicariously? No, reader, you have the fruit, and that published by teachers as piety, of the system I denounce. It is largely afloat. It may be more guarded by the theologians, more nakedly stated when a female's feelings are possessed by it; but the doctrine, the root and principle of it, belongs to a whole school of doctrine.33 You have some of the ripe fruits here. Christ slipped, "and who but knows the difficulty of walking in miry clay without slipping?"

I do not charge the whole school with accepting such fruits as these, but I do charge their principles and their doctrine with being the root which bears them. Some who published the tracts and the biography (if what I am informed be correct) must have been brought, by being habituated to this doctrine and the ignorant apphcation of Psalms and other parts of scripture to Christ, to see what was edifying in saying that Christ's foot slipped—He not having succeeded in overcoming the difficulty of

not doing so; and that this is a great comfort for believers when they are set fast in the mire—it is to be supposed when they slip too; and this is the fellowship of His sufferings! Seasons of spiritual darkness are an answer to a prayer to know Him, and the fellowship of His sufferings! “and in no case, perhaps, can Christian experience be more fully or minutely traced out, as a real participation in the sufferings of Jesus Christ, the Head of His body.”

A justification of the darkness of unbelief—not the travailing sorrows of love for others, which, however, are here confounded with them, but of darkness and almost despair for oneself, viewed as the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings—is beyond all, I avow, that I could ever have imagined the perversion of a misguided mind could have led to. If it was vicarious in Christ, I suppose these doctors must make it so in the Christian now, for it is the fruit of his prayers for fellowship in Christ’s sufferings. It is not, they tell us, unbelief, but privilege; not a needed exercise of heart, but a conferred one; not one whose blessing is a needed one for the soul who goes through it—its own humiliation or its discipline. For whom is it undergone? Indeed, in the same tract it is said that Christ is to see of the travail of His soul, and Gethsemane and the cross are specifically referred to. So, it is said, ministers travail in birth for their little children, till Christ be formed within them. And this is circulated as beautiful piety. I do not trust myself to express what I feel. It was said by the leader of this school, referring to Christ, that we need not be surprised if a person going up an ice mountain with a heavy load on his back should slip. This ripens under female feeling into the declaration that He did—a

conclusion necessarily drawn from this abuse of the Psalms fairly followed out. And these public teachers go a step farther now, and comfort believers with the thought that Christ actually slipped, His path was so difficult.

But I repeat, it is the just and natural fruit of a school of doctrine admired by very many really Christian people. The tree is known by its fruits.

That Christ suffered every possible sorrow which can come upon man through sin (I do not speak, I need hardly say, of final condemnation); and that all His sorrows were, in one way or other (for they were various), the consequence and fruit of sin, though of His own love too, is most preciously true. That in all my sorrows and temptations and trials, even those which come through my faults and infirmities, I may know that He feels either with or for me, is of infinite value. But to make the infirmities of my faith, my hours of darkness, and unbelieving fears of final failure, the fellowship of His sufferings, and His slipping, a comfort to my soul, is the last excess of spiritual pride and folly.

But the principle which has borne this fruit connects itself on one side with the question of the vicariousness of Christ's life, at least by the view taken of it by the school I have in view, because the true character of wrath against sin and atonement is lost sight of. It is this last point which I would desire now to give its just place to, and leave all controversy connected with it pretty much aside, though I shall refer to the opinion of old writers.

We cannot have too deep a sense of the depth of the Lord's suffering in His atoning work, of that which no

human word is competent to express (for in human language we express but our own feelings)—what the Lord's drinking the cup of divine wrath was to Him. With this nothing can be mingled and mixed up. Divine wrath against sin, really felt and truly felt in the soul of One who, by His perfect holiness and love to God and sense of God's love in its infinite value, could know what divine wrath was, and what it was to be made sin before God, of One too who was by virtue of His Person, able to sustain it, stands wholly apart and alone. Dreadful as the anticipation of it must have been, as it surely was, it was not that which was anticipated. No simple fact of death, dreadful as it was to the Prince of life, still less any human suffering, real and absolute as His were (and without one eye to pity, one heart to feel with the sufferer), could be put on a level with divine wrath.

Hence, in Psalm 22, the Lord expresses it Himself alone; He refers to the violence and wickedness of man in that Psalm; He refers to His own sense of weakness; and, in the midst of all that, contrasts with it God's being far from Him, as the distinct point of conflict in it, but openly declares that in all sorrow where others had help, God had forsaken Him. Hence, as has been said elsewhere, the fruit of this is unmingled grace, and grace and blessing alone, because it was wrath and suffering from God for sin. Sorrows from man's hand might and will bring judgment, if viewed as the fruit of enmity of will; the forsaking of God when Christ is made sin—who is to be judged for that? No, this stands absolutely and wholly alone, and Christ wholly alone in it. It works atonement, expiation. Can anyone else suffer what works this? Hence Christ puts Himself wholly alone in this Psalm 22—contrasts Himself with others

who are believers. They trusted God and were delivered. He was forsaken. Suffering can go on of the deepest and most poignant kind, distress and anxiety even in respect of sin: sufferings can go on even to death with its terrible power as such over the heart of man—can culminate to the very point where wrath is also found; but all close and reach their limit here; all stop totally and wholly in their nature short of the wrath and forsaking of God. They have their place and character as elements of human sorrow, however extreme; but all give way when this is there. Who could feel sorrow though sorrow was there, when wrath, God's wrath against sin, is there? Not merely bitter consequences on the sinner, even to death, for all that is true—and Christ has trodden that path—but divine wrath as such against sin—this stands alone: woe be to him who does not know it.

Hence even in Psalm 69, far, very far, as it goes in the sorrows and sufferings of Christ, and that in connection even with sins known to God, long as may be His cry, and to sense and feeling long unheard; yet the Spirit can introduce others into the same place. I do not say they suffer as much or as deeply—surely not; but they could suffer in the same way, because of the position their own sins have brought them into.34 "For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded" (v. 26). Hence judgment is looked for on them. It is not atonement. These sufferings from man bring judicial visitation on man. In Psalm 22 not a trace of associating others, or others being associated, with the Lord in His sorrow. All suffering saints are, as we have seen, contrasted with Him. When the redemption is accomplished by it, when

He has been heard from the horns of the unicorn, then indeed He associates His brethren with Him; but it is in deliverance, joy, and peace. Who could make atonement, or bear wrath for its accomplishment, but one? In every other sorrow we can bear a part.

And this difference between Psalm 22 and Psalm 69 is so marked that in Psalm 69, while dwelling on the sufferings which came upon Christ on His drawing near to death, and giving the cry of deep distress as to state and circumstances as its thesis, instead of presenting to us His being forsaken of God while crying to Him, says, “But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Jehovah, in an acceptable time; O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, and in the truth of thy salvation” (v. 13). Hence, even in the expression of His anguish and sorrow, deep as it was, we have no word like Psalm 22; “but thou hearest not.” Now it is impossible that a spiritual mind, one who knows something of the value of divine favour and being able to look to Him, however deep and inward the distress, be it even through sins and failures, can fail to understand the immense and absolute difference of these two states: equally impossible, it is true, yea, blessedly so, to fathom the depth of that which Psalm 22 expresses.

Now it is the sense of the true bearing of wrath—direct wrath from God—when made sin and suffering it, the being, as to the state of His soul, really forsaken of God, and because of sin, so that it was necessary and deserved, though through others, but really undergone —that it is of the very last importance, fundamentally important, to keep quite clear and fast hold of and maintain, and to hold as a clear foundation of everlasting truth. As regards the truth itself, I repeat, no

divinely-taught mind, however obscure it may be as to the doctrine of the proper nature and character of Christ's living sufferings— however it may (through feelings) run up the depths of Christ's sorrow into mixing with those sorrows His atoning work—no divinely-taught mind will, as to the positive truth, fail to distinguish from all else the reality of Christ's own soul bearing the direct inflicted wrath of God, and the forsaking of God, which in grace He underwent—will fail to distinguish this from all other sorrow and suffering, however deep, in which He could say, for example, "But as for me, my prayer is unto thee in an acceptable time," in which He did not say, "But thou hearest not." He may find many passages difficult to explain—may be confused by the reasonings of others. He may, as to his feelings, confuse anticipating the cup of wrath and drinking it. We have all, more or less, done this; but when the real bearing of wrath from God, the wrath of God for sin, is before his soul and conscience, he will bow his soul before that solemn work, he will know that Christ stood alone in it: nor will he ever mix it up, for one instant, with sorrow, however deep, in which others could bear a part. In all sorrows of active love, in all brought upon us by the government of God for sin, we—at any rate man—(as for example the Jewish remnant, and, in principle, sinners under the law) can bear a thankful part, or have to bow under it. Reproach may break man's heart; he may stand alone and be forsaken of men; he may cry out of the depths, because of sin; but bear the weight of wrath he knows he could not. He adores when he finds another has done it. But this demands a more orderly exposition.

There is a double character of suffering besides atoning work, which Christ has entered into and which others can feel: the sufferings arising from active love in the world; and the sorrow arising from the sense of chastenings in respect of sin, and these mixed with the pressure of Satan's power on the soul, and the terror of foreseen wrath. In the former we suffer with Christ as privilege; in the latter we suffer for our folly and under God's hand, but Christ has entered into it.35 He sympathizes with us. But all this is distinct from suffering instead of us, so as to save us from the suffering, undergoing God's wrath that we might not. In atonement He suffers for us, in service we suffer with Him: in our distresses about sin and agony of mind He felt with us.

We shall see that the Lord Himself and the teachings of the gospels clearly distinguish the sufferings of Christ during His ministry here, and His closing sufferings, and these last (even though taking place at the same time) from His atoning work. As soon as the Lord was baptized of John, the Holy Ghost came upon Him and He entered on His public ministry; but as a first and introductory step to it, He was led of tie Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He overcame, the strong man was bound, and He proceeded to spoil his goods; He went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him. Let it be possession, sickness, death: all and every fruit of the power of the enemy disappeared before His word. He went through sorrow—reproach from man, He took their burdens upon Himself. I have no doubt that Christ never healed a sick man without bearing in His spirit and heart the burden of it, as the fruit and power of evil:

but all this was the activity of His love. “Himself bare our infirmities and carried our sicknesses.” This is said, remark, when He healed them. Bearing our griefs and sorrows, and delivering us from them by power, is not bearing our sin itself under the wrath of God.

But further, Satan was not with Him in the way of direct temptation during the course of His ministry. We read in Luke, “And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.” “But at the close of His life He could say, “Henceforth I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me,” etc. Here a distinct change takes place again as to the position of the Lord in respect of the presence of Satan. Hence He could say to those who came from the chief priests afterwards, “But this is your hour and the power of darkness.” Previously He had sat daily with them in the temple, and they had laid no hands on Him; but this (terrible word for these unhappy men!) was their hour and the power of darkness. He that had the power of death was busy there with the Lord, nor did He withdraw Himself from the trial. His soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death, and he who had the power of darkness brought it all to bear upon His soul; but even here He could look for His disciples to watch with Him. They could be sifted as wheat, though their only resource (as that hour came on with real power) was to flee, or they entered into the temptation; at least when they knew not the power of the Holy Ghost working in them, for they should follow Christ afterwards, as He told Peter at least. This difference of His own position the Lord marks to them very clearly: “When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. Then said

he unto them, But now he that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise his scrip, and he that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one; for I say unto you that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors, for the things concerning me have an end."

Now all was changed. Before, He had protected them by His divine power, by which He wrought in the world. Now, while His divine Person was ever the same, and His power in itself unchangeable, He was to be rejected and suffer. The glory would come, but first He must suffer many things, and be rejected of that generation. This He taught specially to His disciples from the time of Peter's confession of Him as Son of the living God, from the transfiguration onward, and in His last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. Not that He was suffering these things then—His hour, we read in John, was not yet come—but He taught them that He must. (See Matt. 16:21; ch. 17:12: "shall suffer,"—mellei paschein—and chap. 17:22. Mark 8:13; Luke 9:22.) And it is the more remarkable because it is then He charges His disciples to tell no man He was the Christ, saying, "the Son of man must suffer." He was giving up, practically, His ministry of the circumcision for the truth of God, the witness of Jehovah Messiah,36 and about to enter on another, the sufferings of the Son of man. It will be remarked that it is on the suggestion of this title also to His spirit by the coming up of the Greeks, in John 12, that His cross and death rise up at once before His soul. (Compare Psalm 2 and the use made of Psalm 8 by the apostle in Hebrews 2.)

But to return to our immediate point. He tells them that He was about to suffer. We have seen that the prince of

this world was to come. Satan entered into Judas, and it was the hour of His enemies and the power of darkness. This He spoke at the time He met the band from the chief priests, at the close of Gethsemane. Here there was a distinctly announced and openly declared change that took place in the character of the Lord's service and suffering—His position. It was not His service as Prince of life, though He ever was this and proved it, spoiling the goods of His vanquished enemy; "the prince of this world cometh." It is the power of darkness, and His undergoing it in agony for our sakes—His soul sorrowful, even unto death—the whole power on His own soul of the enemy, as having the power of death: still this was yet in communion and supplication with His Father about it, and heard of Him. And here we have the most distinct and definite revelation from His own Ups, that He was not yet drinking the cup which His Father gave Him to drink. He prays that He might not drink it, that if it were possible the cup might pass from Him, but that if not unless He drank it, His submission to His Father's will was perfect. Here, doubtless, His soul enters in the deepest way into what it was that He had to drink—it was sorrowful, even unto death; but being in an agony (conflict) He prayed more earnestly. He was heard. He did not take the cup from man's hand, nor from Satan's hand, though both were there to press Him down, and all His weakness felt as man; but He goes through the thought of that, and death itself, in heard supplication with Him who was able to save Him from it, and takes the cup in perfect peace, as to man and Satan's power of darkness, from His Father's hand, and offers Himself freely, that none that the Father had given Him might be lost. (See John 18:4-11.) The Father had given Him the cup to drink. He does not draw back from

it, but freely offers Himself for us. Had He not done so in blessed obedience, He had only to walk away before His prostrate pursuers, or have demanded legions of angels to free Him from their power. But how should the scriptures have been fulfilled? But on the cross all is finished. God forsakes Him, and all the wrath of God is poured out on Him who knew no sin, but was made sin for us—on One who in His fully-tried life knew no sin. If any there had been, or any had been possible, the time for consciousness of it had been then. Every trial which could have drawn it out, if it had been there to be conscious of, had reached its full height; but the spotless offering on which no yoke had been, He who offered Himself without spot to God, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He made His soul an offering for sin, as it is said too in the passage of Isaiah, referred to by the Lord Himself (Luke 22:37) as that which was yet to come, “and he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors, and bare the sins of many.”

And now, before I go farther, I ask, Is not His death presented in scripture as that by which redemption was wrought —His precious blood as its efficacious means? Have we not redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins? Is it not by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot? Is it not declared that without shedding of blood there is no remission? Let the reader take Hebrews 9, which I shall allow myself to quote here in full. It is well worth all human authority, be they of what age they may. “But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the

blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption [for us]. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first [testament] was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was, therefore, necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy

place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation" (v. 11-28).

Let the reader remark that "without shedding of blood is no remission"—the declaration that He must often have suffered if He was to offer Himself often, as the high priest with the blood of others, but that it was once, in the end of the world, He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." Let him turn to chapter 10, where, in contrast with standing for daily ministrations, "this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down." Was the way into the holiest to be opened? It was through the rent veil, that is to say, His flesh. Indeed, if we examine the value of the death of Christ, what do we find attached to it in scripture?

Do I need redemption? We have redemption through His blood, an eternal redemption, for "neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption."

Do I need forgiveness? That redemption which I have through His blood is the forgiveness of sins—yea, without shedding of blood is no remission.

Do I need peace? He has made peace through the blood of His cross.

Do I need reconciliation with God? Though we were sinners, yet now hath He reconciled us by the body of His flesh through death, to present us holy and unblamable, and unreprovable in God's sight. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.

Do I desire to be dead to sin and have the flesh crucified with its affections and lusts? I am crucified with Christ. "Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed; for in that he died, he died unto sin once, and in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." This is my deliverance also from the charge and burden of the law which has dominion over a man as long as he lives.

Do I feel the need of propitiation? Christ is set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood. The need of justification? I am justified by His blood.

Would I have a part with Christ? He must die; for except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; if it die, it brings forth much fruit.

Hence, unto what am I baptized as the public expression of my faith? As many of us as have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into His death; for what indeed has broken down the middle wall of partition and let in the Gentiles, slaying the enmity and reconciling Jew and Gentile in one body to God? The cross. How have we boldness to enter into the holiest? By the blood of Jesus, by that new and living way which He has consecrated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh; for till that was rent, the Holy Ghost signified by it that the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest.

Hence it was a lifted up Christ that was the attractive point for all. “If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me.”

In the power of what was the great Shepherd of the sheep brought again from the dead? Through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

How was the curse of the law taken away from those who were under it? By Christ’s being made a curse for them; as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

How are we washed from our sins? He has loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, for His blood cleanseth from all sin.

If I would be delivered from the world, it is by the cross, by which the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.

If the love of Christ constrains me towards men in the thought of the terror of the Lord, how is it so? Because I thus judge, if One died for all, then were all dead; and they that live should live not to themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again. Hence the apostle knew no man after the flesh—no, not even Christ. All was a new creation. If I would live in divine power, it is always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in my mortal body. If He would institute a special remembrance to call Him to mind, it was a broken body and shed blood. It is not less a Lamb as it were slain that is found in the throne.

All was love, no doubt; but do I want to learn it? Hereby we know it that He laid down His life for us, and that

even of God in that He loved us and gave His Son as a propitiation for our sins. It is to the sprinkling of that precious blood of Christ that we are sanctified, and to obedience; and through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once (contrasted with the many Jewish sacrifices) sanctified and perfected for ever, so that there is no more offering for sin; for, having offered one sacrifice for sins, He is set down for ever at the right hand of God.37 For He should not offer Himself often, as the high priest entered into the holy place once every year with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world He hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself: for as it is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and to them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Do I desire, therefore, my conscience purged? It is through the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God.38 For it is by means of death that there is the redemption of the transgressions which were under the first covenant, and in that view He became Mediator. Indeed, a testament could have no force while the testator lived.

Do I seek the destruction of the power of Satan? It is through death that He destroyed (the power of) him that had the power of death.

What do I find to be the central object of Christ’s coming — the groundwork of His glory as man? We see Him made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that He by the

grace of God might taste death for every man. And even the purifying and reconciling all things in heaven and earth depends on this (Heb. 9:23; Col. 1:20).

Would He sanctify even the Jewish people to Himself? It must be by His blood, suffering, rejected, without the gate. No remission for us, no privileges of the new covenant for us, nor establishing of it with them, without this blood: redemption is not without it. The living sinner as such cannot be presented to God, nor a living Christ offer that by which the sinner must draw nigh. The veil remains unrent, the conscience unpurged, the propitiation unaccomplished. God forbore with the Old Testament saints, and has shewn His righteousness in doing so now—a righteousness now declared in that propitiatory set forth through faith in Christ's blood. It is alleged, indeed, that He came to do God's will in taking the place of the sacrifices, and that His obedience during life is available in expiation; but we read, "by the which will we are sanctified, through tie offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

It is alleged that His living obedience had the same legal character as His death. Is it the same thing, then, to obey the law with unfeigned heart, so as to be perfectly acceptable to God personally, and to bear its curse for others under the wrath and judgment of God? Is it possible that Christians, who know what the need of their own souls as sinners is, can use such reasoning?

Having thus proposed the blessed value of Christ's death from scripture, and leaving it to its own force without comment, allow me to go yet a little farther into the elements and character of His sufferings as available for us, so that we may the more fully appreciate His

grace. Man may be looked at morally in three conditions: first, as a sinner under condemnation; secondly, as a saint through grace, partaker of the divine nature, and of the Holy Ghost as his force; and, thirdly, as suffering, though awakened, quickened, and upright in desire, under the exercises of a soul learning, when a sinner, the difference of good and evil under divine government in the presence of God, not fully known in grace and redemption, whose judgment of sin is before his eyes, exposed to all the advantage that Satan can take of him in such a state—such suffering, for example, as is seen in the case of Job. Christ has passed through all these kinds of suffering—only the last, of course, as Himself a perfect being, to learn it for others;39 I need not say that He was perfect in all. But what met the first condition, that of a sinner under condemnation, He went through as actually bearing sin, and so enduring wrath vicariously for others, that they never might have it to endure. The second He was truly in Himself, nay, our leader in that path.

To the first of these conditions, our being under judgment and condemnation for sin, Christ's death upon the cross is the divine answer in expiation. All that God was in His nature, He was necessarily against sin; for, though He was love, love has no place in wrath against sin, and the withdrawal of the sense of it, consciousness in the soul of the privation of God, is the most dreadful of all sufferings—the most terrible horror to him who knows it: but Christ knew it infinitely. But God's divine majesty, His holiness, His righteousness, His truth, all in their very nature bore against Christ as made sin for us. All that God was, was against sin, and Christ was made sin. No comfort of love enfeebled wrath there. Never

was the obedient Christ so precious; but His soul was to be made an offering for sin, and to bear it judicially before God. At the end of the three hours of darkness, this is expressed by the Lord in the words of Psalm 22, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” The result, and that to the end of time, and indeed for an endless eternity of unmingled grace for us, has been already touched on, and I will advert to it again in connection with remarkable facts as to the expressions of the Lord Himself. Here the Lord suffered that not one drop of what He took might remain for us. It had been everlasting misery and ruin for us; His own divine perfection in love went through it without one ray of comfort from God or man. All other sorrows pressed Him onward with accumulating power to this, and merged in it, in that darkness which hid all but the wrath He was enduring from God. Judges had been heartlessly unrighteous, and washed their hands of such a One and His matters; the chief priests, who should intercede for the infirm, cry for cruel death upon the guiltless; the friends on whom His heart ought to have been able to count (and He looked for comforters, and would have had the most favoured of them watch with Him) actually forsake and deny Him: and the unfaithfulness of a friend is bitterer than the assault of an enemy. But all this was the proof of the power of one who exercised unlimited dominion (save so far as grace delivered) over, and had his rights through sin and the power of death over, him whom the Lord came to deliver; and it was his hour and the power of darkness. All he can do he does; but it only led the Lord through conflict, of which I will speak just now, in willing offering of Himself, letting His own go their way, to the last scene, when, deprived of all human comfort, He was to

accomplish the work of propitiation, alone with God judging sin—that scene which stands alone, which no eye can fathom (though, blessed be God, we truly know its meaning) but His who knows divine wrath against sin as God alone knows it. Bulls~of Bashan were there, dogs with no shame of heart, but only to drive the Sufferer to seek for succour where He was to learn in all its utter depth for us what it was to be forsaken of God—an hour passed for ever with divine and eternal glory for fruit. He even could say, so great was the infinite and truly divine value of that hour and work, "therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again."

But, willingly as I expatiate on this blessed yet most solemn subject, I must leave it, and turn to another and brighter, yet to us humbling character of the Lord's sufferings—those which He endured as the Holy One glorifying God, when the reproaches of those that reproached God fell on Him. This went on up to His death. They flowed from His declaring righteousness in the great congregation; from His perfectly manifesting God amongst men, who had no relish for the light, so that for His love He had hatred. I do not enlarge upon this simply because I apprehend it can offer no difficulty to my reader. In our little and imperfect measure we have our share in this kind of suffering. It is our privilege as saints. "To you it is given … not only to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake." "If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him." "To do well, suffer for it, and take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." Quotations could be multiplied to shew how we are thus called to suffer as He suffered, as Paul speaks of his filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ,

for His body's sake, the Church. In the measure in which we manifest Christ as He manifested His Father, in our walk and testimony, we shall suffer for it as He suffered, and His consolations will abound—a meat to eat which the flesh knows not of. He could thank His Father when He had most sorrowfully and justly to reproach the world.

But I now come to the third character of trial in which man stands, which requires a little more attention—that which is not the fruit of holy witness in the world (though it may in a certain way accompany it), nor the enduring the wrath of God in condemnation, which for us would be everlasting misery, but the fruit of sin under the government of God in this world and connected with the power of Satan in it—that which, as used of God, is the means of our learning the difference between good and evil, whether in terror before the knowledge of redemption, or even by various exercises, though in an altogether different state of soul after we know it (for God continues even then His instructive government, founded on His immutable judgment of good and evil); that which in the way of terror brings righteousness, though not without hope, before us, or, when redemption is known and divine righteousness is our state, ministers to practical holiness of life and judgment, according to the divine nature of which we are made partakers.40 If we take the case of the remnant of the Jews in the latter day, we shall more readily understand this, though it is in principle the case of thousands of upright souls under the law, and a principle on which God has acted from the beginning of man's failure. The sentence of death, of sorrow on the woman, were judgments pronounced upon sin, as part of

the display of God's government in this world, not in themselves everlasting condemnation and separation from God because of the holiness of His nature. That power of death and its terrors over the mind Satan wields (Heb. 2:14). Here it is that the thought of God's righteous judgment against sin, and the pains of death, and the power of Satan, unite in their pressure upon the soul. So when a soul is convinced of sin, and practically under the law (that is, the requirements of God's righteousness on living man), the judgment of God is feared, the terrors of the Almighty can drink up the spirit. God thus teaches a man what he is, what he is worth in this solemn question between Satan and God—the power of evil and of good. See the case of Job. God sustains man in grace and the sense of integrity, so that he clings to dependence on God, come what will; yet judgment is feared, God's holiness and righteousness pressed on the spirit weighed down with the sense of sin, the power of death as ending nature's hope and leading to judgment is there, and Satan uses it to drive to despair, to destroy faith, and break the spirit of man away from depending on God and believing in His love.

Without the atonement, there could be no answer in grace to this state, because we have deserved condemnation; and if new life be there which clings to God, yet this very life gives the sense of God's holiness, which brings judgment on the soul conscious of sin. When the full work of grace in redemption is learnt, the soul obtains a peace only the more solid, and indeed only thereby really solid, that it has passed through these exercises by which sin is known, by which God's judgment of it is before the soul by His own convincing work, and Satan's effort spent and resulting only in

bringing us to the answer which atonement gives, and thus his power over us destroyed and gone for ever.

But though the answer to, and deliverance from, this state is the full and perfect redemption wrought by Christ, by which we are wholly taken out of the state in which we stood accused and liable to judgment, and transferred into the position of the Second Adam before God, of Him who is now gone to His Father and our Father, His God and our God, there is positive and direct grace in the exercise itself. For, beside this deliverance and salvation by which our miserable case is met, there is a real learning of the difference of good and evil before God— learned, I admit, more blessedly when redemption is known, and we are in possession of perfect good in grace, so that evil is thus judged, and we are delivered from its deceits; but still, profitably learned in the knowledge of our wretchedness, guilt, sin, powerlessness against evil even when we would what is good, and the solemnity of the question involved in the salvation of the soul, where the claims and power of Satan through sin in which we have listened to and subjected ourselves to him, and the righteous nature and title of God are brought to issue in a soul, subject to sin on one side, and quickened to own God’s title and delight in His nature and so judge its own evil on the other, and that in the presence of the righteous judgment of God.

Now, before obtaining the peace acquired by the knowledge of redemption, Christ sustains, encourages, relieves by times, the soul in this state, but not so as to hinder its learning this deep and solemn lesson which has its fruit in eternity; nor so as to prevent its finding

its only resource in the redemption He has accomplished.

But in the case of the remnant of Israel in the latter days, we find these exercises of heart and spirit gone through in circumstances where the government of God is historically developed as to a people sinful under law, yet renewed and quickened of God, so that the desires and consciousness of uprightness are there. The circumstances are, with more complete development, the continuation of those in which the Jews were in the time of our Lord: only that Antichrist is manifested, the body of the people are given up to unbelief and the unbridled influence of Satan—seven devils, worse than the old spirit of idolatry, but along with it, are entered into them. In a word, it is the time of Satan's power, the power of darkness, of the oppression of the Gentiles, of the same Roman beast. In the midst of this the remnant find themselves, on the one side, conscious of the nation's guilt under the law, and of their filling up of their sins, so that wrath was come upon them, the just vengeance of God; yet they feel this because they are renewed and quickened; and the Jehovah they have sinned against is their only hope. Yet how difficult to trust God for help in difficulties in which we find ourselves under His hand by our sinning against Him! Without atonement, they could not be dealt with in grace. The goat of atonement had been offered, so that God could deal with them about their sins for their good, sustain their faith, yet make them feel the weight of their sins, and the darkness they had brought themselves into; and, at the same time, say, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and seeth no

light? let him trust in the name of Jehovah, and stay himself on his God." But the true Aaron had not come forth, so that Israel's sins should be, in administrative application, sent away on the scape-goat into the land not inhabited.

Now here the judgment of God against them, the sense of guilt under a broken law and national unfaithfulness, the full power of Satan and the darkness it brings—all rest on the spirit of the people: yet, though smitten in the place of dragons, there is integrity of heart, earnest desires after the law, and after God Himself and His worship, and trust in Him as their only resource. Thus the full judgment of evil is wrought in them, in hope of goodness and mercy prophetically revealed.

Who is to furnish thoughts, feelings, faith, hope, which can be known to be acceptable and a sustaining ground of faith, till they look on Him whom they have pierced and find peace? The answer to this question, as well as the groundwork of atonement, is found in Christ. All this exercise Christ entered into so as to be able to help them: "This poor man cried" — "God hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted," and that, when41 He had been really forsaken of God, the real ground of hope for the people. When He was on this earth, the power of Gentile evil, with no fear of God before their eyes, was there; the apostate wickedness of the priestly rulers of Israel who would have no king but Caesar, and who called for the blood of their Fling to be on them and their children—the power of Satan and darkness was there; the judgment of God standing out in all its truthfulness and terror, not one godly man left; the guilt of Israel under a broken law and a rejected Jehovah and King—of the Anointed as of the Lord—

pressed upon the spirit of any intelligent saint, if such there were, as in the last days.

It was not now, in these last scenes of Christ's life, the manifestation of the Lord in grace to Israel, the revelation of the Father's name to the few given to Jesus out of the world, but the endurance of Israel's own case42 under the government of Jehovah when guilty and rejecting their own mercies, yet with the sense a holy soul, wrapped up in Israel's blessings, would have of such a state before the judgment of God;43 not made a curse and drinking the cup, but the sense of it under God's government and Satan's power. Here good and evil were fully entered into and proved by the Lord. That is, He must undergo the whole power of evil, not as in judgment, but as trial. Was Satan using death and darkness, sorrow and terror, with God's judgment sanctioning the pressure of it on the soul—men but His instruments to add to the grief, be they friends or foes? Was Israel's sin and rejection of good come to its height? Was all this used by Satan against the soul of Christ to stay Him in the path? But was He to enter into the temptation which thus pressed on Him and give way; or, trusting God, was He to go on in the path of obedience, and drink the cup itself in obedience to God His Father? In the synoptical gospels we have the trial; in John, the full and blessed answer. He passes through the trial with God, does net take what death imports from Satan's hand, so to speak, nor stop in His path; but, while going perfectly through it as the power of darkness, receives the cup itself (instead of drinking from it under Satan's terror) from His Father's hand and gives Himself freely up in love and obedience to expiate the sin under God's

hand and wrath, which Satan had in vain wielded to deter Him from it.

The power of evil as trial was broken entirely, and Satan's power of darkness annulled for us. Man might be made to pass through it under the government of God, to learn what he was, what sin is, what the power of evil in which he had been lying is; but the sympathy and sustaining grace of Christ can support him through it, suggest the right thoughts and feelings under it, and be found a resource in every pressure, so that faith should not fail, however sore that pressure may be. Atonement was needed for this, but the sympathy and consolations of Christ in the trial are what sustain and encourage the hearts of the remnant through their various trials down to the lowest depths of sorrow. If it be asked how they can profit by it, not having any direct knowledge of or faith in Christ, I reply, It is exactly what is furnished in the most admirable detail in the Psalms, where every part of their external sorrow and internal distress is expressed and entered into, the dreadful weight of a broken law, the power of adversaries without conscience, the temptation and pressure of the adversary, with the thoughts and feelings whether of distress or faith, are given a voice to by divine grace, with the witness that He who in all their afflictions was afflicted, and the angel whose presence succoured them, has not forgotten them in their deepest distress;44 but, as the poor man, has passed through it for them, and can comfort them under it, putting His seal upon the holy desires He has awakened in them, with the certainty of a divine answer, and that even by that Son of man, the branch which God made strong for Himself. Hence it is that these Psalms, besides the personal piety

which is found in them, have been the comfort of distressed souls who were under the law, and not yet knowing the fulness of redemption, for such will be the state of the remnant.

Hence, too, we find in them the desire of the judgment of enemies and the execution of vengeance, because it is by that judgment alone that the remnant of the people will be delivered. Hence, too, we find the assurance that the Lord will build up Zion, and the remnant of His people inhabit it, in Psalms, where the sufferings of Christ are entered into in detail. Indeed, we have in the Psalms a complete and perfect history of the remnant in every circumstantial and moral phase of their path, both of Jews and Israel, and the result in blessing with Messiah, together with the way in which Christ has entered into it, these last Psalms being prophetic of Christ personally, though in many we have the remnant also, while all the Psalms are the expression of His spirit. The godly remnant is the first thought in them—their subject—Christ's sympathy is with them. The first Psalm gives us the godly remnant, the subject of God's government; and the second, Messiah, King in Zion, object of His counsel and decree; and after that, all the various experiences which flow from His rejection, up to the glory at the end.

I have already shewn that the time in which Christ went through the distress and sorrow, under which the remnant fall through their sin, was not that of those public services by which He was the light of the world revealing to others His Father's name, but when (going again up to Jerusalem for that purpose, and setting His face as a flint for it, and not hiding His face from shame and spitting, His rejection being the ground of Israel's

divorce, Isa. 50) He was subject to the fullest exercise of soul, under the power of darkness, in the hour of His rebellious rejecters, who could triumph in His apparent rejection; when all was changed from the time that He sat daily in the temple, and no man laid hands upon Him; when the prince of this world came.

Few, comparatively, of the Psalms apply wholly and exclusively to Christ. The great body of them express the working of His Spirit in the hearts of His tried ones. The difference (even where suffering is the subject between those which are, and those which are not, exclusively applicable to Him) is very evident, and particularly between His sufferings from the hand of God and from the hand of man, even when this was under the visitations of God and the power of the enemy. It is worth while to note these points distinctly.

Psalm 2 refers personally to Christ as Messiah, the Son of God, born in this world; Psalm 8, as Son of man. In Psalm 16 we find Him formally taking His place among the godly remnant, treading the path of life through death up to fulness of joy in resurrection. Psalms 20 and 21 have, in a certain sense, also Christ alone for their subject; Psalm 22 clearly so. Sins are not confessed till Psalm 25. The integrity of heart of the remnant is presented, or Christ Himself. Besides these Psalms, 40, though mainly of Him, is not absolutely so (see verse 5.) In Psalm 45 He is clearly celebrated; Psalm 69 speaks also chiefly but not exclusively of Him (see verse 26.) In Psalm 72 we find Him again as Solomon; Psalms 101, 102 treat also of Him as king in Israel, and as, though cut off, Jehovah the Creator. In Psalm no He is exalted to Jehovah’s right hand to be priest after the order of Melchizedek. In other Psalms He is introduced, but He is

not their personal subject. I do not call to mind others of which He is exclusively or pre-eminently the subject, though it is possible some one may have escaped me; my object is rather to give a certain number of distinct examples than a list of them. As regards the Psalms which speak of His suffering, the marks which distinguish those which speak of His sufferings from man, and those which express His sufferings under the hand of God, are very clear and decisive. Thus Psalm 20, 21, He suffers from the hand of man. The consequence is, Psalm 21 announces judgment on man. So it is in Psalm 69; though other elements are found there. The Psalm treats of the number of those who hate Him without a cause, who gave Him gall for meat, and in His thirst gave Him vinegar to drink; and He desires that their table be a snare to them; that their eyes be darkened, and that God should pour out His indignation upon them. So even in Psalm 31, though it has less of this character, yet it still has this distinctive mark of the looking for judgment on the wicked (v. 17, 18).

I have already remarked that in sorrows from human persecution, on account of what is good, His saints can have a part. The pressure of it, in connection with sins, and the desire of vengeance or judgment, finds its accomplishment in the remnant of the Jews in the last day.45 In Psalm 102, where, though the enemies are seen, the sorrow of Messiah is traced to God’s indignation and wrath, who has lifted Him up as Messiah, and cast Him down, even to the dust of death, no desire for judgment is expressed, but blessing and grace are the result. This is most strikingly displayed in Psalm 22 where the atoning work of the cross is the distinct and definite subject. As soon as the Lord is

heard from the horns of the unicorn, His first thought is (as indeed it historically was) to make known all the blessing of His God and Father's name, where in unclouded blessing in righteousness He now stood, to His brethren. Then He praises in the midst of the Church, then in the great congregation—all Israel in the latter day, then the blessing reaches all the ends of the earth in millennial mercies; then the seed afterwards born. To all the word is that He has done this. No trace of judgment from Him who has borne sin and wrath for us, nor from Him who inflicted that wrath on Christ for us, in the counsels of unutterable grace.

Now in Psalm 69 we have the cross also, and not merely the wickedness of man, though that is fully entered into; but the trusting of God and distress under the sense of sins. How is this to be distinguished from the atoning work of Christ? Here the difficulty presents itself fully, but if we wait patiently on the Lord, all difficulties of scripture are inlets to light and blessing. The mark I have noticed as indicating sufferings from man, and other distinguishing ones, are clearly found in this Psalm. Judgment is looked for on the enemies—an absolute and conclusive distinction in the very nature of the suffering; and there is another characteristic already noticed, but to our purpose here. We read, verse 26, "They persecute him whom thou hast smitten and speak to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded." Here we have evidently more than man's persecutions. They take advantage of God's hand upon the sorrowing One to add to His burden and grief. This is not atonement,46 but there is sorrow and smiting from God. Hence we find the sense of sins (v. 5), though of course in the case of Christ they were not His own personally, but the nation's (in a

certain sense we may say ours, but specially the nation's sin). But we have the clear proof that they are not atoning sufferings;47 because, instead of suffering in the place of others, so that they should not have one drop of that cup of wrath to drink, others are associated with the Lord here in them. "They persecute him whom thou hast smitten and speak to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded." When men are wounded too, when Christ is the companion with them—not a substitute for them, then atonement is not wrought nor the wrath of condemnation endured. Yet God has smitten and wounded. It is not merely man that has caused suffering. Man comes in in malice to add to the sorrow.

Thus we have, along with the suffering from man at the epoch of the crucifixion (the special object of the Psalm), bringing judgment on man, the third character of Christ's sufferings, the suffering48 under the government of God,49 at the epoch of His final sorrows, in which the remnant will have its part and into which Christ is entered for them, afflicted in all their afflictions. Hence, too, though in most deep waters, overflown, weary of crying, Christ is not forsaken—His prayer is to God in an acceptable time. Deep as is the distress, it has a character wholly and entirely contrasted with atonement, yet it is not the ministry of Jesus in blessing in the enjoyment of the light of His Father's countenance, but the conflict and agony of His soul when the power of darkness is at work.

Another very striking fact in the path of the blessed Lord which I alluded to, is this: During the whole of His life of service, all through, including Gethsemane, Christ never addresses God by the name of God. He always says, "Father." On the cross we know His words were, "My

God, my God.” In His life this title would have been out of place—not of course because it did not belong to Him whom He addressed, but because it was not the expression of the unclouded relationship and conscious blessedness of Sonship in which the blessed Lord always stood. On the cross God was dealing with Him about sin, and therefore as God, in His nature, majesty, righteousness, and truth. Here sin was to be dealt with as such by God, and the blessed One expresses according to truth the position in which His holy soul stood. We are permitted in wondrous grace to see Him in such a one. Infinite and wondrous grace it is. But the terms the Lord makes use of mark very clearly and solemnly the difference of the two positions in which the blessed Lord relatively stood.50 Till the cross the Lord walked in the enjoyment of the relationship of a Son with the Father, yea, an only-begotten Son, knowing that the Father heard Him always. On the cross, as we have seen, all that God was against sin, He, made sin, had to feel and meet and endure; but then, returned into the full joy of all that God and His Father was in righteousness, redemption being accomplished, He brings His disciples into the enjoyment and joy of both. “I ascend to my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God.”

When I speak of three characters of the sufferings of Christ, it is not that He did not in detail suffer in a thousand ways; yea, everything was a suffering, His perfectness and love being shewn in enduring. I speak merely of three distinct positions in which, or principles on which, He suffered. Another question arises, connected with these points, as to the active and passive obedience of Christ, as it is called—whether the

righteousness of Christ, as obedient under the law, is imputed to us; and then also as to His priesthood. But this I must reserve, if the Lord will, for another paper; it will be time enough then to consider the opinions of men. One thing is certain, that without shedding of blood there is no remission; and it is a singular atonement and vicarious work which had no such effect. There was, we are told, “a sin-bearing life”— that the sufferings of Christ during His life were satisfactory; yet they obtain no remission, for without shedding of blood is no remission. My earnest objection, however, is not against this, but against a doctrine which, on the contrary, declares that these sufferings were not vicarious, but the effect of Christ’s being born a man and a Jew, and which makes us consequently partakers of these sufferings under wrath as our privilege. Still, those who insist that Christ’s living sufferings were satisfactory, and that all His sufferings wrought the work of redemption, should explain how it is that remission is wholly by something else.

Finally, I say, that he who says that Christ—when He said, “I cry in the day-time, and thou hearest not,” and when He said, “I know that thou hearest me always,” when He said, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and when He said, “He that sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him” — was in the same position, and accomplishing the same work before God, knows neither the tenor of His life, nor the true power of His death rightly before God. Acceptable He always was; but bearing wrath unheard, and enjoying divine favour, knowing He was always heard, is not the same thing;

and he who holds that it is does not yet know what his sins have cost the Lord.

One great root, let me just add, of all this (prevalent evidently in Scotland, and I fear not confined to it, and the true root of Irvingism and semi-Irvingism) is an abuse of scripture language, found, if my memory be not very treacherous, in the “Night of Weeping” —that Christ was made bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. These words have no such application or use in scripture; they are not indeed found there. We, the Church, are bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, now that He is glorified and the saints united to Him who is on high. The thought is a totally different one and does not refer to His incarnation, but to our union with Him when glorified. As incarnate, He abode alone. But this would lead me to a point I hope to touch on, the Lord willing, in another paper.

I close this paper, already too long, but justified by the importance of the subject, by stating the different characteristic periods of Christ’s life as presented by scripture. First, until He was about thirty years old (save His going up to Jerusalem at twelve years old and disputing with the doctors, given doubtless as a part of what He was in person and grace, and to shew that His relationship to the Father did not depend on any extraordinary anointing for office by the Holy Ghost), He remained in the obscurity of a patient and perfect life, awaiting His calling of God. He then associates Himself publicly with the remnant and is baptized by John, and is owned by the Father, sealed and anointed with the Holy Ghost. He thereupon goes up, before His public service, into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He overcomes and binds the strong man. Satan departs

from Him for a season. Subsequently to this He goes about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him—does always such things as please Him—is always heard and knows it. Satan comes back as prince of this world, and having the power of death. At the beginning he had tempted Christ with all that might be hoped to allure Him, physically, spiritually, and by the glory of the world. Christ, having overcome, displayed the power which could deliver man from all the effects of that of Satan. Now, man's enmity is brought out, and Satan proves Him by the power of death and the terrible consequences of what man was in judgment, what He must go through if He will take up his cause being such. This was at the epoch of His last visit to Jerusalem. Finally, He drinks the cup which He had freely and submissively taken at His Father's hand, and works redemption on the cross for those who believe in Him.

Notice of Earlier Opinions on the Subject.

I said I would take notice of the quotations from ancient writers on the point of Christ's vicarious life and living sufferings. What I have already said will have proved that views of His sufferings, in which (what I avow is to me more precious than clearness) true piety may be found, not only fail in clearness, but are superficial in their nature. And this is real loss; for, far from losing the piety and the holy affections which should accompany the thoughts of Christ's sufferings, a deeper scriptural knowledge of what they were gives seriousness to our spirits, and makes Him more prominent in our thoughts, emptying us of self. What we have to seek is, that everything our mind is engaged in should be filled with

Christ, or rather the fulness of the truth of Christ be that in which our minds are engaged. All other things are thus judged, received as belonging to Him, or we are freed from them. This enlarges and sanctifies the mind, for, indeed, He fills all things. We lose ourselves thus even in Him, and there is very real enlargement of heart. If we have peace and a single eye, scripture does thus feed the soul; sets before it a scene that embraces all things, according to the divine view of all things; gives a large, divine view of things in contrast with, and to the exclusion of, a fleshly, narrow one, of which self and the worldly mind and its narrow and confined interests and apprehensions are always more or less the centre; and, moreover, because scripture is the word of God, this gives submission and certainty to the mind, and clearness of judgment as to the walk.

I avow, I could not tie myself to any of the ancients, nor own their authority in any way. I may learn from them (I would, I trust, gladly from any one), and own thankfully, what was given them of God. I see in Luther an energy of faith for which millions of souls ought to be thankful to God, and I can certainly say I am. I may see a clearness and recognition of the authority of scripture in Calvin, which delivered him and those he taught (yet more than Luther) from the corruptions and superstitions which had overwhelmed Christendom, and through it the minds even of most saints. But present these to me as a standard of truth—I reject them with indignation. They were not inspired. Their teachings are not the word of God. To this I hold fast tenaciously. It is the safeguard and guide of the Church and of the saints under grace at all times, and especially in these days. The gifted men I respect, when presented to me as such,

would become a horror to me if they were in any way substituted for, or made to compete with, the word of God.

I am not surprised if eminent servants of God, not vessels of inspiration, did not all at once cast off every trammel, in which all Christendom, save a few persecuted ones (at that time almost rooted out by persecution, but precious in God's sight) had been bound up. I thank God heartily for the light and courage He gave them. But no one can say they were freed from everything that had overburdened the truth. I do not see that these eminent men were so free from human views, and what governs human judgment according to this world, when they were framing systems for the countries they belonged to, as when they were wielding truth for the deliverance of souls from error. I do not wish to dwell upon the evil which accompanied so much good—evil for which man was responsible, because I do not see that it would be edifying; but I do not wish to blind myself where history shews me facts which ought to have their weight with my conscience. I am writing in peace, because God has delivered us through the instrumentality of these men, some of whom laid down their lives for the gospel and their love to Christ and to souls. I have no wish to depreciate them or the work in which they were engaged—I wish I had the faith of many of them: but do not bring their doctors or their systems to me as authority. You are trenching on the authority of the word of God. Am I to believe consubstantiation? Am I to believe in baptismal regeneration? No honest man can deny that it was, generally speaking, the reformed faith, or at least the faith of the reformers, and that forgiveness of sins was obtained in it.51 I may be told,

But they preached justification by faith, so that it cannot be. They did preach justification by faith for the deliverance of souls, and taught baptismal regeneration when establishing a system, and tortured themselves to reconcile both. The evangelical party among the reformed have, at the present day, cast baptismal regeneration off, as freer in their ecclesiastical habits. The stricter Lutherans, at least confessional Lutherans, torture themselves to this day to reconcile both. In England everyone knows where we are as to it.

But (to refer to the points which engage me at this moment) it is remarkable enough that the term "righteousness of God" is not found in Luther's New Testament—the most unfaithful translation I know. He always says the righteousness which is valid before God —die Gerechtigkeit die vor Gott gilt. Calvin is quoted as an authority to shew that Christ's living sufferings went to make up righteousness by atonement; that His life, as well as His death, was needed to complete our righteousness. But if I take his doctrine, I cannot stop here; I must believe that His suffering the torment of hell (dreadful thought!) was needed too.52 These are his words: "Nor indeed is it right that the descent into hell should be omitted, in which was what is of no little moment for the effecting of redemption… Nothing was done if Christ had departed by only a corporal death; but it was, at the same time, of consequence (worth while) that He should feel the severity of divine punishment… whence also it was proper that He should struggle hand to hand with the powers of hell and the horror of eternal death. We have lately cited from the prophet, that the chastisement of our peace was put on Him; that He was smitten of the Father for our crimes;

bruised for our infirmities; by which he signifies, put in the place of surety for the wicked; and therefore He was bound, like the guilty, to pay and satisfy all the penalties which were to be exacted from them." Am I in this to adopt Calvin's view of what made out a believer's righteousness? or is it true that by one offering He has perfected for ever them which were sanctified?

But it is alleged, I am to receive his doctrine as to the vicarious merits of His living sufferings. Here are Calvin's words: "Furthermore, as a curse because of guilt awaited us at the heavenly tribunal of God, in the first place is related His condemnation before Pontius Pilate, governor of Judaea: that we may know that the penalty to which we are liable was inflicted on the Just One. We could not escape the horrible judgment of God; and Christ, that He might snatch us thence, submitted to be condemned before a mortal man, yea, a wicked and profane one. Nor is it merely to secure credibility to His history that the name of a governor is expressed, but that we may learn what Isaiah teaches, "the chastisement of our peace was upon him, by his bruises we have been healed." Previously, this made hell necessary, not scourging by an unjust judge—which is right? I must confess that such a statement as to the sufferings of Christ is very far indeed from carrying any moral weight to my spirit—our deserving God's wrath met in any way by His standing before a human judge. Does this, in any sort of way, meet or correspond to God's wrath against sin? And when it is said that with His stripes we are healed, does any person taught of God for a moment suppose that this refers to a bodily scourging by the soldiers of Pilate, or Pilate himself—precious as this may be in our eyes? I avow (while

fearing to say an irreverent word, while touching on such a subject) such interpretation is, to my judgment, and I am persuaded to every rightly taught mind, in the highest degree revolting, whether we think of the true character of Christ's sufferings, or of the true deserts of sin.

Witsius states it more simply and less offensively, yet as a system of doctrine more strongly. "Still more specially do Isaiah 53:5, and 1 Peter 2:24, assert that our healing is due to the scourging of Christ, as a part of His sufferings, when they say, By His bruises we are healed. For by that dreadful scourging, by which the whole body of the Lord Jesus was disfigured, as by one bruise, joined with other sufferings, He has merited for us, that we should be free from the bufferings of Satan, and the rod of divine burning wrath." … He adds, that "besides healing by example, there remains in the scourging of Christ a demonstration of the righteousness of God."

You have now, reader, the statements which are relied on to prove that Christ's living sufferings were vicarious and atoning. The proof drawn from Calvin and Witsius is, that "with His stripes we are healed" refers to His scourging by Pontius Pilate, and that He was judged before a tribunal of man to meet our being arraigned as guilty before God. I do not feel that this requires an answer with any sober Christian. The word "stripes" does not even mean scourging, but the lividness left by blows. Such teaching is simply deplorable.

A passage of Isaiah is quoted, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," quoted by Matthew 8:17, "And he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which

was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." Now I believe that in the sympathetic exercise of His power in love, Christ never remedied an ill that He did not bear it on His spirit. But this is not atonement. That atonement may be righteously necessary, that He might sympathize with sinners, in respect of what was the fruit of sin, I can well understand; but bearing on the heart in sympathy is quite another thing from atonement. To apply the principle of atonement here is simply nonsense. Was Christ sick in our place when He made atonement on the cross? He did surfer wrath and bore our sin so as to come under it. But in these healings He was exercising power. He healed, it is true, not indifferently; He entered into our sorrows when He relieved us. Thus the passage is as precious as it is intelligible; but the only act referred to is His healing by His power. What did that atone for? Was healing vicarious to make up for our not healing? Will it be said, for our want of health? But then He should have suffered the consequence of it Himself. What was healing an atonement for? Nay, infirmity and sickness were not to be atoned for. It needed what the compassionate Lord accomplished—healing. To say that His healings, shewing that He bore our sickness, means that healing was vicarious, has no kind of sense.

The truth, moreover, is that the word is not at all that which is used for bearing sin as a burden imputed. Nor would the Spirit here accept the LXX translation, which has amartias pherei—bears our sins. It is the word employed in Romans 15:1; "We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Was this atoning? The quotation of such

passages shews only the extreme poverty of scriptural intelligence, to be borne with when produced in the first dawn of light, or held in systematic and traditional piety; but when reproduced as pretending to the dogmatic maintenance of truth, is as poor as it is unfounded. “The miracles themselves were the manifestation of His sin-bearing work and character.” This language shews the real character of the statement and the force of what I have said. If sin be borne before God, man must suffer; but was the exercising power of love bearing sin? It is not said in Matthew’s explanation, He bore sin, but took our infirmities, which are not sin, and bore our sicknesses. Wrath of God is due to sin, if it be borne; healing the sick is not bearing the wrath of God. What Matthew says may be a proof of Christ’s entering in the fullest way into the sorrows of those who are healed; I believe it is. But this doctrine would destroy all the gracious, sorrowing sympathies of Christ in love; they are but bearing wrath upon Himself.

Isaiah 53 is the recognition by the converted Jew, in the latter day, of the way they had treated Christ, which we, of course, anticipate, but is literally applicable to the Jew. It looks at all Christ’s course and appearance in the flesh, His sorrows and the way He was received. He was despised and they esteemed Him not. He bore Israel’s griefs and carried their sorrows, but besides that, He was wounded for their transgressions. Was that healing the sick? The Lord laid the iniquity of them all upon Him, so He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgressions of my people was He stricken. This remark is connected with His death. “It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when he shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed.”

“Because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many.” The chapter speaks of His sorrows, and in doing this goes to their full extent, and speaks of His being cut off for sin, and connects His death with this bearing of sin in the most explicit way. This is not saying that all His sorrows were sin-bearing. To say that His healing the sick was His own being wounded for our transgressions, is introducing confusion into all truth, and neutralizing the value of Christ’s death.

Besides, “the Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all.” On whom? On Christ, Jehovah’s servant. But then He was the Christ before it was laid on Him. Further, “when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin”: why “when,” if it was always? Besides, who offered Himself through the eternal Spirit without spot to God? The divine person in heaven? Clearly not. If Christ was always the sin-bearer, He did not offer Himself through the eternal Spirit of God; He was always by position under sin. The free love of Christ —man—in offering Himself is entirely set aside. This is a very important point. Isaiah 53 gives the general picture of the sorrows of Christ, so opposite to the unbelieving nation’s estimate, and pursues them up to that great truth, that He was numbered with transgressors and bare the sins of many.

The statement as regards Dr. Owen is a mis-statement. It is said that he shews that Christ’s strong crying and tears which He offered in the days of His flesh were “concomitants of His sacrifice,” and in his Exposition of the Hebrews he enters fully into this, shewing that “the days of his flesh “means His life on earth though especially consummated in Gethsemane. These life-time

prayers he calls sacerdotal prayers. He quotes the psalms already quoted in proof of his averment, and shews that thus it was with Him “not for a few days, or a short season only, but during His whole course in this world.” I do not agree with Dr. Owen in many things on this point, but it is here stated that he calls His life-time prayers sacerdotal prayers. And that it was thus with Him during His whole course in this world.

Now, Dr. Owen states, “There was no time wherein He was not, as to His human nature, the king, priest, and prophet of His Church… but, as to His priestly office, He neither did nor could enter upon the exercise and discharge of it, until the end of His prophetical ministry.” He speaks of unction in incarnation, declarative unction at baptism. Then, thirdly, to both these there succeeded an especial dedication to the actual performance of the duties of this office; and this was His own act which He had power for from God. “This Himself expresses. (John 17:19.)… In that prayer therefore of our Saviour (John 17), do I place the beginning and entrance of the exercise of His priestly office.” Not only so: where Dr. Owen states that from His cradle to His grave He bare all the infirmities of our nature, etc., he adds, as to His sacerdotal prayers, “But yet respect is not had here unto this whole space of time.” That is, he declares exactly the contrary of what he is made to state. Whoever reads the Thirty-first Exercitation may easily see that the whole doctrine of Dr. Owen is opposed to what is stated. “His oblation was at the same time and in the same action with His blood-shedding.” His entering into the holy place “was consequential to that offering of Himself whereby He made atonement for us.” “His obtaining eternal

redemption for us was by the sacrifice of Himself in His death. For redemption was by price and exchange. And the Lord paid no other price for sin and sinners but His own blood "(1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

As regards 1 Peter 2:24, it is alleged that its true meaning is that Christ bore our sins up to the tree—not on it. He carried our sins during the whole of His humbled state. This is only want of acquaintance with the use of the expression; and the passage is only an additional proof of what I feel to be important for our souls in this matter. Anapherein epi to is a sacrificial expression, signifying the proper offering up of the victim on the altar. Peter here compares Christ to a victim laid on the altar as our sin offering with our sins upon it. The reader has only to consult Genesis 8:20, or Leviticus 3:5, 11, 16; and chapter 4:10, 19, 26, 31, where he will find the formula of anaphero epi to exactly what there is in Peter used for hala and katar in Hebrew; that is, the positive offering up on the altar as a sacrifice—the causing it to ascend to God, or burning it. The words do not mean at all what they are stated to mean. The cross was as the altar where the victim was consumed by the fire of the proving and just judgment of God about sin; and all was a sweet savour, though also for sin.

In result, this doctrine of an expiatory sin-bearing life (I will touch on the righteousness farther on) is built on no scripture ground. It sets aside the declaration that without shedding of blood there is no remission. It denies the offering up of Christ by Himself, when a man, to be a sacrifice—a most vital truth; for, according to this system, He is it all His life. It perverts, in the most shocking way, such passages as "with his stripes we are

healed," and casts at once both Christ's sufferings under divine wrath, as the wages of sin, and His living sympathies into the shade, by confounding them together; making death and blood-shedding to be essential to the first, and turning the latter into sufferings for sin under God's hand. And see the fruits. "If Paul could say, 'I die daily,' how much more Christ? His life was a daily dying. He was always 'delivered unto death.'" Was Paul suffering for sin, then, in so dying, and in an expiatory way? What an absolute proof of entire confusion of mind, as to the very nature of these things, is here displayed! We are told a whole undivided life is our expiation. Mark that, reader:—life an expiation. I ask, if such a statement be not in opposition to the universal testimony of the word of God. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." So that "without shedding.of blood there is no remission." It separates redemption from expiation, or gives redemption without blood. No sacrifice is needed for expiation. And what is death when it comes, but the consummation of a life, the same in legal character as itself? He was born "under the law; He lived "under the law"; He died "under the law." Is, then, one keeping the law in life, so as to be in the perfectness of divine favour, the same thing as being under the curse of the law, because it had been broken? But it will be replied to me, But we say, that He was under that during the whole course of His life. Yes, but scripture says quite the contrary; it declares that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. I admit fully an obedience running through life, always

perfect, and unto death, when it was consummated; I admit that Christ was in death perfectly agreeable to His Father. The question is not there, but in this—what expiates sin? Is wrath, and the curse, and the cup the Lord had to drink on the cross, the same as His life?

Reader, the word declares that the wages of sin is death; and Christ died to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. If the corn of wheat had not fallen into the ground and died, it had remained alone. He was once offered to bear the sins of many. We are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. Where were we without redemption? And this is forgiveness. Where would you be without that? He hath once suffered for sins, being put to death in the flesh. If death be not written on the old man, you must be judged for its deeds. But it is only in Christ's dying it is so. "Now, once in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

One passage I would yet desire to refer to. God "has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." Who knew no sin? Does it speak of the eternal Son before His incarnation? Clearly not. That would say nothing. It was Christ incarnate in this world. It was when by His path through this world, in which His sinlessness was put to the test, it could be said He knew no sin, then it was He was made sin. God did not make the Eternal Son sin in His becoming a man, in the word being made flesh. It would be hard to say which would be worse, the absurdity or the evil of such an assertion. If not, it was when Christ had been fully tested, and in result it could be said He knew no sin, then He was made sin. It is alleged that "during His life He was made sin for us."

When? And, remark, being made sin is clearly as an offering.

It is asked, In what sense and for what purpose was He made under the law, if from His very birth He were not the very substitute on whom our sins were laid? Scripture will answer, “He was made under the law that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Besides, He magnified the law and made it honourable— a matter not without its moral importance. It was of moment to honour the law, the measure of God’s requirement from His creature, at the moment He was going to take him entirely from under it, to deliver him from it. But this touches on the ground of righteousness, which I reserve for another paper.

* * * * *

I thank you for sending me the query as to the paper on the sufferings of Christ. It was my desire to send a few words to you on a danger to which saints may be liable, through the enquiry which has been raised on this subject. This question of your correspondent C. affords me the ready opportunity of doing so. But for the circumstance of the words “To be continued,” being omitted, through a very immaterial mistake, the paper would not have appeared to be closed without a signature, which would have left on the writer all the responsibility of the views contained in it.

The danger I have alluded to is double. First, that the whole doctrine as to Christ, which has been promulgated, should so alarm Christians that they should be afraid almost of dwelling on the sufferings of Christ, and giving them their full human reality, lest they

should trench on the perfection of His Person and position before God. The tendency of the mind to being overbalanced by the fear of one extreme, and running into another, is a well-known infirmity of human nature. If the enemy could lead the saints to shrink from a full contemplation of the sufferings of Christ, because of the heartless blasphemies which have been mixed up with the teaching on the subject, he would have gained a point of the utmost consequence. There is no subject more full of blessing and profit—if the divine nature and perfectness of Christ be fully maintained—than the true humanity and real sufferings of our Lord. It is the channel and expression of His love to us, where the heart meets it most near to us. If this be weakened in the soul—and it has been weakened by orthodox persons, the link of the heart with the blessed Lord is seriously weakened. I remember, at the time when Mr. Irving was promulgating his errors as to the person of Christ, a religious newspaper insisting that Christ's learning obedience by the things which He suffered meant His teaching it. Now this, though rightly intended in resisting fatal error, sacrificed precious truth, and tended to the very injurious practice of forcing the word of God. There is the danger of losing— through a just jealousy of the abominations which have been stated as to the blessed Lord—a full practical sense of the reality of His human sufferings.

But this danger has another side for every heart that occupies itself with it. It is clear that the peculiar value of this touching part of the Lord's history is that the wretched and cold heart of man may be touched, the affections engaged in a sanctifying way with Christ, and brought up to what is divine, the soul attached to Him,

while a reverent sympathy is awakened in the soul with all He went through, and the heart carried with Him into those better scenes into which His sufferings lead Him. Now, the truth has to be guarded; but a diligent dissection of all we ought to feel is very apt to destroy all feeling as to what we dissect; the power of the sufferings of Christ is lost in the effort to be precise as to them, and to guard the integrity of doctrine as to His Person and work. The real guilt of this would be with those who brought out the hateful doctrines which have given occasion to hedge around the truth with precautions. But it is the wisdom of those who respect the Lord so to deal with the subject as to keep alive (in all their freshness, and with the bloom of first ripe fruit) the sense of the sufferings of Christ, and the simplicity of holy and reverent affections with which they have been first dwelt upon. Such I desire for my own soul, such I desire for my brethren. It is well and very important to have the truth clear, and to guard it—especially when it concerns Christ—with holy vigilance. But it is well to have the heart free and fresh. “In that he hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” Let us never forget that. He laid His hand upon the leper, which if another had done, he would have been defiled; but it was not to contaminate Himself, but to drive away what was contaminating from the defiled one. The immutability of His holiness enabled Him to enter in love into the proximity of sin, and all the miseries and sorrows of sinful men, as nothing else but such a holiness could. It was just the blessedness and divine perfectness of His work, when alive here to do so. God was here revealed, and none but God could have done this, and in grace to the fallen.

The mistake of your correspondent—and I am very glad of his jealousy of anything which could have in it a particle of the doctrine that has been and is spread abroad—is, that he confounds sorrows with the cause of sorrows. First of all, to dispose at once of his first question," Was He Himself chastened in respect of sin? "It scarcely needs an answer, because He had no sin, in respect of which He had to be chastened. He was not chastened in respect of sin, nor by anger applying to His Person in respect of sin. But we must not confound voluntary sympathy with sorrows, and entering into them in love, with lying under sorrow by His own position. If He lay under the chastening Himself, He could not enter into it in voluntary love, alive as a man on earth, because in that case He was under it already Himself. Here is just the danger— denying the entering into, because of the fatal doctrine of His being necessarily under. It is just the doctrine of Christ's being necessarily and by birth, when a man, under these sorrows and chastenings for sin, which renders impossible the truth of His graciously and freely entering into them in love; which is just what gives all its value to these sufferings. He could not, as a man on earth, enter in grace and tender goodness towards us into that by sympathy, which He was lying under by necessity in His own Person as man, or more than other men were.

This point is cleared therefore. But sufferings endured by others can be fully entered into and endured by the will and love of an individual, which they are not in the smallest degree subject necessarily to, and could cease to undergo, at any moment, if they thought fit. A mother could enter into prison with a child, and suffer the

disagreeableness and discomfort of the prison in love to her child, and to win his heart to what is right, to whom it was no penalty for a fault, and from which she was free to go out at any moment, if she were disposed. She may enter into all his circumstances, and endure the pain and misery of a prison life, and feel that it is, for him, a penalty for his faults, without the smallest sense, whatever, of its being a penalty on herself—as indeed it is not. She is gone there in love. It is no penalty. She is not there, at any time, as in a penal condition herself, nor can she have the sense of its being a penalty on her, as if she were in the same case as her son. Yet, in fact, she is enduring all he is, feels it much more herself (for her natural and moral feelings are much more delicate), and she feels all the shame and misery of it as a penalty on him, without its being in the smallest degree such on her. Not only so, if she were there by the law imposing it on her (even because she was the mother of him who had incurred it), she could not feel in the same way for him. Instead of our being under an evil being a cause of sympathy—so far as we are under it ourselves, we cannot in simple and true love sympathize with one who is. We must morally be out of the evil to feel freely for those in it. The sufferings as to the facts were experimentally the Lord’s own, and He entered in spirit and thought for His people into the causes of them, and did so, and could do so, exactly, because the causes of them had no application whatever to Himself. The scorn and rejection of the Gentiles He underwent; so will the remnant of Israel; but they have been the guilty parties, and are there because they are, though now in heart repentant, and turned away from them. The terror of God’s judgment was before Christ in Gethsemane: so it will be with the remnant of Israel in the last day. They

will indeed escape it (which He did not, because of our salvation). Rejection and scorn on the part of the Jews were His portion.) so it will be of the remnant. And thus with all this character of sufferings, as treachery, desertion, and scorn.

Now, all this is quite a different thing from atonement, where the wrath of God is endured. That the remnant (though they, as ourselves, have deserved it) will never undergo. All these sufferings will form the moral state of the remnant—come upon them as a penalty; they will and ought to feel it as such. They are the fruits of their faults and sins, though at the same time of their integrity, as expressed in the Psalms; but in Christ, while the present fruit of His integrity, they are in no kind of way of His fault, nor is He dealt with as faulty in it by God—quite the contrary. He voluntarily enters into it all in grace.

It may be asked, But how could He enter into the sense of wrath in this way? Nothing can possibly be simpler. Israel is under it because they have deserved it, and (though they are encouraged, and in a measure comforted in hope, yet, not being yet acquainted with the fulness of redemption in Christ) they cry out of the depths under the sense of sin; and the hand of God upon them bears with it the sense and dread of wrath because of sin. Christ felt this, not because He had earned it in any way, or was necessarily under it by birth amongst those who had, so that He needed mercy and some means to escape it; but (exactly the contrary) because, when He was not subject to it, but the delight of His Father, He was going to take it in grace voluntarily all upon Him. He could anticipatively feel what He was going really to undergo, and cry unto Him who was able

to save Him from death. They could groan under the dread of the same wrath, which (when rightly and for their own good taught the truth of it, so that there might be truth in their inward parts) they are not finally to undergo at all. I am not here speaking of the degree and spirit in which He suffered, for here, notwithstanding grace in them, the difference will still be great. The truth is, that, so far is sympathy from the being in the same state, the sympathies of Christ are exercised when He is in no suffering at all. He has a nature cognizant of the same sorrows, as sorrows, and hence capable of entering into them. But the spirit and mind in which He enters into them may be as different as possible. His Spirit works in the remnant according to what is to take place from His hand—that is, judgment. He feels and enters into their sorrows, for He has gone through the sorrows. His feelings under them were purely gracious. When they suffer, He is going to judge, and His Spirit works the looking for this judgment. The Church alone has, properly and fully, as to their nature, like thoughts with Jesus Himself. On this side also her privilege is great. We cannot estimate it too highly.

Since I sent my reply to some previous questions on the paper on the “Sufferings of Christ,” two further questions have been sent to me. After the explanation I have given in reply to the former, a short answer will suffice. The enquiry made is, What is the difference between the doctrine of the paper and Mr. Newton’s? The question shews the need of making the matter clear to those who have been occupied with it. The answer is very simple. The doctrine of the paper is exactly the opposite of Mr. Newton’s. Mr. Newton taught that Christ, as born an Israelite and a man, was at the same

distance from God as Israel and man, because He was one of them, was exposed to the consequences of it, and passed through the experiences an unconverted elect man ought, escaped much of what He was exposed to by being in their position, by prayer, obedience, and piety; but still had the fierce displeasure of God resting on Him as born one of the people. Hence He listened with glad attention to the gospel under John the baptist, and passed then for Himself as from the law to the gospel. Most of this terrible anguish to which He was exposed, as born one of the Jews and of the children of Adam, was before His baptism by John.

I believe, on the contrary, that though suffering from man and feeling for all the sufferings of man and Israel, and the sorrow of love resting continually upon His heart, the sunshine of God's favour was on Him and was His delight and His joy continually, and thus there was no divine displeasure resting on that Holy One, nor was His frame wasted by the anguish of it. I detest it as a false abomination. But I believe that in grace, at the close of His history, when His life-work, as presented to Israel according to promise and gracious service towards man, was brought to a close, He, the object of divine favour, entered into the sorrows of His people.

Your correspondent has said in a short parenthesis "(unless anticipatively); "but what is Israel's sorrow in the last day unless anticipative? They will not undergo wrath at the close. Christ felt it in Gethsemane anticipatively, because He was about to undergo it. But He did it anticipatively; that is, He did feel what Israel will feel, only far more deeply. And He felt it in grace, because He was not under it personally; whereas Israel as to his own position will be; and if Christ had been

under it personally, because born a Jew, He could not have entered into it in grace. If the whole family are held under the penalties of high treason, and the mother I have supposed in my previous answer in prison necessarily though not personally guilty, she cannot go to partake of her son's sorrow in love, for the simple reason that she is there by the necessity of her own case. She is not free to go out because she has gone voluntarily in. Christ could have asked for His twelve legions of angels and have been free. Mr. Newton's doctrine was that He was born under it and sought to escape it by prayer, and obedience, and piety, and partially did; mine, that He was not born under it all, but, instead of having to seek to escape it, entered into the sorrow in love and grace for the deliverance of others. That is, one is exactly and essentially the opposite of the other. The question of "How long?" is as to this in itself immaterial; but the point that He was entirely free as born into the world, His state the opposite of what Mr. Newton says, and that by grace He entered into it, makes the difference of a false Christ and a true one—a true one who, being free, perfectly free, can care for others; and a false one who, being subject to it himself, must think of himself and not of others in love.

Mere attacks on my statements I should not notice, as I see no Christian profit in it. I leave them, where the will of man is at work in them, to Him whose will is above all human wills. I have always found it a happy course, and the way to be really sheltered from any and every attack. "Thou shalt hide them by thy presence from the pride of man, thou shalt keep them secretly in thy tabernacle from the strife of tongues."

I am uncommonly thankful that the papers on the "Sufferings of Christ" have awakened the enquiry they have. I have no doubt it was needed when the question once was raised. In itself the raising of it would be a cause of regret to me, for fear of the destruction of holy and reverent affections on such a subject. But we all know that it was raised, and a large class of persons in the Free Church of Scotland, and elsewhere were more or less affected by it. The original root in both England and Scotland, was the deadly wickedness of Irvingism. The attempt to meet that in England by explanation led to the statements which have now become notorious. In Scotland it was a more direct result of softened down Irvingism itself. When the English form of the doctrine being put to shame lost its blasphemous virulence, though never given up, it tended to coalesce with the softened and pious remains of Irvingism or semi-Irvingism in Scotland. This is the present phase in which the influence of this doctrine appears. It has sought to support itself by old opinions, and to make use of phrases employed, as is constantly the case, in a general and inaccurate way, when the question was not raised, and no such thought was in the mind of the writer, to sustain a system of doctrine which he, whose words are quoted, never thought of; but its birth and true nature is a distinct false doctrine as to the relationship of God to Christ, which is not Irvingism, but which affects both the person and work of Christ by views which have flowed from Irvingism, or been the result of contending against it without the Spirit of God.

But my object now is not to pursue these thoughts farther, but to say that when the humblest saint is honestly exercised on the subject, or troubled by any

statements which it cannot clear up for itself, I am bound and ready to explain, and make the truth, or my own meaning, clear as far as I can. I suppose the replies I have made to your correspondents, C. and another from Manchester, will serve as a general reply to any honest difficulty; but as more than one request for explanation has reached me, I would meet the particular points contained in wme of these and clear up what may have been obscurely expressed in my own statements on the subject. The Psalms afforded more especially occasion to that part of the subject which remains obscure to many. This is not surprising. The subject is new to most, and the bearing of particular psalms or parts of psalms in many cases new to my own mind; so that, though perfectly clear as to what I reject and what I hold, it is not surprising if I have not made all clear to my readers. Something doubtless is my own fault, but much of it the newness of the subject to themselves.

I got one paper stating that my language is to the effect that Christ suffered from God apart from atonement. This surprised me somewhat, and I looked at the papers and I found, “But the moment He [Christ] is suffering from God because of the atonement for sin, it is exactly the contrary”; and a little farther on, “Christ has only drunk that cup, because He suffered from God—entirely apart, totally alone.” Indeed one of the objects of the papers was to shew that Christ’s suffering from God was a distinct thing, even if at the same time, from His suffering from man—that the former brought grace and redemption to man, the latter, judgments; and that this distinction was carefully kept up in the Psalms. In one place it is said, in the preceding articles, that He was smitten of God. This, however, is the language of the

psalm, and my remark is introduced in connection with it, though the question may remain how far it applied to Christ, how far to the remnant. No one, I suppose, at least no believer, has ever doubted the general application of Psalm 69 to Christ. The knowledge of the degree of its application to Him, or its being exclusively so applicable, must be, as of all scripture, the result of divine teaching.

A simple saint is kept, by what he does know, with certainty of the truth of God, from being misled by what is obscure; but we may remain ignorant of many such points till God in His grace carry the soul on to further light and spiritual apprehension. I think it a great mistake to suppose (as is stated, if I remember right, in Home on the Psalms) because an expression is applicable to Christ or used by Him, that the whole psalm is so applicable. His Spirit speaks in all and throughout each, and in general in reference to the life of a godly Jew. Where an expression served to give utterance to His own perfect piety and sorrow, He could use it, though the whole psalm could by no means be assigned to Him. This is a very important principle to keep fast hold of. There are some psalms, of course, which are positive personal prophecies of Himself.

That, in Psalm 69, Christ is in the mind of the Spirit of God, though not exclusively so, is, I suppose, hardly necessary to prove to Christians, seeing it is one of the most vivid descriptions of His outward sufferings on the cross. It is in respect to the remarks in my papers on the “Sufferings of Christ,” which arose out of the consideration of this psalm, that difficulties arose in some pious minds. These difficulties I respect, and delight in the jealousy which would not bear anything

that they thought touched the divine perfection and relationship with God His Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever expression might throw a cloud on that, or if any did, I condemn it already: I am sure I have no doctrine which does. I hold His cloudless relationship with His Father, save in the act of atonement, to be an essential truth. It was to make this clear that I drew attention to His sufferings from man which brought judgment on man, and His sufferings from God (that is, atoning sufferings) which brought forgiveness and peace. This clearly distinguishes a life of communion, and the forsaking and wrath on the cross, and denies distinctly and unequivocally, in whole and in part, the doctrine of Christ being subject to the displeasure of God as a born Israelite and a born man. He never was but His delight. He was not by birth subject to what He sought to escape, and did partly escape from by prayer, obedience, or any other virtue or quality. All this is fundamentally false, makes a false Christ— not the true one at all, let it be vicarious or not vicarious. The former indeed is absurd, if He is subject to the displeasure of God by birth and position as the necessary consequences of these; for He is in it whether He delivers others or not—in it by His own position, not therefore for others. But vicarious or not, it is false; it denies, before the question of vicariousness can arise, the true being of Christ and His true relationship to God, which alone made His gracious work for others possible.

But then another enquiry presented itself. Did these two statements, of Christ suffering from man and suffering from God in atonement, explain or rather express all that the Psalms contain in reference to the sufferings of Christ? They do give all that we have to say to as

Christians, and hence the difficulty many Christians find in entering into anything further. It is true that in the indirect comfort of a soul under law a certain application of the Psalms may be found. I remember when the only passage in scripture which comforted me was Psalm 88, because no ray of comfort was in it; yet I was sure it was a saint who penned it, and I might be a saint though in like anguish. There is a certain truth in this, but it is needless to pursue it farther here. But it is important to give all its value to scripture, without in any way turning aside or shrinking from receiving its full force. God is certainly right. And when the saint holds fast the truth which He has been taught of God, and where a passage is obscure waits humbly till God teaches him, he will not go wrong. But to meet effectually a heresy which uses scripture, we must give their full value to the scriptures of which the heretic avails himself. This frees the spirit of him who respects scripture, and is troubled, inasmuch as what he cannot receive (because he sees it contradicts known truth) seems to have a foundation in some unexplained passage. It will be found universally that heresies are founded either on some obscure and difficult passage, the true sense of which not being known, it is easy to trouble many minds with some apparent sense of it, or on some truth neglected by the Church. The practical neglect of the true humanity of the Lord, of the presence of the Spirit, and the coming of the Lord, laid the Church open to the wild pretensions and dreadful doctrines of Irvingism. So the true interest which the Lord takes in Israel as God’s people being lost sight of, and His sorrows applied only to salvation and to the Church, the scriptures applicable to Christ’s connection with that people remained open to all manner of interpretations.

Christ died not for that nation only, but to gather together in one the children of God which were scattered abroad. But He did die for that nation as such. What God is displaying in that nation (though no blessing can be without atonement) is His government, not the Church's place and portion. These form, besides individual salvation and relationship to God, the two great subjects of scripture, its heavenly and its earthly parts: in heaven the display of infinite grace in the Church; on earth God's government, in result the display of blessing, under the direct government of the Lord in contrast with man's misrule and Satan's power. The Church is, in union with Christ, the centre of the heavenly blessing, and rules with Him; the Jews, the centre of the earthly blessing, the royal nation in the midst of which Christ governs. In all these (individual salvation, the Church, and the earth's resurrection through the fulness of Israel) Christ must have the preeminence; but to have it, man being a sinner, He must suffer (Heb. 2:10) and glorify God (John 17) where man has dishonoured Him. First of all, everything is based on atonement— the perfect infinite glorifying of God as to good and evil: that which, if it saves us, angels desire to look into. This, as a moral foundation, is the centre of all blessing, and makes the blessing dependent on it immutable. It is not the founding of blessing on creature responsibility—as was the case with angels, Adam, and Israel under the law, but on God's having been already perfectly glorified in respect of every moral question which could be raised. In virtue consequently of this work, man in the Person of Christ is raised up and set at the right hand of God in power, raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and set over all the works of His hands. Now Christ must glorify God in

every respect in which the divine majesty required it and in which He was to take a place in glory. As regards His life, this was done, not by being in distress under God's hand, which would have glorified nobody, but the contrary—would have been the mere subjection of Him who was without sin to the consequence in His soul of the power of evil and divine judgment without a cause, and effacing the divine judgment of good and evil and confounding altogether what had to be cleared up.53 He knew all that was due to God in a divinely perfect spirituality in the midst of evil, and walked in it. To meet this with displeasure would have been the contrary of a display of God's way as to good and evil.

God was glorified in Him in life by His maintaining, in spite of all temptation and trial and sorrow, undeviating communion with His Father, perfect always towards God, and as to the circumstances through which He passed, and equally undeviating obedience to His will.

This God did not visit with His anger and hot displeasure. It would have confounded, as I have said, all good and evil. It was met by what the Lord says, "I knew that thou nearest me always." Just as angels and men left their first estate, the creature fell untempted, or tempted in the midst of blessing. Christ kept His as man, and in spite of the efforts of the enemy maintained Himself in His place of communion and obedience, though in the midst of sorrow and loneliness of walk. He overcame the strong man, and could spoil his goods, and did, walking sinlessly in communion with His Father. The essence of His position as a living man was, that He did keep that first estate so that He remained "that holy thing." Dependence, confidence, communion, and obedience, according to the Spirit of holiness, formed

His life towards God. As He knows His sheep, and His sheep know Him, so the Father knew Him and He the Father. The very essence of His position in contrast with Adam was, that He was with God, and never got away from Him or the relationship He enjoyed with Him. The question of good and evil was resolved in the world by the power of godliness in life, in walking in the midst of evil, and overcoming through every temptation, and by goodness dependent on God.

But evil and sin had come in, and if any one was to be saved of the evil race, that evil must be dealt with—the true judgment of good and evil maintained according to what God is. This was done in the wondrous work of the cross, where perfect love to the sinner was at the same time displayed. Here, consequently, the very opposite to communion found its place—the forsaking of God. The Lord Jesus drank that dreadful cup, and made atonement for sin and obtained a place for man in the purpose of grace, which is displayed in the fullest way in the Church united to Him, though all salvation and every blessing depends on it. His position was the closest relationship of enjoyed favour in life, and forsaking made only more terrible by it in death—these formed the two characteristic conditions of the blessed Lord with God and His Father. This faithfulness in all was made good in spite of every obstacle and all the power of evil in man and Satan. So that the whole work was complete.

But there was another side of Christ's service, besides its aspect towards God, glorifying Him in life and in death—the interest He took in His people; spiritual or earthly, His sheep or Israel. They, in the path of life, have to go through temptations and trials: His sheep, trials of one character; Israel, of another. His sheep have

trials of temptation, persecution, sorrow, and the hatred of the world, sustained by communion with God, when in the relationship with God by grace in which Christ Himself stood when on the earth. John 17 fully develops this position (indeed chapter 14 partially so too). This, consequently, Christ went through. He is their example in it on the one hand, and on the other has the tongue of the learned to know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. We have His sympathies as well as His example. With all this, with more or less clearness, the hearts of His saints are familiar.

In general the subjects I have hitherto spoken of are connected with salvation and the Church, rather than with the government of God, although there be something of this mixed with our sorrows and temptations. But Israel is the centre of that government, and in this Christ must have the preeminence too, must secure the glory of God, and comfort His people with His sympathy. The atonement is the basis of this as of every blessing. It has its own unchangeable character. Christ died for the nation. This was towards God for them. His sympathies with them have yet to be enquired into. It is this point that has exercised the minds of some—how He could enter into the sorrows of Israel, when we view them as smitten of God.

I have already spoken of not merely the difference, but the mutually exclusive nature of being subject to these sorrows Himself as born a Jew, and His entering into them in grace. One is subversive of the other, and they are mutually so. I do not pursue this any farther; my object is to explain how He did enter, how, in a fuller personal sense than was once said of Him as Jehovah, “in all their afflictions he was afflicted.” If they are to be

accepted; if they are renewed in heart, and at the same time dread the wrath of God, which they have deserved, and see death before them, and hostility without the fear of God around them; if they trust God, and yet fear what is before them; if Satan's power is to be let loose against them, and death and judgment still press upon their spirit; if all this were from the hand of God, though human beings be the instruments, Christ (to sympathize with them and by His spirit suggest the right feelings as to it) must pass through their sorrows, not because they are resting on Him in His position, but because they are resting on them, and He will enter into their sorrows. He could say, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children, for if these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"54 Had He need of repentance, or anything to repent of, when He was baptized with the baptism of repentance, in order to walk with the true residue of Israel in the path marked out for them? He was fulfilling righteousness when they were owning sin; but He did come to be so baptized, and it was part of the path of His righteous obedience to do so. He took this place with them, and took it because He was not in it. This was its true character—the gracious and blessed place of answering to God's call, which gave a place and a name to the residue. Still He entered into their position, though exactly from another cause, and in the opposite way to theirs. Theirs was confession of sin, His fulfilling righteousness; He came from heaven, having a title to have a will, into obedience, but we from sin, and a will with no title to it; but He came into the path of obedience in which His people had to tread, and walked in it: when they had to be baptized of John, He too, though He had no sin to confess, He would be with them.

This part of the path was indeed quite different in character from what I would now explain. He could walk with them here. When the other part had to be trodden, He must do it alone. They, hereafter, will have the comfort of its being said, “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his distress.” If their piety will be shewn in looking on all as coming from the hand of God, whatever the instrument, so Christ, too, had to receive all at the hand of God, and so to look at it as entering into their sorrows, though He was perfectly free in His soul towards God. He bears their sorrows, though He was not the cause of them for Himself, as they had been, and looks at them as coming on them from God—on them from whom He would not be separated till all was accomplished for them.

Nor was this merely sympathetic feeling.55 Because, though government and atonement for sin are two distinct things, yet that government and the wrath borne in atonement would coalesce necessarily if atonement were not already made; for what can finally the government of God, as to a sinner and his sins, be? But till Christ had wrought the atonement, this separation between wrath and government remained, as to the work that wrought it, unaccomplished. What makes the sorrow only discipline for the remnant, when they are not yet brought into the sense of divine favour, was before Him then really (though this be not all the truth on this point, as we shall see) as wrath and the hand of God in wrath. What they dread vaguely, as not yet set free, He underwent in the highest and fullest sense. They are renewed in heart, trust in Jehovah, yet cry out of the depths, and see God’s hand upon them. Christ, always perfect in heart, trusts in His Father, yet cries

out of the depths, and sees it is a cup which His Father has given Him to drink. I speak now specially in respect of Israel. If the nation was to be spared and restored, His strength must be brought down in His journey, and His days shortened, and that of God. They are not yet delivered from the sense of wrath, though hoping in God; Christ was looking forward to the wrath He was really going to undergo. To Him government became wrath, for He was going to make an atonement, to go through what was needed for the deliverance of the nation, and He was looking forward to this, though not then accomplishing it.

Hence, when Peter smites one of the crowd come to take Him, He says, “The cup which my Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?” He said this in peace, because He had gone through the whole agony with God in perfectness, and from man He took nothing, though not insensible to his hatred in it. When Israel thinks of it as coming from God, peace not being attained, they mix up enemies and wrath (so to speak) all together. God’s hot displeasure is in the human trials themselves. This was not so with Christ. He takes up the thought of wrath wholly with God. The smiting is entirely God’s, and in His case is not separate from that in which atonement is wrought; and taking death as He did, and ought to have done, from the hand of God, He could say, “They persecute him whom thou hast smitten.”

Indeed, having given Himself up to the work of the cross, before He was actually crucified, He goes as a sheep before His shearers. He looks at Himself as the smitten One. For His faith the cup is already given Him. He had only now to say, “That thou doest, do quickly.” Jesus having bowed to this, men availed themselves of it

to trample on Him. As long as His hour was not come, He passed through the midst of them and went His way. Now His hour was come, and, though not actually drinking the cup, He had taken the position of drinking it, taken it into His hand, so to speak, does not expect God to interfere, has been to God about it, and knows it is to be—hence does not answer those who interrogate Him, nor reply. They could have no power at all against Him, unless given them from above: but now the hour for Him to suffer was come. It is not the time for the divine Porter to hold the fold open and free in spite of all; but for the good and divine Shepherd to lay down His life for the sheep. Jehovah was just going to smite the Shepherd, and He had given Himself up to it.56 Did men not profit, yea Satan, by this non-interference of God, as He stood with that cup just taken into His hand, though in perfect peace and power, so that when He said it was He, they went backward and fell to the ground?

The difference between Christ and the remnant in the latter days, even as to anticipated sorrow, is this: He goes, when the hour is come, directly and perfectly to His Father about it. It is then that the dreadfulness of this smiting of God, of the cup He had to drink, is all gone through in the agony of it with His Father, in prayer. He is to drink it. Man’s will in it and Satan’s will in it have disappeared—it is God’s will. He enters into no temptation; power and liberty are there; His enemies go backward and fall to the ground. He then offers Himself freely, saying, “Let these go their way”; so that not one sheep is touched, but they are scattered from the Shepherd, whose portion now is smiting. Then Christ let men do what they please with Him; and what did they please? Oh! what a tale it tells of what man is, left to

himself. That is, for Christ personally, even the anticipations of God's wrath and man's persecuting are wholly apart. He has gone, as to trial in spirit, through all wholly with God, and then freely offers Himself to man's ways to accomplish His Father's will.

Not so Israel: they have not peace with God. They see, because renewed in heart, the smiting of God's hand; but it is all mixed up with the enemy without, the transgressor and oppressor within, the sense and the legal sense of the sin for which they are smitten, and the sense and dread of His wrath. Yet they have hope towards God by grace, through divine teaching as to Jehovah's mercy, though peace-making atonement be not fully known as yet. Hence they can cry and do, as to themselves, "They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and speak to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded." God in the last days is smiting them, but, in virtue of the atonement, for their good, "till the pit be digged for the ungodly." "Blessed [it is then said] is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest out of thy law."

Hence we find in the Psalms, pleas of integrity; and from Psalm 25 confession of sin, of the people's past sins and of their own confident trust in Jehovah, yet almost despair under a legal sense of sin: the claim to be viewed apart from sinners and a sinful nation, yet the profoundest interest in the hopes and history of Israel. The atonement being made, they have the sympathies of Christ, who, though personally in another way, has entered into their sorrows. Something analogous to their state may be seen in the condition of a soul under the law. But this part of Christ's history is not that in which He learned sympathy for us, and sets us an example,

save in the fact of bearing evil patiently. For this reason: we have full knowledge of atonement; we sit in heavenly places in Him, with the full favour that rests on sons.

Now the enjoyment of that full favour as Son was His condition through His life, before His hour was come. The divine favour rested on Him and on His walk; and persecutions and trials were such as we in principle may expect to find. We cannot, if on really Christian ground, be in presence of the wrath of God as that the dread of which is not yet passed away, nor be crying out of the depths, because Christ has taken us out of them. Now the remnant of Israel, on the contrary, cannot be in the place of Christ's living delight in Jehovah and comfort in His favour, come what would, because they are not yet assured of this favour as a present relationship, though hoping in mercy. But, on the other hand, no depth of distress that they can go through can reach that which Christ did in Gethsemane, though not yet actually drinking the cup. All the circumstances they are in answer to His at the close as to the state of the people, and heathen oppressors. But Christ, being in perfect divine favour, and perfect in His ways and thoughts, could separate the anticipation of divine wrath and the malice of men, as He did, and present Himself to that malice for the accomplishing the purpose of God; but He could (as having passed through the experience of a cup given Him to drink, in which the Shepherd was smitten, and the use man made of His being in this position) fully enter into the sorrows of those who had brought it on themselves, as He, save by giving Himself, of course, never did. Hence He can sympathize with them and supply to them the thoughts and feelings which suit

their state, although they be not the same as that which He felt when passing through His sorrow.

When entering on the path of sorrow after the last supper, which led to the atonement, He (though accomplishing a work in which He must be alone wholly and altogether, yet in the path which led to it and even in the fact of death as rejected of man and with wicked hands crucified and slain) could in His sorrows enter into the sorrows of Israel under the government of God in the last days, when their blood too will be shed like water on every side of Jerusalem. It could not be said to them as to us, “Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,” because they are not in our place of union with Him and liberty; but He could enter into the sorrows they will be under, and though what He then felt towards His enemies is not what they will, for He was not only perfect, but entered as in the divine favour, though through agony, into the divine mind, yet He will enter into their sorrows and supply by His Spirit (as He has done in the Psalms) the feelings suited to them as having passed through, as to suffering and sorrow, all they can do. If He had not, who should help them?

But atonement is not the whole aspect of the death of Christ as suffering. And, indeed, in the Psalms, which are not a directly doctrinal part of scripture, and occupy themselves with Messiah and Israel, it is scarcely viewed in this light, though the facts in which it was accomplished are fully prophesied of. All the present hopes of Israel (as indeed of man), and the accomplishment of all the promises, were connected with Messiah. He was, if Israel had received Him, the crown of all their blessings. But all this must be given up; He must be delivered up, even into the hands of the

Gentiles, and be put to death. Did the Lord not feel this as to His beloved people? This is what was expressed in His weeping over Jerusalem— there indeed in sympathy. He was the Jehovah who would have gathered them; but if He was, still He took it all as the obedient man from the hand of Jehovah. This is seen explicitly in Isaiah 50, where this subject is treated. The Lord God had given Him the tongue of the learned. Even what He suffered from man He took from the hand of God when thus given up to suffer, yet even here with no breach in His entire confidence in God, or thought that His portion was uncertain, as has been blasphemously stated. “He is near that justifieth me” are His words when He was under the suffering. So in Psalm 22, He owns Jehovah’s hand in His sufferings, “Thou hast brought me into the dust of death.” So in Psalm 102, “Thou hast lifted me up” —that is, as man into the place of Messiah and glory — “and cast me down.” “Thou hast weakened my strength in my journey, and hast shortened my days. I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days.”

But these passages shew another truth of the deepest interest. Christ felt it, not only as to the ruin of beloved Israel; He felt it as to Himself, and He received it at the hand of Jehovah. The setting aside of every present joy and hope, of the present accomplishment of all promises, typified in the giving up of Isaac by Abraham; all ending, not in figurative, but in real death: all this Christ’s soul passed through. His obedience was tried in it. His devotedness to His Father, His submission in giving up all, entirely up in death. Was it nothing, when every promise and blessing was His natural portion, to find death instead, and the loss of all? Surely He shall

have all in a more blessed and glorious way, founded securely on that death and resurrection, the sure mercies of David. Still, then He had to give it all up. It was His piety to look to the hand of God in all this, and He did so.

No doubt that, when the Shepherd was smitten, atonement was made for sin; but that smiting was a great and solemn fact, besides the atonement which was accomplished in it. God's Shepherd was smitten instead of feeding His beloved flock. Further, death itself was fully felt as such by the Lord. He, with strong crying and tears, made His supplication to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared. It was no light thing to Him to have death instead of life for His portion as a man—He who knew what life was as a true possession of God. But all this has nothing to do with Christ's being subject to it as born into the world. It is exactly and diametrically opposed to that doctrine. Christ's life was the witness of a holy life in divine delight through every temptation to which we can be subject—a life in which, as regards His Messiahship, He exercised the fullest power, and disposed of all hearts, so that His disciples in going forth needed nothing. Now He says, "But now I say unto you, Let him that hath a sword take one; for this that is written concerning me must yet be accomplished, He was reckoned with the transgressors. For the things concerning me have an end." His path was changed from the active exercise of power in love, to the patient suffering the will of God. Not that He had lost the power, as Malchus's healing shewed; but that He was arrived where other things written concerning Him were to be accomplished. His hour was come.

As a man with death before Him, and as the Messiah of Israel, with the loss of all that belonged to Him, His being cut off and having nothing, He came into a place of sorrow, destined to Him, but not previously the path in which He served God. This He felt as at God's hand. It was His perfectness and piety to do so. He was heard in that He feared. Yet, till forsaken of God, the work of atonement, the wrath that worked it out in the forsaking of His soul, was not yet in accomplishment. He was till then in communion with His Father, pleaded with Him, was heard in His plea. Yet the smiting of God was the present thing before His soul; for, though the outward instruments were men, and the power of darkness at work, He would not stop at secondary causes, nor take the cup from any but His Father's hand. He does not say God's hand. His Father's giving, and the bright joy of obeying was, though going through conflict, the portion of His soul. In atonement itself this could not be. But the difference here is evident. He never asked any other cup to pass. Men had often shewn their malice and sought to kill Him who had wrought many good works amongst them (and surely His heart grieved over this); but He was not given up to them of God, so that His soul looked to His hand in it. Now He did. It was from divine counsels the word had gone forth: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts," though the wounds in His hands had been made in the house of His friends. And the Lord felt it all, as well as (when it came) the all-absorbing cup of the forsaking of His God.

24 From the "Bible Treasury," 1858-9.

25 [Added to the Second Edition, published 1867.]

26 Yet the explanations at the end leave really little or nothing to be desired.

27 I speak not of having sinful experience, but of the sorrow and distress, of the upright dread of death, and sense of what has brought it on.

28 Was Gethsemane the same as the widow of Nain?

29 This is confessedly the true sense; it is given in the margin of the English Bible.

30 Though Christ's proper sufferings are entered into in very few, save as from without.

31 Nor was it sympathy.

32 This passage has been used against me, not for what is in it, but as shewing the evil of other passages. The principle is perfectly just. Positive direct suffering from God is for sin, from man for righteousness. But that cannot set aside the sorrows of Christ's heart in respect of Israel's rejection, and His own cutting off as Messiah. It does not set aside that He felt what death was, that it became God to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings. This is not, in the true sense of the word, suffering from God in that sense of wrath of which Psalm 22 speaks. What is here is right. The utmost that can be said is, that a collateral truth should have been mentioned, as it was in my answer to Mr. Newton, where I said there were only these two sorts of suffering. Directly and properly that is true. My accusers may add the collateral truth if they please. Moreover Christ piously ascribed all these sufferings to God even when they were instrumentally from man, as coming from God's will and counsel. The reader has only to go on to the third following paragraph and he will find

these other sufferings. Compare pp. 178-180. It is fully entered on towards the close.

33 A popular book of piety, the “Night of Weeping,” is unequivocally infected with this doctrine.

34 I have altered this sentence to make its sense clear. It refers to Christ’s entering into the sorrows of the remnant, fully explained elsewhere. It ran, “in the same way in the same position” —Christ having entered into these same sorrows in grace; just as by grace He tasted death.

35 I have fully explained this in the introduction, so that I do not add any explanation here nor make any change.

36 This, however, was continued in patience up to His entry into Jerusalem on the ass, when He announces the vineyard was to be taken away from them.

37 I reject entirely as utterly senseless, what is become somewhat the fashion—the reading it, “one sacrifice for ever.” It does not, however, touch our present subject.

38 Note this, and indeed all these passages, for they shew what is the meaning of Christ’s offering Himself to God.

39 Guarded as this statement is by the preceding words, it is what has been especially used against me by Mr. T. Ryan and all his followers, as setting Christ in a false position. But no unprejudiced mind could use it to signify the state Christ was in. It refers on the face of it to the sufferings of Christ because others were in that condition; or Christ would be a sinner under condemnation, and a saint through grace, and He learning when a sinner the difference of good and evil. The last kind of suffering is immediately guarded, only

because there was the possibility of misconception. People have confounded His going through the sufferings in His own soul, and being in the state or relationship which occasioned them. He did pass through such sufferings in His spirit; but it was because they belonged to others who were in the state which brought them on, and that He passed through that which makes Him to enter into such. Thus He was upright, feared death and wrath, cried to God with them before Him. What is spoken of is the kind of sufferings, and Jesus' spirit realizing them. If any prefer "realized in His own soul," I have no objection; only Messiah was really cut off. It is what was meant by passing through them, as is evident on the face of the sentence. The whole matter is explained in the introduction.

40 This and what follows is another passage which is attacked. I have noticed the matter in the introduction. Here I have only to urge an earnest study of its force as most important for the soul, separating as far as needed the abstract question of evil in every soul, and the special circumstances of the remnant of Israel. This alters nothing, but may make it clear to the mind.

41 This is, perhaps, obscure through its brevity. The meaning is "the answer came, the proof He was not abhorred nor despised; when," etc.

42 If this create any difficulty, it may be changed into "passing in heart and spirit through, and enduring the sorrow of Israel's own case and of the effect of His own being the head of promise to that people and now to be cut off and have nothing, of Israel's case, that is, as under the," etc.

43 This may be changed to “besides, though not yet made a curse nor drinking the cup, the sense of it under God’s government and Satan’s power. Here good and evil were fully entered into and proved of the Lord, Himself perfect in the good, and perfectly tried by and apprehending the evil. That is, He must,” etc. I do not think myself these corrections and additions add anything, to the instruction contained in the passage, to a rightly disposed mind. They make it laborious and heavy; but if needed, be it so.

44 I have not suggested any alteration here, and the sense is the same everywhere, because I hold the denial of Christ’s passing through the sorrow and distress of Israel to be a fatal denial of the truth of His sufferings. The power of Gentile wickedness, of Jewish apostasy, desertion by man, and Satan’s power, were really felt by Him as no remnant ever will feel them, and the setting aside all the promises of God as to their then fulfilment in Him come in the flesh, and that brought about by His own being cut off.

45 It is one of the things which characterize the Revelation also as distinct, in its prophetic part, from an address to the Church on its own ground of blessing, and its taking a proper prophetic and not evangelical character, that we find joy over the judgment of Babylon, and in the souls under the altar the desire of vengeance.

46 It goes on to that (as stated p. 179, and also in notes to Psalms, and is fully entered into p. 230) in which in another aspect atonement was made. To make death in itself, or mere cutting off, atonement, is ruinous, unless that death be viewed as the expression of wrath from God. It is the secret or unconscious denial of what sin is,

and what it deserves—rests in the outside—is infidelity at bottom.

47 This may be changed into “that His sufferings are not viewed here as atoning suffering.”

48 If clearer to any mind, it may be read here “His fully entering into that which comes upon Israel under,” etc. The words express the character of the suffering, which Christ most really went through. This also was used as if it made Christ to be in the state to which that suffering belonged. It is this fallacy which has been the wile of Satan to deceive my accusers: that entering into sorrow and suffering implies Christ’s being in the state or relationship which gave rise to it (see p. 220.)

49 After the word “God “may be added, “through full sense of which He passes, and in the effect of whose evil state He has a part in being cut off as Messiah.”

50 The writer of an article I have alluded to at the beginning of thi$ paper attacks a tract entitled “The Cross,” published in Dublin. No one can be answerable but the editor of the Dublin tracts for expressions found in them, because he modifies them to suit his object, which is popular distribution, and he seeks to make them simple and clear; but the critic’s note is most unhappy. The tract states that God was with Christ in the communion of perfect complacency up to the time His people’s sins were transferred to Him on the cross, but that then all was changed. The critic then exclaims, “What! the Father’s complacency in His Son changed!” Such singular pre-occupation hardly needs, as everyone will feel, an answer. The tract says there was the communion of perfect complacency till then; the note says, “What! the complacency changed!” Now I believe

that there never was a time when the Father's complacency in the Son was so great as at that solemn moment; but that is not the communion of complacency. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" is not the enjoyment of communion. The subject precludes my making any remark on so strange a mistake.

51 It may be alleged this is not the case in Scotland. But their Confession was a hundred and thirty years after the Reformation; and even there it is really taught as to the elect. "Grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed," they say, "that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerate"; but this is to save election. They say, "The efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet, notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost to such, whether of age or infants, as that grace belongeth unto, according to die counsels of God's own will, in His appointed time." So that, according to this teaching, by the right use of this ordinance, the grace promised is conferred by the Holy Ghost in God's appointed time. Yet this is the efficacy of baptism. The grace promised is not conferred in baptism; yet, by the right use of this ordinance, in which it is not conferred, it is conferred at some other time by the Holy Ghost. And yet it is the efficacy of baptism. This is a singular effort to reconcile the truth felt as to vital partaking of the divine nature, and tradition as to ordinances.

Here is the Catechism of Calvin: "Baptism is to us as an entrance into the Church of God; for it testifies to us that God, whereas we were strangers to Him (estrangiers de luy), receives us for His servants. The

signification of baptism has two parts; for the Lord represents to us in it the remission of our sins, and, besides, our regeneration or spiritual renewal. Not that the water is the washing of our souls, for that belongs to the blood of Christ only, but by the sacrament that is signified to us. The water is in such sort a figure that the truth (reality) is found with it; for God promises nothing to us in vain; wherefore it is certain that in baptism the remission of sins is offered to us and we receive it. This grace is not accomplished indifferently in all; for many destroy it by their perversity. Nevertheless, this does not hinder the sacrament having such a nature, although it is the faithful only who experience its efficacy. This grace is applied to us in baptism, inasmuch as we are then clothed with Jesus Christ, and receive then His Spirit, provided we do not render ourselves unworthy of the promises which are then given to us." An explanation, though happily less precise than the Westminster or Scottish, equally unintelligible to me, I avow. We receive His Spirit, provided we do not render ourselves unworthy of the promises given in it. Render ourselves—when? Do we then receive it or not?

The Catechism of Heidelberg, in general use among the Reformers, says, "Why does the Holy Spirit call baptism the washing of regeneration and the cleansing of sins? To teach us, not only that, as the filth of the body is cleansed by the water, so our sins are effaced by the blood and by the Spirit of Christ; but much more to assure us by this sign and by this divine pledge that we are not less interiorly purged of our sins than we are washed outwardly with the visible water."

I need hardly cite less important witnesses of what I allege. The lesser catechism of Luther thus states it:

“What does baptism exhibit (praestat) or confer?

“It works the forgiveness of sins, frees from death and from the devil, and gives eternal blessedness to all and every who believe what the words and divine promises promise.

“How can water effect so great things?

“Water certainly does not effect such great things, but the word of God which is in and with the water, and faith which believes in the word of God added to the water: because water without the word of God is simply water, and is not baptism; but, the word of God being added, it is baptism, that is, the saving water of grace and life, and the laver of regeneration in the Holy Ghost; as Paul says in Titus 3 (quoted).” What this faith is I may cite from the greater catechism, which is a violent defence of his views. “These leaders of the blind (who said faith alone saved and that externals were of no avail) will not see that faith must necessarily have something which it may believe, that is, on which it rests, and supported by which it endures. Thus now faith clings to the water (aquae adhaeret) and believes that it is baptism in which pure blessedness and life is, not by virtue of the water (as has been abundantly said), but through this, that baptism is united with and confirmed by the word and the divine ordinance, and ennobled by His name.” He founds it all on “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

The Dutch services teach the doctrine of regeneration by baptism as clearly as possible. See the second point in the address at the beginning of the formulary and the thanksgiving at the end. It is asserted in these places without any question or condition.

Calvin is far less positive in his Institutions, with a great deal that is confused, and in my judgment erroneous, as to the identity of the baptism and ministry of John with that of the apostles. He says that the knowledge and certainty of purging and regeneration are given in it. Purification is promised by baptism, but none other than that which is by the blood of Christ, which is figured by water by reason of its power to cleanse. But for sins committed afterwards, we are to look back to the certainty given us in baptism, which is not only for past sins, for the purity of Christ is offered to us. That always flourishes—is undone (opprimitur) by no spots. He says, "Therefore it is thus to be judged; namely, that in whatever time we may be baptized, we are washed and purged once for our whole life," and hence, if we fail, are to recall our baptism. We know how earnestly Luther preached justification by faith—how Calvin taught it—how English martyrs laid down their lives for it; yet all in their catechisms taught that forgiveness was received by baptism, so that men were to look back to it if they fell afterwards. I had often remarked the contradiction in the two aspects of the Reformation in England; so that I could not understand how a man could sign his acceptance of both. If he believed the Articles, he denied the Prayer-book which he usually signed (this was the evangelical position). If he believed the Prayer-book, he denied the Articles, or signed them with a reserve; he had his own explanation, as the other had for the catechism and baptismal service.

What I now notice it for is, that this remark applies to the whole Reformation. The preachers of truth proclaim justification by faith. The same men, when they form national Christianity, teach it to be identified with

ordinances. The phenomenon attaches itself to the whole circle of the Reformation. The more the formative side is clung to, the more they approach Rome in giving life and salvation by ordinances. The more they seek souls in grace, the more they depart from it. I am satisfied that a great deal of this arose from confounding the Church as the body of Christ, and the house formed on earth with the responsibilities of the Church of God attached to it, but having quite a different aspect from that of the body of Christ. Then baptism was made to be incorporation in the body of Christ, which the scripture never speaks at all of its being—on the contrary, declares that by one Spirit we are baptized into one body—a baptism which is never for a moment in scripture confounded with that of water. On these points, the Reformers clearly have not scripture to warrant their statements. Nor are they alone in this. The language of the English baptismal service and catechism is too plain to need comment. “We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption and to incorporate him into thy holy Church.” “We call upon thee for this infant, that he, coming to thy baptism, may receive remission of his sin by spiritual regeneration.” And the catechism, “My godfathers and godmothers in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.” And in the service for Confirmation, “hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins.” On this last point I will quote a passage of the Homilies, to shew the deliberate view of doctrine as to a sacrament, which governed the

minds of the Reformers in England. “And as for the number of them, if they should be considered according to the exact signification of a sacrament, namely, for the visible sign expressly commanded in the New Testament, whereunto is annexed the promise of free forgiveness of our sin, and of our holiness and joining in Christ; there be but two, namely, baptism and the supper of the Lord.” “For although absolution hath the promise of forgiveness of sin; yet by the express word of the New Testament, it hath not this promise annexed and tied to the visible sign, which is imposition of hands. And though the ordering of ministers hath this visible sign and promise, yet it lacks the promise of remission of sin,” etc. This is precise enough. Nothing is a sacrament which has not remission of sin annexed and tied to the visible sign. I quote all these, not for the purpose of controversy, but of demonstrating what the doctrine of the teachers of the Reformation was as to sacraments, and particularly baptism. It does not weaken my value for their work, but it does affect their authority as a standard of doctrine.

52 It has been suggested to me that, though unwisely using the expression in the creed, Calvin only meant to distinguish suffering wrath from the physical act of death, as I have done. This he does distinctly in the passage here quoted, and I have no doubt rightly; the only difference is, that I have avoided the misapplication of the creed, where hell does not even mean the hell of the damned.

53 However derived from Adam our sinful nature may be, and we lost in him, the divine word is careful to add, “and so death passed upon all men, for that all have

sinned," epháo the condition on which it hung, though not its first cause.

54 I am aware we read, "if they do these things," poiousin. But Luke so uses, very often, the active third person plural for the simple existence of the fact. The outward instruments were, of course, men, and particularly Israel; but I am persuaded that is not the sense here. If any one prefers so taking it, I have nothing against it.

55 This is one of the attacked passages. I have only to urge the reader's earnest attention to it.

56 The persecuting "Him whom thou hast smitten" is literally applicable in Psalm 69 only to what was done to Him on the cross. (See verses 20, 21.) Still surely in spirit all that passed from Gethsemane, or when He had given Himself up to the suffering of death and rejection, has this same character. It may be remarked, in connection with this, that Psalm 69 gives the whole course of Christ's suffering life, closing in this solemn bowing to death at the end, His being in the depths. The zeal of God's house ate Him up. It was for the God of Israel's sake He suffered reproach and was alienated from His mother's children. All His grief and holy service made Him the song of the drunkard. Then, verse 14, He turns to what He was brought into at the end, which is the great subject of the Psalm; and the circumstances of the cross are spoken in detail. There we know was the true smiting. It was written, "Smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered "; but the moment after, in Gethsemane, He had given Himself up to this, all partook of this character morally, though the fact of smiting had not actually taken place. There were

the instruments of this as to the outward act; but I need hardly say whose word ordained “Smite the Shepherd,” and to whom Christ because of His perfection looked. (See Matt. 27:31.) I shall further on take up the truth that atonement was not all the sorrow of death to Christ. The reader should distinctly remark that the subject to which Psalms 69 and 102 are applied is the blessing of Zion and restoration of Israel. (See Psalm 69:35, 36, and Psalm 102:13-22.) [This note is part of the original tract.]

The Word Of God And The Priesthood Of Christ

There are two things that God employs in carrying us through the desert as spoken of in Hebrews 5. One is the word of God, and the other is the priesthood of the Lord Jesus.

The word of God is used for the detection and discerning of the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is “quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword … and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Whatsoever is flesh it cuts down mercilessly; and, thank God for it, because it is a hindrance to our blessing. The warning of which the apostle speaks here, alluding to the history of Israel, is that their carcases fell in the wilderness. They had got out of Egypt, and yet their carcases fell in the wilderness. There is, of course, for us, the danger answering to that—a very real danger. No doubt God will keep His own to the end, but there is the principal danger; and if we are kept, it is through faith. Now that which tends to make us fall in the wilderness is the flesh; and the means that God uses that we should not fall in the wilderness, is the word that is sharper than any two-edged sword. Whatever is not a thought that comes from God, and an intent that goes to God, the word of God judges: that is, whatever springs naturally up in the heart of man, whatever comes from the flesh (which, of course, is everything in a mere natural man, in the heart, out of which are the issues of life). The flesh never gets from the wilderness into the land. It may die in the wilderness, but it never can get out of it. The flesh belongs to it, in a sense, and may die

in it, but cannot get from it. There is nothing for the flesh but the sword—a figure, of course, of that which judges, detects, and condemns it; and let us thank God for that.

As regards acceptance with God, we can say the flesh is condemned already. “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” Thus, looked at as a question of righteousness in the cross of Christ, God has condemned sin in the flesh; and then, when we come to journey through the wilderness, the word of God judges whatever is not according to that word. The cross has dealt with the flesh already: whatever did not suit the death of Christ in a thought or act was thereby judged and condemned. The word of God is one means for the practical carrying out of this; and the second means employed is the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of God, we saw, judged the thoughts and intents of the heart, while the priesthood applies to all infirmities and failures. The moment it is a question of a thought or intent of the heart, it has to be judged as coming from the flesh; and this is done by the word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword. On the other hand, looked at as regards trials and weakness, there you get the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The word of God is the eye of God, judging everything in my soul that is not according to Himself. And then we have “a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.” Where it is a time of need and difficulty, it is the High Priest full of tenderness and mercy, “that we may find grace to help in time of need.” It cannot be, evidently, anything inconsistent with the

word of God. It cannot be the one to cut and the other to spare the flesh; and therefore the priest must sustain us, according to the blessing which is given us entirely out of reach of the flesh. And so it is that Christ becomes High Priest. He is gone up where the flesh cannot enter. That is the place in which we have to say to God; and therefore, as our high priest, He has to carry on our affairs in that presence of God where nothing that defiles can enter. He lays the foundation of that in the sacrifice by virtue of which He can go there; so that this very priesthood of Christ is founded on our acceptance.

As a figure, the redemption of Israel out of Egypt, which preceded all their journey in the wilderness, is here used. We have done with Egypt altogether. The Red Sea put death and judgment between the journeyers and Egypt; and so with the saint now. Death and judgment form the starting-point of the saint. There is that which goes before it in exercise of heart; and when a soul sets out to leave this world of ruin and condemnation, it Qften finds itself, as Israel did, on the banks of the Red Sea, the waters before and their enemies behind them. There they were completely shut in to this judgment, where Satan was driving them. But the moment they had passed over the Red Sea, all that was entirely and finally closed. What had been a barrier when Israel could go no farther, was now left wholly behind, and served as a barrier against Egypt. And to us, death and judgment are a securing barrier between us and all that are against us. It is not that there may be no conflict after—no weariness after; but there is no question of deliverance after that. If Israel were not faithful, they failed in gaining victories; but there was no question of God’s being against them. Next comes this journey

through the wilderness, the judgment of the flesh by the word, and then the priesthood of Christ which is exercised for us. And when I come to see where Christ is, I find that it is the very One that has gone through the death and judgment that were due to me, and has taken His place in the presence of God, where He is exercising His priesthood. He has settled the point where I belong to, where I worship; and it is in the presence of God that is my place. All that belongs to me, as in the first Adam, is done with in my intercourse with God—not as regards conflict with it, but as regards my place with God. The old nature is there still, and the word comes and judges all the movements of it that would hinder me in my path. But the place where Christ exercises His priesthood is out of the flesh altogether; it is in heaven. “Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” Israel had a place on earth, and a priest on earth; we have a place in heaven, and a priest in heaven.

“And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.” He must first be made perfect in His place as priest, before He begins to lead and administer to those who were to worship through Him. We shall find that Christ exercises this priesthood because we belong to a place where flesh cannot enter, because He has set aside all that we were connected with in the first Adam. He gives us access into the presence of God, and there He maintains us. The high priest in Israel, taken from among men, was not there. They did not go even in figure within the veil, save once a year, and that was with clouds of incense, to hide the glory of God from them. They were

men in the flesh, and therefore could not be connected with the holiest. We are men in the Spirit, and therefore we are in the holiest; but the flesh has no part there in any way. The Jews, as a nation, being in the flesh, they must have a high priest in flesh, compassed with infirmities, because they had infirmities; as it is said here, “who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.” He was outside like them; He was on the same ground. Well, in a sense, we are on the same ground with our high priest, and it is on the ground of the new thing that is in heaven. We are associated with God in this new place that He has made for us in Christ. But Jesus, as our high priest, is the very contrast of the Jewish high priest taken from among men. He must be separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, because we are. All the question of our capacity to go on with joy, as being there, depends upon the intercession of Christ.

There are three things here, as regards this fitness of Christ for the priesthood. The first is the title of His Person. “No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest.” He did not set up to be a person worthy in dignity to take such an office, but God says it of Him, He is My Son. And there He was, having a competency in His own Person. “But he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.” In Psalm 2 we find it said, “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” When I look at Christ as a man upon earth (for it is not His eternal Sonship that

is spoken of here), and say, Who is this man that He can have a priesthood? What is His title? He is the Son of God. He has a competency in His Person to have such an office.

Then we come to the installing of Him in this office. “As he saith, also, in another place, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.” Not like a high priest taken from among men, who dies and gives the office to some one else, but He is a priest for ever, etc. The carrying on of the priesthood of Christ in heaven is founded upon an already completed salvation, as regards both blood-shedding and righteousness. If the righteousness were not already perfect, the failure must bring down judgment instead of intercession. If propitiation had not been made for the sin, the sin must be the cause of judgment. But righteousness having been perfectly made in Christ, and made for us, He sits now in heaven, and intercedes for those for whom propitiation has been made through His blood. The atonement has been perfectly accomplished, sin is put away, and I am made the very righteousness of God in Christ. But the question still remains of our intercourse in this holy place with God in blessing, and in the perfect enjoyment of the position He has brought us into by this death and judgment through which Christ has passed. Here the intercession comes in: “We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” Thus we have the Lord Jesus Christ in the dignity of His Person, as Son of God, and in the title for office, as priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. If He is to be our priest in the presence of God, we have Him in the dignity in which He can carry it on.

But, then, there is another difficulty. If He has this mighty title, if He is the Son, how can He enter into all the sorrows and trials of such poor creatures as we are? If He were a priest like another man, He could understand the infirmities of other men.

But I answer, The priesthood is carried on where there cannot be a thought of infirmity, where the enjoyment is spiritual enjoyment, where, if there were a thought of the flesh or of sin, there could be no communion with God. Therefore the place of Christ, as priest, is necessarily out of reach of all infirmity. Another priest could join with sinners, and feel their infirmities, as being himself a partaker of them. How, then, can the Lord Jesus Christ be fitted, in that sense of the word, to be our high priest? It is not while He has His priesthood that He is thus fitted for the office. It is what He was upon earth, not what He is now as a priest, that has fitted Him for such a work. “Such an high priest became us,” etc. He has gone through the difficulties and trials of a godly and perfect man upon earth. He has known every possible difficulty which a godly man can find in his path through this world, and the trials too. He suffered and was “tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.” Now that is just what I want. I do not want sympathy with my sin; I find the word of God to cut it down, but no sympathy with it. Christ does not intercede for the flesh. What I want Christ’s help for is for the new man against my flesh. I want to be helped as a believer going through this world, against myself, so far as the flesh is there.

“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was

heard in that he feared. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." That is what I am to learn; only in His case I hear "Though he were a Son," etc. Christ had to learn obedience. Why? Because He commanded everything through all eternity. / have to learn obedience because I have a wicked heart and will '3Christ had to learn it because He was God over all, and therefore obedience was new to Him. It is new to me because I am a disobedient creature; it was new to Him because He was not a creature at all. He was put into all the difficulties and trials that we can possibly go through; and more than that, He was even put under the wrath of God that we might never be there. Into those sufferings we can never enter. In His sufferings as a righteous man on earth, we can, in our little measure, sympathize with Him. Supposing I am seeking to lead a godly life in this world, I must take up my cross and follow Him. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." And if we get too much ease in this world, it is not a safe thing for us. Suffering must be my portion. If I am godly in my ways, I shall find suffering; and if I walk in the power of the love of Christ, there I shall find suffering too. I may suffer for righteousness' sake and for Christ's sake; but whatever it be, we find there, in our path through this world, the Lord Himself going before us, suffering first and most of all.

In the sufferings of Christ about our sin, He was entirely alone; but there is another kind of suffering which Christ went through, of which we cannot say that we suffer with Him, but in which He can sympathize with us, and that is in the close of His life. The special character of that, though not exclusive, was the suffering of the

Jewish remnant in the last days. They are under law; they do not know what it is to be reconciled to God; but they come into the most awful conflict with Satan, Antichrist, and all the terrors of that day. They will be under the sufferings which come from the full letting loose of the power of Satan upon them, without the knowledge of God's favour resting upon them. That is anything but suffering with Christ; but still they will have the sympathy of Christ. Christ has gone through that too. When things were entirely changed in His whole position (not yet as drinking the cup from God but) when He comes and has Satan's power let loose upon Him (and there He can look forward to wrath), He was going through all that darkness which the power of Satan could bring upon Him, with the wrath of God staring Him in the face. For that reason He can sympathize with the remnant of Israel in the sufferings that they will pass through. Wherever this character of suffering comes in, judgment against man is what we find called for. Hence the constant appeal to God to arise and avenge them on their adversaries, which we find throughout the Psalms. Whereas when expiation is made, it is mercy that is called for. In the one case, it is calling for judgment upon men, because men, as the instruments of Satan, are making Christ suffer; but the moment He is suffering from God, because of atonement for sin, it is exactly the contrary. You then read, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I sing praise unto thee." It is all grace, and nothing else.

But how does that apply to us? Take souls that are under the law, finding out something of the depth and extent of their sin—not quite in despair, but all the terrors of the

law drinking up their spirit. Christ can sympathize with them; having passed through all this terror and distress from the power of Satan, there is a sustaining grace that hinders the soul from being completely overwhelmed. The sufferings of expiation are another thing. Christ only has drunk that cup, because He suffered from God—entirely apart, totally alone; and nothing but grace remains. After He has said, “Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorn,” you will not find one single thing but grace. It is the wrath of God He was bearing for others.

Christ, in going through the first two classes of sufferings, can sympathize with me, where it is the trial and suffering of a godly soul, and can intercede for us and help us on. I have no doubt, too, that the presence of Christ in heaven now sustains Israel as a separate nation.

“And being made perfect,” etc. The whole thing has been passed through, and He becomes a qualified high priest, as regards my sorrows and difficulties, because He has gone through all the difficulties of a godly life on the earth; and therefore now, while He gives us this place in heaven, He is competent to sympathize with us as we pass through the world. My place is in heaven, and my path upon earth is that which belongs to, and is consistent with, this place that I have in heaven. My path ought to be the expression of that. What was Christ’s path in this world? Even as the Son of man upon earth, He was ever “the Son of man who is in heaven.” Every atom of His life was the expression of this blessed One in heaven; and so it is with us, so far as we are consistent. The Christ who is in heaven, and who gives me this place in light, in the presence of God, is the

Christ that is in me. So the apostle says, “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” The life of the Christian upon earth is the manifestation of that life in Jesus, with whom he is in heaven: he is the expression of that Christ upon earth. Where we fail, where our life is not the expression of that life in Jesus, there comes the word of God, which is the expression of it, and searches us; and thus there is sanctification by the truth. The word brings Christ to me where I am not shewing forth Christ, and judges it.

But what if I find difficulties and trials by the way? There I have the intercession of Christ. I have Christ interceding for me, as knowing all the comfort of the grace of God that flows out to this life upon earth. He has known how a soul is comforted in this trial, and He takes it all for me, and pleads for me before God, according to His own knowledge of my need. There I find the supplies of grace I want, through a person who understands the application of grace to a heart that is going through these difficulties. Before He stands in His place of priesthood, He has gone through them all. Thus His walk upon earth was ever that of a dependent man, and now He intercedes for us as dependent ones, and thereby maintains our communion with the blessedness of God, in the place where our title is. You may be conscious of much infirmity, but if you say, I am weak, you are also entitled to say, God is for me in that. Do I want light? God is for me in that. Do I want direction for my path? God is for me in that. I get all that God is for my need; and such is the effect of the intercession of Christ. In all this path of trial below, there is not one of the difficulties to which grace does not apply it. There is

not a step of my life that God is not thinking of me. There may be that in me which requires that God should deal with it, as, for instance, was Job's case. He sees that Job is not going on well, and He says, I must take that case up and deal with it. And so He lets Satan loose upon Job, till Job was made nothing of in his own eyes; and that is exactly what was wanted. In Peter's case Satan took the start. The Lord says, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." He prays there before the sin was ever committed. The Lord was thinking about him, and, when the fitting moment was come, looks at him, and Peter weeps bitterly. It was good for him to be sifted. He was a man true and sincere, but with too much confidence in himself, and in his love for the Lord. Then, in order thoroughly to restore his soul, the Lord applies the word, "Lovest thou me more than these?" And Simon, conscious of how little love he had shewn, is forced to appeal to divine knowledge of it— "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." You know that I love you, though nobody else could. The Lord then says to him, "Feed my lambs." There we get the application of it. "When thou art restored," He had before said to him, "strengthen thy brethren."

Christ, having "learned obedience by the things which he suffered," associates our hearts with Himself in the perfectness in which God is, by applying that perfectness in grace to all the wants of our souls. Then, when we fail, intercession comes in and restores the soul, and yet it always maintains the soul in the confidence of divine love. The Lord intercedes for us without our even asking. We do not gain Him to

intercede for us because of our repentance or prayers. He did not intercede for Peter when he repented, but before he sinned; He interceded for Peter because he needed it. “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father.” It does not say, If any man repent of his sin, but “If any man sin.” That is, he wants it. It is the exercise of grace in His own heart towards us to restore our souls.

“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.” People are apt to talk about “strong meat,” as if it meant something very great. But the simple truth taught here is that milk is fitted for babes, and strong meat for grown people, and therefore if you are not able to eat solid meat, you are in a bad state. I do not give milk to a grown man because meat suits him. If we cannot take the solid food, the fact is that we have been content to stay babes, because, we have not been growing up into Christ; the thought and intent of the heart is not right. We are called upon to have our senses exercised to discern both good and evil, and that is impossible except as we are walking in reality with God. But the place where Christ keeps our hearts is in the holiest of all. He has sanctified Himself in the presence of God for us, and that is the place where He keeps us. We may forget Him, we may fail in appreciating the position in which He has set us, and in walking according to it; but in the holiest He keeps us, in unmingled untiring enjoyment of what is there— there in perfect love and in the light, as God is in the light, sin put away, and ourselves made the righteousness of God in Him. I have nothing more to think about my competency to be there. I am there, and

I cannot get there except as being perfectly cleansed. All sin blotted out, and there, consequently, as thus cleansed, I enjoy the unclouded favour of God. The place into which I am introduced is the unclouded favour of God that has been brought in by the death of Christ, which has cleansed me. And now here, in this earth, I am to manifest Christ. But in the midst of all the trials and difficulties of the way, we find these two means which God uses to carry us on: the word of God, sharper than any two-edged sword, which judges everything that is contrary to God; and the intercession of Christ which meets all our weakness and failure. He has trodden the same path which we have to tread, and has met the same temptations in that path. And now our very weakness, if we are kept in dependence upon Christ, is but the continual exercise of affection to Christ and the drawing out of His affections towards us.

The Righteousness Of God

Before entering on the solemn and interesting question of our righteousness, the righteousness of God, I will shortly notice what is objected, and dispose of it, so as to be able then to treat the subject unhinderedly for edification, and not controversy. The principle in question it is well to state; it is, I fully admit, a most grave and important one. Not that beloved and truly godly souls have not been, as I judge, cloudy upon what was really of great moment to their true and godly liberty in Christ, which is the power of a Christian walk; not that they have not been violent, as men generally are, in the sustain-ment of that in which they are wrong. But this does not destroy the importance of being clear. Still, I freely and fully, yea, joyfully, acknowledge (as choice and devoted servants of Christ, whom I respect, and whose devotedness I look up to) persons who have held on this subject doctrines which I believe to be a mistake. I have thus no animosity as regards this point. The point, however, is important, and what saints have held by infirmity of judgment may become a very great hindrance to the progress of souls, and a weapon in the hands of the enemy: witness the Judaism of the early Church at Jerusalem, and the opposition raised to Paul on the very same ground. The principles, indeed, which were then in question are the same which now partially agitate the Church of God, and largely hinder its blessing and testimony, and obscure its faith.

The question is this: Is the righteousness of God legal righteousness? I may state the question in the words of a sermon, which in its main purport and object I can

with my whole heart desire a blessing upon, so that I shall avoid an apparent attack upon others, and any supposition of evil will towards him from whom I quote. The statement, too, has the advantage, not always found, of stating that side of the question with peremptory decision. I read in Mr. Molyneux's sermon (preached July 18th, 1858, at the special services at Exeter Hall), in pp. 17, 18, what follows: "Do you know this, my dear brethren, that no man can enter into the kingdom of heaven unless he is garbed in a perfect robe of righteousness?" So far (save that "the kingdom of heaven" is used "for heaven," which to the practised mind—practised I mean in divine truth from scripture—betrays the existence of the system to which these statements belong), all is well. Now follows the definition of the general statement: "In plain words, do you know this, that over the gate of heaven is written up, Do this and live? Do you know that if a man is cleansed from his sin in the blood of Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit of God, He cannot then go to heaven? He wants something more still; he must have a perfect obedience. Heaven is suspended on a perfect obedience, not a negative one. God said to Adam, 'Do this and live.' He failed. You must present a perfect obedience when you come to God. Have you got it? It is the active righteousness of Christ; it is not His sufferings—that blots out sin; it is not His Spirit—that sanctifies the heart; but it is His perfect righteousness. Listen, 'By his obedience shall my righteous servant justify many.' Listen, 'He brings in everlasting righteousness.' Again, it is put upon us; it is the wedding garment: 'Friend, how earnest thou in hither not having the wedding garment?' That is the righteousness of Christ." The writer continues on the same point, but this may suffice.

“Transgressions are pardoned by blood, the person justified (that is the fruit of Christ’s righteousness imputed), the soul sanctified (that is the work of the Holy Ghost dwelling in you).” The reader must not think that the singular mis-quotation of Isaiah 53 is an error of mine. It is a singular fruit of the bias of the author’s mind, the result of his doctrine. It is singular that the only direct passage which he quotes for the point he is seeking to prove, is a misquotation. The two others are the point to be explained, and no proof of the author’s explanation of the doctrine.

Now I believe, and bless God for the truth, that Christ is our righteousness and that by His obedience we are made righteous. It is the settled peace of my soul, as I trust it is of the author’s. The important point here is the contrast between the death and sufferings of Christ, as winning our forgiveness, and His obedience as our justifying righteousness—what is sometimes called His active and passive obedience. This doctrine, however, is not fully seen until another point is noticed—the legal character of this righteousness. Mr. Molyneux states it in principle as clearly as possible. It is written on the gate of heaven “Do this and live.” That is positively and characteristically, as the apostle teaches us, legal righteousness. “To Adam it was so said.” To enter into heaven legal righteousness is absolutely required. This alone gives a title.

I affirm that the doctrine of scripture is wholly different, and that this doctrine (wholly unintentionally, I admit, so that I do not impute the consequence to those who hold it) denies the extent of” sin and the true character of redemption. Law is perfect in its place. The angels accomplish it in its highest character; he who loves does

too, as the apostle teaches us. I say this by way of preface, that there may be no mistake. But that a holy nature does with delight what is in the law is a different thing from the way a sinner obtains righteousness and eternal life. Doing with delight, when in possession of life, is a different thing from doing in order to obtain life. Now what I say is, The law was never given that we might obtain righteousness or life by it, nor ever could have been. It was introduced by the by to convince of sin. A sinless being, who had life, did not want a law of righteousness to obtain it; a sinful creature with a law of righteousness could only be condemned. “Do this and live” is not written on the gate of heaven. It was written on Sinai, which is not the gate of heaven. It is the gate of death and condemnation. It was not said to Adam Do this and live. He lost the life he had by disobedience.

The apostle, on the whole matter, contradicts the statement explicitly. “Moses,” he says, “describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth these shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise … that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” The righteousness of faith is contrasted with that of law, which says, Do this and live. It does not accept its principle and find a means of meeting its requirements by another, but brings in righteousness on another principle. It speaks on another wise. The great evil of the whole scheme is, that it is a righteousness demanded of man as born of Adam, though another may furnish it. The thing furnished is man’s righteousness. If Christ has done it for me, still it is what I ought to have done. It is meeting the demand

on me—Do this and live. If it is to be a satisfying the. demand of righteousness on me, it is the doing what is demanded which makes out the righteousness. If “Do this and live” is written on the gate of heaven, it is doing this that is the righteousness, and doing nothing else and nothing more. It may have been, if such be the truth, very gracious of the Lord to have done it for me, but that was what was to be done. Righteousness, wrought out by meeting the demand of a superior, can only be in doing exactly what is demanded. What is else than this has not the character of righteousness. And if we take the law as the perfect rule of what the creature ought to be, as indeed it was, then there can be nothing more; or else the rule is not a perfect one, and the righteousness not a righteousness according to the law, nor a meeting what I ought to do. It is not the obedience required of me. Besides, the whole principle is a mistake; for the law, when spiritually apprehended, reaches the disposition and condition of the heart. It does not only say, Do, but Be. But then life is there. If I say Love and do not lust (the two aspects of the law), righteousness is taken out of the sphere of doing. Doing becomes evidence of a state and nature. But is the motto of heaven a denial of the spirituality of the law? And so far from “Do this and live” being on the gates of heaven, I know of no scripture which shews that a doer of the law was entitled to heaven, or which promises heaven to a doer of the law, as having thereby such title.

And now mark the effect of the discovery of the spirituality of the law. It becomes not a claim to do, but a criterion of the state of a man. Its very nature and effect is changed: by it is the knowledge of sin. A command for qualities in a man, love and no lusts, ceases to be a

command to do, and is condemnation and death, and nothing else. The whole ground and principle of my standing is changed. “I through law am dead to law.” That is not looking to another to fulfil it for me, because I have failed. What I find in scripture is this, that man, the Adam race, has been as such tried and tested. Failing when innocent, he has been tried without law, and was lawless; under law, and was a law-breaker: I may add, tried by the presentation of divine goodness in Christ, and he hated it. The more we go into detail, the more we shall find that exhibited, as in priesthood in Aaron’s sons, in obedient royalty in David’s, in supreme power in Nebuchadnezzar’s.

But the great moral principles of it, the three stages of sin, suffice here: lust; lawlessness in will, or transgression; and hatred of God Himself as goodness. The first Adam, the flesh, is thoroughly and wholly condemned. Another Adam is set up—the Second man: God looks for nothing from the first. He sows (this is just the truth of the parable of the sower; He brings something by the word of life); He does not look for fruit. The fig-tree in His garden, after all His pains, only cumbers the ground. It is, for faith, cut down, and will be so, in fact. Leaves it had, but no fruit; and the judgment of the Lord is, not only that it had not produced fruit, but “Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever.”

It may be said This was Judaism. True, but Judaism was flesh under law. And this was what judgment was here pronounced upon. Flesh was judged—Adam and all that sprung from him. Not only was evil fruit condemned, but no fruit (which the Lord, in a probationary way, looked for) was ever to be borne by it.

The false principle of all this system is, that it is making out the righteousness of the first Adam under the law, instead of putting us in the Second entirely and absolutely, and treating the first as dead and gone. Had I then no personal responsibility? Not indeed under law, as a Gentile—still I had. Sin reigned over me and death. Hence Christ was, in sovereign grace, made sin for me and died, not to build up the old man again, after death, when it was dead, and confer righteousness on it, but to put me in a wholly new position in the heavenly man, who is my righteousness; to set me in the righteousness of God, seated in heavenly places in Him. Christ was the root and spring in life of the redeemed race; and the first is wholly set aside, judged, condemned, and dead. Christ is of God righteousness to us. All is wholly new, though we are personally brought into it only as quickened with the fife of the second Adam, having Him for our life.

This is the special doctrine of Paul: no thought of a righteousness of law acquired by another for us. There is atonement for sin, in which we lay, which we had committed as in the first Adam; but I repeat, no conferring of righteousness on it, but closing its history, and being before God in death, in which He in grace took its place, in respect of the judgment due to it. “lam dead to the law, by the body of Christ, being married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead.”

Hence, there was no connection of sinners with Christ under law. A corn of wheat, except it fall into the ground and die, abides alone; if it die, it brings forth much fruit. We are united to Christ in His new position, where He is the righteous man at the right hand of God, when He has died unto sin once, and is alive unto God. But if the

corn of wheat die alone, as come amongst the family of the first Adam, death is written on all that is of Adam. It has ceased to exist, so to speak, before God.

And when the Spirit of God, in the Ephesians, speaks, in its full extent, of the blessing we are called to, He does not speak of men as having lived in sin, or being condemned under law as having a life in which they had to keep law. Man was dead, wholly dead, in trespasses and sins; the Jew is viewed not as a transgressor, but as by nature a child of wrath, even as others. But what is the first object then presented? Christ dead (i.e., in the place, by grace, where we were), raised far above all principality and power, and then we, “quickened together with him, raised up together, and made to sit in heavenly places in him.” In view of the counsels of God there was, so to speak, no living man at all. There was man dead in trespasses and sins, but a Christ dead there too; and as God raised up Him, so us with Him who descended for us there. When God deals with us morally, as responsible beings, He does see us living in sin, breaking law, despising goodness. This last is the way the point is looked at in the Epistle to the Romans. In the Ephesians it is simply a new creation when we are dead.

To make this a little more clear—there are two ways I can deal with the point of the relationship between God and man. I may simply take the counsels of God and begin with them. This is done in the Ephesians. Or I may take the actual state of men as responsible children of Adam, and shew how grace meets this state. The result is blessedly confirmatory of the other, but the point of view different. This last is the view taken in the Romans —the ways of God in His moral government met by

grace. In the first, man is found dead in sin. All is God's work from beginning to end. Christ is seen—to bring about this blessed counsel in grace—dead; and we, dead in sin, are brought back up to God, according to these counsels, with and as Him. In the Romans, man is proved to be dead, dying under the effects of sin and his moral condition as a living responsible being, a child of the first Adam; and this responsibility, as a sinner who has ruined himself, met by grace.

But before I unfold the Epistle to the Romans in its bearing on the point which occupies us, under the added light of that to the Ephesians, I would gather the statements of scripture as to righteousness to see how far it has to do with law, in the case of a believer. Of course a man under law could only be righteous by keeping it. But is this the way (i.e., the making good legal righteousness in any way) in which righteousness is obtained by the believer—his title to be in heaven? Turning to Romans 3:21, I read, "But now the righteousness of God without the law" —not without the man's doing it, and by another doing it for him, but apart from law entirely, charts nomou. It is witnessed by law and prophets, but it is another kind of righteousness, made out independently of it. "To him that worketh not"—well, what instead?—but believeth on him that has wrought it out for him instead? Not at all: "but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly" (chap. 4). It is opposed in kind. So, further on, the promise that he should be heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed by law. It was not on this principle. It is not that it is on this principle, but that another had to carry it out: but it was not on the principle, not by law. The law entered by and by (chap.

5:20). We are not under the law, but under grace (chap. 6). Why, then, must I have it fulfilled in my place? We are become dead to the law by the body of Christ (chap. 7:4). How held to its fulfilment, if I am dead to it, and consequently it has no more dominion over me? So, further on, we are delivered from the law, being dead in that in which we were held. Then he enters into its power as a means of convicting of sin, which is not my object here, but of which I purpose speaking further on.

So in Galatians, as many as are of works of law are under a curse—not as many as have broken it: all under it had; but that is the position of one under it. No man is justified by the law; for the just shall live by faith, but the law is not of faith. That is, our justification does not proceed on this principle, whoever may meet it. And how are we redeemed from its only effect—a curse? The curse is taken by another. It is not met by another's fulfilling it; not a hint of it. After faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. I have nothing to do with it as a way of righteousness. How was another to be my righteousness by keeping it? I must have righteousness; but I am not under law, so that righteousness should be claimed in that way. If righteousness came by law, Christ is dead in vain. How could this be said if it does come by law, Christ having livingly fulfilled it to be our righteousness? And mark, His death is appealed to. Christ is dead in vain, if law is the principle on which I have righteousness. For faith, in the death of Christ, the very nature is dead in me from which the righteousness of the law would have been expected. "I am crucified with Him; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Is He under law? If not, I am.not. If I am justified, says the apostle, by works of law, why have I

cast it all down? If I build law after Christ, I am a transgressor in leaving it to come to Christ. But I through law (says he) am dead to law (i.e., not bound to it), that I might live unto God (which no one under law ever did: it is weak through the flesh); for by works of law shall no flesh be justified, be he Jew, or Christian, or who he may, or whoever may do them. No one is justified by works of law. We are set on a wholly different ground—dead and risen again in the second Adam. We are in the presence of God through the rent vail. Again, Christ is become of none effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law. You are fallen from grace. It is on another principle. It is not Do this and live.

As regards walk, even, it is the same setting aside of law. If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under law. If led of the Spirit, they were going right, yet they were not under law. We are not children of the bondwoman. The whole of the system on which I am now commenting, and which places man on the ground of legal obedience, flows from not apprehending the truth of being in Christ. But of this point in examining the Epistle to the Romans.

These quotations will give not a particular, difficult, or contested passage, but the well assured view of the Spirit, often expressed. The Epistle to the Romans, to which I now turn, will give the great principle on which this depends, and how the saint passes from the old state to the new.

What I find in the scripture is this: when I read in the Ephesians of the counsels of God, I find nothing of the law at all. All is God’s work, and all is in Christ, who is not spoken of as alive down here, but is first viewed as

dead, then exalted, and believers exalted in Him. It teaches unity now of all saints in Him, when taken out of death.

If I turn to the Romans, I find the responsible man in flesh proved guilty, not seen dead; but no remedy for his condition by making it in any way good, but death brought in; at which point we arrive at the beginning, so to speak, of the Ephesians, but making thus the state of man uncommonly clear. We do not find even Christ exalted in the Romans (save in one passage which does not apply to this point and confirms the general view I am presenting), nor the counsels of God as to the Church. The result of the union of its members is presented in one practical passage. The Epistle to the Romans places the individual on the ground of righteousness, and thus of true liberty in life, but does not reach the union of the body with Christ. Hence, death and resurrection, which suppose man to have had to say to sin in life, are its theme. After stating that its purport was God's good news, it begins with a divinely powerful display of the wickedness and evil state of man, alike terrible and true; and terrible, because true. Gentile conscience must quail before its plainness, telling things as they were; and Jewish hypocrisy, too, laid bare by the edge of that very word in which it made its boast, seek to hide itself in vain in its anger. All the world is guilty before God.

But grace meets this. By deeds of law none are justified; by law is knowledge of sin. But now righteousness of God is manifested. What is this? The first idea, so to speak, which is given us of God's righteousness (Rom. 1:17), is exceedingly abstract. In other passages we shall see the way it is brought about and made good as

to us; but here I do not doubt it is its general nature and character. It is God's, not man's. It is—has its character, quality, and source—from God, not from man. It is what it is that is spoken of, not how it is. It is a righteousness after this fashion, not man's. It comes from God for man, not from man for God. Hence it has the character and qualities of its source, whoever may be given to profit by it.

So wrath of God from heaven: it is not human wrath or justice on earth ending there in its nature and quality, nor even divine wrath exercised in an earthly way by earthly instruments. It is divine, from heaven.

It is not "the" righteousness of God, a fact, an existing thing, which is spoken of, but "righteousness of God"—this quality of righteousness. But hence it must first be found in God Himself, or it would not have that essential quality. Hence we are after God as to the new man created in righteousness and true holiness.

"The righteousness which is valid before God" (which is the sense put by Luther and Calvin on the expression) is utterly astray, because legal righteousness, where it existed, would be valid before God. If accomplished, it would be accepted. Man would live in doing it; but then it would be not God's righteousness, but man's: whereas the whole point on which the apostle insists in this expression is, that it is God's, and not man's.

I would also state here, that it is not inherent righteousness— an expression of very questionable character as to any consistent meaning. Indeed, on this subject, it is rather a contradiction in terms. "Righteousness" is indeed used for the quality which is disposed to judge and act righteously; or at least

“righteous” is (as we say, a righteous man). But, in general, certainly righteousness is a relative term: that is, it refers to conduct towards another. Hence, inherent righteousness is a very loose expression, as inherent conduct towards another is evidently very little exact. However, to take it as it is meant, as the quality by which man is disposed to be righteous, although this cannot be separated from the righteousness here spoken of (because if Christ is our righteousness, He is our life also; it is a justification of life), yet here we have nothing to do with inherent righteousness. The question of Job, “How can man be just with God? “is that to which the Epistle to the Romans gives an answer. When it is said the Jews were going about to establish their own righteousness, and did not submit to the righteousness of God, it is clear that it is not submitting to inherent righteousness. So when it is said, “Now the righteousness of God is manifest”— “to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness”: these words cannot apply to inherent righteousness. It is righteousness before God which the epistle treats of.

But, further, this is viewed, on the other hand, and for the very reason that righteousness before God is treated of, as applied to or judged of in the person who is to be accounted righteous. The man is accounted righteous; righteousness is accounted to him or reckoned to him. Thus, when it is said, Faith was imputed to him for righteousness, it is not the distinct substantive value of his faith which was reckoned as righteousness in itself, and then imputed to him, but that he was accounted righteous, held for righteous before God, because of his faith. The why or how remains. A believer in Christ is justified through faith; he is reckoned righteous; yet it is

not the value or strength of his faith which is accounted as itself equivalent to righteousness, and then imputed; yet it is said for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe (who believe); but that he was accounted, and we are accounted, righteousness on the ground of believing. That is, the meaning of imputed righteousness is not a substantive righteousness, apart from the person, and afterwards reckoned to him, but the condition of the person in God's sight. God views him as righteous, though he be not such as would entitle him to it by reason of anything inherent. It is righteousness reckoned to him, but not thought of apart from him, but his standing before God. They are in righteousness in God's reckoning, though they are not intrinsically so. Hence it is imputed or reckoned. The whole difference lies in this.

The meaning of imputed righteousness is, not a quantity of righteousness apart from the person, and afterwards reckoned to him in the present sense of the word, as I impute anything to a person; but the state or condition before God in which He sees the person. I beg the reader to remark thatT am examining the force of the scriptural expression "imputed righteousness" —not the scripture doctrine. From all I have said, there may or may not be a quantity of righteousness outside a person put to his account. But the meaning of imputed righteousness is the character or quality in which the person appears in God's sight, not the cause of his so appearing. It proves it is not inherent, for then there could be no more reckoning of it. Why he is reckoned righteous remains to be proved. The not seeing this has produced insurmountable difficulties where such passages as "his faith was imputed to him for

righteousness" had to be considered; for then, if a certain thing in its own value was put to the person's account and reckoned to him, faith was the valuable thing for the worth of which he was so accounted, and in truth it was inherent.

So, blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sin is covered: Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin. It is not merely that He does not impute the sin done, but he does not view him as in sin, but as in righteousness; for innocence there is no question of. Hence it is not dikaioma when imputed righteousness is spoken of, but dikaiosune—not an act or sum of things done, but a state. He is reckoned to be in the state of dikaiosune: dikaiosune is imputed to him. As the Thirty-nine Articles express it, "We are accounted righteous before God "; so in Romans 4:3, "It was counted to him for righteousness." Here, as we have remarked, it cannot be the value of something reckoned to Abraham, but the state in which he was reckoned or accounted to be: so we read (v. 11), "Righteousness might be imputed to them also." Here nothing is spoken of as that which is there to be imputed, and the passage as clearly as possible shews that the meaning of the phrase, "Righteousness imputed to them," means they were accounted to be righteous. Of verses 21-23 I have spoken. Faith is still here the thing imputed (Gal. 3:6). It is again faith which is imputed for righteousness.

There are eleven passages in scripture which speak of imputing righteousness or for righteousness; in nine of them faith is imputed for righteousness; so that here it does not mean the value of the thing done which is

imputed, or our faith would be the merit. They are Romans 4:3, 5, 9, 10, 22-24; Galatians 3:6; and James 2:23. The others, where it is said righteousness is imputed, are Romans 4:6, 11. In Romans 4:6, it is, God imputes righteousness without works, saying, Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Here, clearly no positive external thing is imputed or put to another's account, but a man is reckoned to have dikaiosune. Verse 11 leads us to exactly the same result. The Gentile believers were to be reckoned righteous, because faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness when he was uncircumcised.

These are all the passages. An analogous passage (Rom. 2:26) gives the same sense—the uncircumcision is counted for circumcision. That is, the man is accounted circumcised when he is not. Thus, though a person is reckoned to be in a state which he is not de facto in, a quantum of righteousness, ready outside himself, reckoned to him, is not the meaning of imputed righteousness. It means the state in God's sight of the person so accounted righteous. Righteousness imputed to a man is the same as the man's being accounted righteous.

Next comes the question, How and why is the man accounted righteous? It is God's righteousness, by faith in Jesus Christ, towards all, Jew or Gentile, and upon all them that believe. We are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth [to be] a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness." Here we have a very plain principle: God is righteous in remitting

the sins of Old Testament believers, as to which He who foreknew all had exercised forbearance, because of the blood of Jesus. He had forborne and forgiven, and how was this righteous? It was now proved and made manifest by the death of Christ. He declares at this time His righteousness. There is this difference in our's and the patriarchs' position— not in the substance of the matter, but in our status before God—that we stand in a known revealed righteousness, not in hope of forbearance, great as the mercy may be which grants it to us. He is just and the justifier. Who is just? God. Here there is an all-important principle: the righteousness of God means, first of all, His own righteousness—that He is just. It is not man's, or even yet some other's positive righteousness, made up of a quantity of legal merit, put upon him. The righteousness spoken of is God's being righteous ("just" is the same word), and yet so declared that He can justify the most dreadful sinners.

But it will be said that there must be a ground for this, which makes it righteous to forgive and justify. Right. Righteousness has a double meaning. I am righteous, say, in rewarding or forgiving; but this supposes an adequate claim which makes it righteous that I should do so—merit of some kind. If I have promised anything, or anything be morally due to righteousness, I am righteous in giving it. Thus, that God should be righteous in forgiving and justifying, there must be an adequate moral motive for His doing so. In the sinner, clearly, there was not; in the blood of Christ there was. And God having set Him forth as a mercy-seat, faith in His blood became the way of justifying. This shewed God's righteousness in forgiving. Thus accepted I stand before God on the footing of His righteousness.

Here we have most important principles—the righteousness of God means, what the words express, God's righteousness. It is not dikaioma here, some act or complete sum of righteousness by an act or thing done, but dikaiosune, the quality or habit. God is just or righteous in this. Next, this righteousness of God is declared or manifested in virtue of the blood of Christ. God is thus righteous in forgiving and justifying; proved so as regards the former saints forborne with before the blood was shed; abidingly and known so now by faith once for all, when all is accomplished, and the perfect ground of the justifying is declared. Further, by this forgiveness (inasmuch as it is through blood, so that God is just in it), the man is justified, accounted righteous. It is redemption, and God's righteousness is upon all them that believe. So afterwards (chap. 5), it is said, "We are justified by his blood." Man is a sinner, without law and under law—and now, entirely apart from law (choris nomou), God's righteousness is displayed in justifying the believer through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, by reason of His propitiating blood and through faith in it. God is righteous and justifies men that believe in Jesus. We have gained an immense point in understanding that God's righteousness is the quality or character that is in God Himself, nor an unimportant one that we are justified by His grace through redemption, and that righteousness is declared in remission.

Such is the direct testimony of Romans 3. (Compare chap. 4:6, 7.) But is this justification by blood all? It is not. A very important part indeed of the epistle remains behind—the doctrine of resurrection. It is thus introduced. Gentiles, and Jews under law, had been disposed of and set aside as sinners, but Abraham had

not. God accepted him, called out from Gentiles, and not under law surely. But how? He, too, was justified by faith. But faith in what? This is the second great point in the epistle. But the apostle will not give up the truth, that in justifying the ungodly forgiveness has the full value of reckoning righteous without works; nor that death, redemption by blood, is the ground of this. He will give us David's testimony to this great truth— "To him who worketh not, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly"—mark that: not, who substitutes another legal righteousness instead of the wanting legal righteousness in the sinner, but justifies one who has none— "his faith is counted to him for righteousness." The point is, that it is no debt because of any works that deserved it, but of grace to him who works not. Now, clearly, here the force of the argument is destroyed if it be works which do merit it in another. And what is our David's declaration? He declares the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputes or reckons righteousness without works, choris ergon. It has nought to do with works of righteousness which are done or imputed. And what is this declaration?— "Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, whose sin is covered." And who is believed in here? God, who justifies the ungodly. He reckons them righteous apart from works.

But I have said this is not all, and that Abraham is introduced to bring in an additional principle of truth, but not to weaken this (for indeed it is founded on it): no more than this sets aside the additional one. So far from it, if we do not seize what this epistle now goes on to teach, our knowledge of our position before God will be exceedingly imperfect. But before I pursue this second

point, let me remind my reader that the ground of forgiveness or justifying which we have been already considering is no light thing, or acquired for us at little cost on the part of Christ. Perfectly agreeable as all He was, thought, and did, was to the Father, yet His death, of which we are now speaking as justifying us, was of all the rest that which had the deepest character and the highest value. He gave Himself for His Father's glory as for us. "Therefore," He could say, "doth my Father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again." No living act of obedience under law, perfect as all was, rose to the excellency of a dying surrender of Himself, and that drinking the cup His Father had given Him to drink. Still there was another point connected with this cardinal fact of everlasting history to be brought out. He was raised again for our justification, as He was delivered for our offences. This was, with obscurer light, Abraham's faith too. It is not union with an exalted Christ in heaven. That is Ephesian doctrine, where nothing is said of Abraham. But Abraham believed that God was able to perform what He had promised. We believe that He has raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead, and therefore to us as to him faith is reckoned for righteousness. Thus, as the blood of Christ was that which was presented to us as sinners, as that by which, through faith in Christ, we were forgiven and justified, and the righteousness of God declared, so now resurrection is laid as the ground, and the following chapters are based upon this truth, which yet, of course and evidently, supposes the dying and blood-shedding. This carries us farther than the thought of blood-shedding. That lays the ground on which we are cleared. This puts us in the cleared place and standing before God, which is an entirely new one.

I believe on Him who raised up Jesus; that is, that God, perfectly satisfied in righteousness and glorified by the sacrifice of Christ, has raised Him up in witness of it and given Him a place as alive to Him in resurrection, sin being put away, our offences for which He was delivered buried in His grave, and we alive again here below by the power of His life in an entirely new condition in the favour of God (the present grace wherein we stand), and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God who has been perfectly glorified by Christ. I say, or rather the apostle says, “we stand,” because it is not now simply, as before, the being cleared from sin, but the new place in which we stand as cleared. Having been (for that is the force of the word) justified by faith, we have61 peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. We walk thus in newness of life. We are not seen here risen with Christ. He is risen, so that we are justified, have a sure ground of confidence, and are alive unto God through Him.

It is doubted if the doctrine of imputed righteousness be not shaken, looked at (as I do look at it) as contrasted with inherent living righteousness in us. In no wise. True it is that Christ is our life, and that we have received a nature which in itself is sinless, and that, looked at as born of God, we cannot sin because we are born of God. It is a life holy in itself, as born of Him. But, besides that, we have the flesh, though we are not in it; and the practical result in respect of our responsibility as to the deeds done in the body does not, even if we have this new fife, meet the just demands of God, if we should pretend to present them as doing so. That is, righteousness is not made out by our being born again.

We need, and have, a perfect righteousness apart from our life, though in Him who is our life. Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. No soul can or ought to have solid settled peace in any other way. The whole perfection of Christ is that in which, without any diminution of its value, we are accepted. The delight of God in His obedience is that in which we are received. What we have done as children of Adam, He took on the cross in grace, and entirely put away. And what He did is our acceptance with God. It is needed for us, for otherwise we have no righteousness. It is a joy to us, because we enter, as immediate objects of it, into the delight which God has in His own Son.

What scripture does not speak of is a certain quantum of legal righteousness attributed to us, because being under law we have failed in it; because we are not under law. It is an unholy doctrine, because it is not atoning by the Blessed One's bearing the curse for breaches of law by those who were under it, but allowing failure under it by another's accomplishing it. It is one thing to make an atonement for sin, and another to have one's neglected duty accomplished de facto by another. Besides, if done, it is human legal righteousness, by whomsoever done. Hence the apostle says, "Not having mine own righteousness, which is by the law," supposing it ever so perfect (for it could be and would be no more than man's); "but the righteousness which is of God" — another kind and sort of righteousness.

But have I not, or at least has not one under law, neglected duty? Yes, alas! but this has been atoned for (why then, in passing, also to be fulfilled by another? and if fulfilled by another, why to be atoned for? The

whole system is false in its nature), and I am put into an entirely new position as wholly dead, the whole being and nature in which I was set aside, since Christ died for me as in it: and thus my whole condition and being as before God in the first Adam is set aside. I am not in the flesh (my first Adam-standing to which the law applied); and I have an entirely new status before God in resurrection, in virtue of this work of Christ. The risen Christ is the pattern and character of my acceptance, as He is the cause of it. As He is, so am I in this world; and this is by a real living possession of His nature, while at the same time by faith in Him: so that my acceptance is inseparable from godliness of life, as in one dead to sin and alive to God, and yet rests for righteousness and peace on the perfectness of what is before God for us. Hence it is called justification of life.

Hence also our responsibility is not now the making good the failures of the old or first Adam: I am wholly out of it, and, as in absolute and perfect acceptance in the second before God, I am called to yield myself to God as one that is alive from the dead. The old thing is gone—atoned for (so that God is glorified in His majesty and righteousness), but done away. To that it was that law applied, and hence was weak through the flesh; but my first husband, law (if I had been under its power, as the Jew was, and many a one practically gets), is gone, not through destruction of its authority, but by Christ's dying under its curse. That authority is thus, on the contrary, fully established by Christ's having met it in death; but then, thus, by the body of Christ, I am delivered from it, having died in that in which I was held, so that I should serve, not in the oldness of letter, but in newness of spirit. Instead of satisfying the

requirements of my old condition under law, I am passed out of it (Christ having borne the merited curse, so as to establish its authority), and passed into another—Christ's —before God, as one alive to God through Him, God having been perfectly glorified.

This is the doctrine of Romans 5, 6 and 7, founded on chapter 4, and the results fully developed in chapter 8. It will be found that the whole groundwork is laid in the death, not in the life, of Christ on earth. See chapter 5:6-11. All is attributed in the fullest way to death. Death and blood-shedding is the theme; only it is thence concluded in the blessed reasoning of the Holy Ghost (who always reasons, not from what we are to what God must be, but from what God is and has done to what must be for us, as One that reveals in grace must do), that, a fortiori, we shall be saved by His life as now risen —life, not before death, but in resurrection, saved from coming wrath. With all this, at the close of the chapter, law is contrasted, when righteousness is treated of. To this I will recur specifically in a moment.

I pursue the evidence of the truth of our new position in the chapters quoted: chapter 5 has applied resurrection to justification, founded, as we have seen, on death. Chapter 6 applies it to life. It it be the obedience of one that justifies, we can do as we please, says the opposer of grace. Nay, says the apostle, you are justified because you are dead, and have now to walk in newness of life. How can a man dead to sin (and that is the way you have justification and life) live in it? If he do, he is not dead, he is in the first Adam, he has not part in Christ at all; for we are baptized unto His death, and it is in resurrection we have life. In chapter 7 this death is applied to our state under law. Law has dominion over a

man as long as he lives; but we are not alive, we are dead. In a word, Christ is alive for me before God, and I am justified, but as having died; and thus it is I have a place in this blessing. Hence I am dead to sin; and, further, I am no longer alive in the nature to which law applied. Therefore, he says, in Romans 7, “When we were in the flesh.” I am married to another, I cannot have two husbands at a time—Christ and law. But it is not by weakening the first: nothing glorified it like Christ’s death under its curse. But, if under it, I have died under it in the body of Christ, and thus I am free. Through law, I am dead to law.

I do not enter into the blessed and beautiful unfolding of this true liberty before God and from sin, and the heavenly security which accompanies it (God, as with Noah, shutting us in); not because it would not be delight to follow it out, but because I must confine myself to my subject. The character of the deliverance may be seen in Romans 8:1-11. There the Spirit is life. Thence, to verse 28, He is the Spirit of God personally considered, the spring of joy, the Comforter in the sorrows that spring from that joy itself in such a world as this. It is God in us. From verse 28 to the end, it is the security and sure glorious results afforded by God’s being for us: hence sanctifying or life is not spoken of here—that is wrought in us.

What is, then, the righteousness of God, and how is it shewn? How do we have part in it? How is righteousness reckoned to us? We are said to be the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5). The apostle speaks of having the righteousness which is of God (Phil. 3). But it is not said, God’s righteousness is imputed to us. Nor is Christ’s righteousness a scriptural expression, though

no Christian doubts He was perfectly righteous. Still, the Spirit of God is perfect in wisdom, and it would be wonderful if that which was the necessary ground of our acceptance should not be clearly spoken of in scripture. One passage seems to say so (Rom. 5:18). But the reader may see in the margin of a Bible which has references, that there it is “one righteousness.” There cannot be the least doubt that this is the true rendering. When the apostle would say “by the offence of one,” he uses a different and correct form, a different one from that which he uses for “one offence.” Theology may make it “the righteousness of one,” but not Greek. But the expression “the righteousness of God “is used so very often that it is not necessary to quote the passages. Now, it is not in vain that the Holy Ghost on so important a subject never uses one expression (that is, the righteousness of Christ), and constantly the other (that is, God’s righteousness). We learn the current of the mind of the Spirit thus. Theology uses always that which the Holy Ghost never does; and cannot tell what to make of that which the Holy Ghost always uses. Surely there must be error in the whole way of thinking of theology here.

I am satisfied that the source of it all is their notions about law. Law is for the first Adam, for the unrighteous. The apostle tells us so expressly. Righteousness is in the Second man. Christ was born under law here below, that He might redeem those who were under it out of that condition, bearing the curse they had incurred. We are told that law is the transcript of the divine mind: I deny it wholly and entirely. It is the transcript of what the creature ought to be. Can God, speaking with all reverence, love God with all His heart, or His neighbour

as Himself? It is simple nonsense. These teachers of the law know neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. The law is not made for the righteous, but for the unrighteous; and never made anybody in the world righteous. It is righteous, but it was given to sinners when in their sins, and never as a law to anybody else—not speaking here of Christ's coming under it in grace. It entered, pareiselthe, or came in by the by, between promise and its accomplishment in Christ, that the offence might abound. Christ is the image of the invisible God—the transcript of the divine mind, if you please. The law is an imposed rule. "Thou shalt love": is that a transcript of the divine mind? It does love sovereignly. Christ was made under law, and of course was perfect under it; but in that character was and abode alone. But He was God manifest in flesh, and thus was the image of the invisible God. He that had seen Him had seen the Father. He was love, and was perfect in holiness—holy enough in His being to love sinners as above sin, and further—what law does not and cannot and ought not to do, knows nothing of in its nature—gave Himself up for sinners, which law knows nothing of (for it will have no sinners at all unless to curse them). Hence, when Christian practice is spoken of, we are to be "imitators of God as dear children" — "to lay down our lives for the brethren." What has law to do with this? It knows nothing of it. The whole doctrine of Paul, and of the righteousness of God, these law teachers are striving against.

Where, then, and what is the righteousness of God? God's righteousness is His perfect consistency with His own perfect and blessed nature; and that (hence it is said, "if our unrighteousness commend the

righteousness of God"), as it concerns us now, in His dealings with others. "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his eyes behold the upright." God beholds the upright. God is a righteous judge, and God is provoked every day. "For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; evil shall not dwell with thee. Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness." The first Psalm opens with this great truth. So when He comes He will judge the world in righteousness, and the people with equity. So Psalms 97, 98, 99, and indeed a multitude of others.

It will be said, The righteousness here spoken of, however essential the principle to the being of God, yet is applied to the law. I admit it, and hence the instruction contained in it ends in the government of this world; and until order be brought about by power there, the state of things perplexed those who looked for it, when they saw the prosperity of the wicked. We are called to another position—a heavenly one, and even as Christ did, to "do well, suffer for it, and take it patiently." This is acceptable with God. But the keeping of the law is never said to be a title to heaven, still less to sit at the right hand of God. Morally—not personally, of course, I need not say, but—as to the quality of our righteousness we have a title to be there. So, on the other hand, we say as to sin, we "have come short of the glory of God," and "we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." And Christ declares, "The glory which thou hast given me I have given them, that the world may know that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Righteousness is shewn in the punishment of the wicked, and in the world's seeing Christ no more. This is the solemn answer to that vain conceit of love which

denies righteousness, and makes of love indifference to sin.

But I do not now dwell on this solemn application of righteousness, namely, that vengeance belongeth to God, as not being our proper subject. How as regards us, in the Christian revelation of it, is righteousness set forth? In the resurrection, no doubt, of Christ. But there is yet more. He shall demonstrate righteousness to the world "because I go to my Father." God has shewn His righteousness in setting Christ as man at His right hand. There, more fully than shall be in His direct government, though of course it is perfect there, the righteousness of God is shewn. Christ had a title to be there, and He is there. Righteousness is in heaven, it is a divine title to glory, and in man. That is what we want—what is ours. But why is Christ's being there righteousness? He has title as Son. He was there before the world was. But that is not our point here.

Let us see how He speaks of it. First, He says in John 17, "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." This I leave, because it is His personal title, though a just and blessed claim, and characterizing His position, and thus most interesting to us. But He adds a second ground, "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

And when was this done? John 13:31 tells us, when Judas went out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." He shall not wait till the public

government of the world; and His appearing from heaven will glorify Him, according to Psalm 8; but straightway, when He says, “Sit at my right hand till I make thy foes thy footstool” —where He is crowned with glory and honour, when all things are not yet put under Him. But why was it righteousness to do this? Because the Lord had a title to it, to be glorified as Son of man (though He had been in it as Son before the world was); because God Himself in His nature and amoral being had been glorified in Him, and He was therefore entitled to be glorified in God. We have seen when this was: “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.” Heavenly glory with God was the righteous consequence. As He says, “If God be glorified in him, God shall glorify him in himself.”

But how was this? Surely it was a glorious thing for a Son of man to maintain—not merely maintain, but make good—the glory of God. Doubtless, He must have been much more to have enabled him to do it. Still, as He tells us Himself, it was as such He did it. Blessed and infinite grace for us that it is so! The more we weigh what the cross was, the more shall we see how God was righteous in raising and setting Christ at His right hand. Sin was come in, disorder in the universe, the government of God unintelligible, angels occupied in conflict in God’s creation, witnesses of the success of evil. Had God judged in righteousness, and destroyed all the wicked, there was no love. Did He spare them, there was no righteousness. It would have been merely undoing the evil if all were restored, or sanctioning it if they had been glorified. Where was His truth which had pronounced death on the offender? where His majesty which had been trodden under foot? The whole

character of God was in question by sin. The Lord offers Himself for His Father's glory, according to the counsels of God. His truth is made good. The wages of sin is death. The cross is an absolute proof of it. It was the paid wages of sin by the Son of God Himself. None escaped but by His dying for them, and He the Son of God.

The majesty of God was vindicated as nothing else would have done it. Christ spends Himself, and submits to wrath to make it good. God's righteousness was glorified in the full judgment of sin. Yet His love to the sinner was displayed as nought else could have displayed it. What a scene for the moral universe! Nothing next or like it is there in all created history. Things that are have been created, and may be destroyed; but this abides, making good what God is for all eternity. Such was the cross. There the Son of man was glorified, and God was glorified in it. Hence He glorified Christ in Himself—placed Him at His right hand. This was righteousness. No glory amongst men would have been an adequate recompense for glorifying Himself. The true reward for glorifying God was God's glory. Into that the Lord entered, where He was before the world was made.

This is what displays divine righteousness—the setting the Son of man at God's right hand. As I have said, it was God's own righteousness; but as this must meet a title to what is given to make it righteousness, it was such because Christ had done what gave Him the title to be there. But this was done for us, for all that have the faith of Christ—this glorifying God about sin. It was about our sin He did it. Therefore the value of the work is reckoned to us. God righteously receives us into His

glory as He has received Christ: for He has received Him in virtue of the work done for us—us therefore in Him. We are made the righteousness of God in Him, for in blessing us in this heavenly and glorious way, in justifying us, He only gives its due effect to Christ's claims upon Him. Towards us it is pure grace, but it is equally the righteousness of God. Thus it appears that all the value of Christ's work is reckoned to us, and reckoned for righteousness. He has been made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Has His living obedience to God nothing to do with this? I do not say this. First of all, "he knew no sin" was absolutely necessary to His being made sin; but the truth is, His obedience is looked at as one whole moral condition or perfection in which He was agreeable to God. He was the obedient one, as Adam was the disobedient. And though His obedience in life was not for sin, it was part of the sweet savour which went up to God, and in which we are accepted. It was finally tried at the cross, and found perfect. This was the perfect man, and in circumstances alone in this nature but perfectly agreeable to God. Once He had undertaken obedience; it was His own duty; but that He accomplished, and glorified God in it, at all cost; but He was alone, and stood alone, that He might take man's sinful condition on Himself, and therein glorify God. He did not, as towards God, make good God's character in it, but a divine perfect man's. He did display God's character when alive—He was it. But that was addressed to man, not a satisfaction to God for man. He took up man's cause as born of a woman. He took up the remnant of Israel's, as born under the law. He was made

sin to reconcile the one, and bore the curse of the law to redeem the other from it, and will never bring the lawless under it. As a living man, sinners had no part in or with Him—He abode alone. As a dying man He met their case. There they could come by faith. “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” That was when He said, “The hour is come that the Son of man must be glorified: except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die; it bringeth forth much fruit.”

It is an entire setting aside the old man, his whole condition and existence before God, by which we get our place before God: not a keeping the law for the old man. Then you must keep him alive. God forbid! I live by the second Adam only, with whom I have been crucified: nevertheless live not I, but Christ in me. But then, in the new man I am not under law, so there is no question of fulfilling it for me, because I am already accepted and have life. There can be no Do this and live. I am, as even Luther expresses it, Christ before God. If righteousness come by law, then Christ is dead in vain. But if Christ has fulfilled the law for me, it does come by law, and Christ is dead in vain. Law applies to flesh, is weak through it, sets up, if it could, the righteousness of the first man. But I am not in the flesh at all—I am in Christ.

But Romans 5 requires some of its details to be referred to. The subject the apostle takes up is, as we have seen, death, in order to have a wholly new place and standing in resurrection. But this goes beyond the limits of law; for man sinned and died when he had none. Death reigned from Adam to Moses over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the image who is to come. Theologians have puzzled

themselves with this, ignorant that it is simply a quotation from Hosea 6:7. They (Israel), like Adam (men), have transgressed the covenant. Adam was under a law, not indeed to do this and live, as Mr. Molyneux so unhappily says, but to do this and die when alive; Israel was under law of Do this and live, when he was dead; as indeed the words rightly weighed implied. But between Adam and Moses there was no law—none of either kind, but they sinned and died.

Hence we must go up to the great heads of the two systems— the first and second Adam: not to mend the first by the second, but through death substitute one for the other. I do not speak of the persons to whom it is applied, but the abstract nature of the act. Adam sins, is disobedient, cast out of an earthly paradise, and is the head of a lost, condemned, sinful race. The second Adam obeys, glorifies God in righteousness, is received into heaven, and is the head of a new justified race. In either case, the act causative of the whole condition was accomplished, before the consequences were entailed on those that came under it. It is not a course of action on the ground of the first man, which, accomplished by the second, forms our righteousness as belonging to the first. We pronounce whole and entire condemnation on ourselves, as belonging to the first—children of wrath, Jew or Gentile. Death closes on that in Christ; and, after redemption, we begin before God in Christ, and are accepted in Christ, and Christ in us is our life. We do not go back to seek a legal righteousness in flesh, the other Adam-side of redemption; we may know ourselves only as lost, dead in sin there. It is too late to get a righteousness for our first Adam state: I have fled to Christ because I was already lost by it. By the

disobedience of one many were made sinners, by the obedience of One—looked at as one moral whole, perfect in death, His character contrasted with that of Adam's without any thought of law—many are made righteous. In death He bore the curse of the law for those under it; but this was not keeping it in life. He was obedient all His life, learnt what it was by suffering. He was obedient in death, in bowing to suffering, when it was His Father's will, where law had no place, though He bore the curse of that too. What law commanded to endure God's wrath when a person was sinless? He learned obedience by the things that He suffered.

Not only so, but this obedience is expressly contrasted with law, in order to meet the sin of those also who are not under law. This is the great point argued in the chapter. Personal headship is insisted on in Adam and Christ, and on this ground we stand, the law having come in between, occasionally, though to meet important ends. Adam died by disobedience, and Christ as obedience. The law came in by the by, says the apostle (pareiselthe), that the offence might abound. That is, he states the obedience as an absolute perfect quality of the Christ, available for sons of Adam, while the law had merely a special place, which did not come into this question of obedience. It brought out sin in the way of multiplying transgressions, but where (not transgressions, the apostle takes care not to say that; for so the grace would not have applied to those not under law, the very point he was insisting on being that it did apply to them; but where) sin abounded, there did grace much more abound. There was one offence, paraptoma, towards all for condemnation; one dikaioma, act of accomplished righteousness, towards all to justification

of life. It is abstract as possible, but, as the following verse shews, to the exclusion of law—that is brought in with nomos pareiseltke, an accessory which had a peculiar effect, and which did not come under his general argument, yea, to exclude which was the effect of his reasoning, in order to let in the Gentiles.

If the one offence swept wide beyond Jews, the one act of righteousness must do so too. The law came in by the by, to do its own work, to produce transgressions (not sin); but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. The purport of the reasoning of the apostle is to get out of the scene of law as to disobedience, obedience, and righteousness—not to bring it in. If it comes in, it is with a special object, by the by, which does not concern the Gentiles, and for the Jew served for increased guilt; but of which Christ has borne the curse for those who believe. I am not under the law but under grace, if I am a believer. I am not in the flesh if I am in Christ: when I was, I was under law, or lawless. In Christ I have entered, be I Jew or Gentile, on a new ground, where I am alike dead to sin and law, and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord, made the righteousness of God in Him. It is a very striking fact that Luther should have excluded from the New Testament that on which the apostle everywhere insists as the foundation of his doctrine, the revelation of Christianity (that is, the righteousness of God). Nor does Calvin get a step farther: “I understand,” he says, “by the righteousness of God, that which can be approved before the tribunal of God; as, on the contrary, men are accustomed to the righteousness of men, what is held and esteemed righteousness in the opinion of men” (Rom. 1; so 2 Cor. 5). But his whole statement is

very poor. To come short of the glory of God means, he says, in the same way, what we can glory of before God. In Romans 10 he makes the righteousness of God that which God gives, and their own that which is sought from man.

61 Some would read “let us have.” It would only strengthen the truth if it be so.

1 Peter 2:24

The true force of 1 Peter 2:24 has been called in question by those who seek not only to make Christ's life vicarious, but His sufferings during the time of His active service penal. The thought that all the sufferings of that Blessed One have infinite value, and that they were all for us, every Christian heart would close in with adoringly. There may be obscurity of mind connected with it; but the heart is right. But when intellectual proofs are attempted to be given to sustain unsound doctrine on this point, so as to undermine the true character and value of atonement, and to cast a cloud on divine righteousness, it is desirable then to maintain the truth. I do not hesitate to say that those who speak of the appropriation of Christ's living righteousness to us for righteousness, and hold the sufferings of His active service to have been penal and vicarious, have, in no case, a full, clear, and scriptural gospel. I am sure many who, from the teaching they have had, hold it, are as far as my own heart could desire from the wish to weaken the truth of atonement and the value of Christ's blood-shedding, without which there is no remission. They have not seen the deep evil lying at the root of a doctrine which speaks of vicarious sufferings, and bearing of sins to which no remission is attached. I am quite ready to believe that the most violent accusers of the doctrine which looks to the sufferings of Christ upon the cross as the alone atonement and propitiation for sin do not wish to enfeeble its value. But we may enquire into the justness of all views which we do not judge to be scriptural, and press too with confidence what we find in scripture.

I do not believe in the penal and vicarious character of Christ's sufferings during His active service, nor do I believe in the appropriation of His legal righteousness to me as failing in legal righteousness myself. I am satisfied that those who hold it have not a full, true, scriptural gospel; by some it is used for the maintenance of what is horribly derogatory to Christ. I have known many valued and beloved saints who hold that Christ, under the law, satisfied, by His active fulfilment of it, for our daily failure under it. I believe it to be a very serious mistake, though I may value them as His beloved people still. I believe in His obedience to the law; I believe that all His moral perfectness, completed in death, was available to me as that in which He was personally agreeable to God, and a Lamb without spot and blemish. But these are not the appropriation to me of legal righteousness. But I am not now purposing to go over all this ground; I merely maintain the ground on which I stand, and the doctrine which I hold as scriptural, and as of immense importance to the Church just now. I would do it meekly, patiently, that souls may be delivered from error and bondage into the liberty of the truth of God, which is the only real power of godliness; but I would do it firmly and constantly.

In the attempt to maintain the doctrine of Christ's bearing sins all His life, the translation of the text I refer to has been called in question. I am satisfied that it is perfectly correct. As an element in this question, I would now examine it. The English version is, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." A simple person would, surely in reading Peter, refer to His sufferings in death. Thus, in chapter 3, I read: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the

unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." No one denies that Christ suffered, during His life, sufferings which found their perfection in His death, besides the wrath-bearing character of it; for He was obedience unto death, even the death of the cross.

But the question is, "Was there sin-bearing during His active service, or was He kept up as the Lamb to bear sin?" It turns on the word "bear," anenegke. It is alleged that if it meant "bare," it must be upenegke or ebastase or eblae. All this is a mistake. A sacrificial word is, I do not doubt, purposely used; but anaphero means "to bear, or undergo," probably because sacrificial victims, which were offered up, were supposed to bear sins: at any rate, it does mean "to bear, undergo, sustain." The truth is, determining the meaning of a word by etymology, in a cultivated language, is the most absurd thing possible. It is interesting as philological research; but as determining the usus loquendi, it is ridiculous. I might say "hell-fire" must mean "covering sins" (for it is the same word as "to heal," used also provincially for roofing)—for the same reason, hence, that the fire of hell was purgatorial or remissory! It did originally mean a covered place, hades, and hence, gradually, everlasting punishment. Anaphero does mean to offer in sacrifice: it means "to recreate oneself, to remember, to cough up, to return, to cast the sin on another, to weigh or consider, etc. The question is, does it mean to bear, to undergo the pain and burden of? and, when used sacrificially, can it be separated from the altar of sacrifice? I say it does mean "to bear, undergo the pain and burden of anything"; and when used in connection

with sacrifice, cannot be separated from actual offering up to God.

First, it means “to bear or undergo.” I must turn to the dictionaries for this, and the passages in which it is used. They leave no sort of question. It is only systematizing, and not the facts in the Greek language, which can lead any one to deny it. I turn to Stephanus. I find anapherein, ferri, perferre, pati, ut Christus dicitur, anenegkein, peccata nostra (1 Pet. 2:24; Heb. 9:21). Citatur e Thucydide, anapherein kindunous, quod, durum sit redderet Ferre pericula: potiusque verti debeat, Subire pericula (better “to undergo,” that is, than “to bear”). The general sense of “undergoing the burden and pain of” is evident; and that is our point here. There is a reference in the beginning of the article to Aristides (I suppose, Ailius Aristides, the rhetorician), which I cannot verify. So Pape, auf sich nehmen ertragen, “to take on oneself”; “to bear” kindunous, Thucydides; phthonous kai diabolous kai polemon, that is, “envy, calumny, war,” Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. He adds, New Testament. Liddell and Scott give “to uphold, to take on one,” Latin sustinere (quoting Aeschylus (achthos) and Thucydides). It is thus perfectly certain that the word means “to bear the burden of anything, to undergo.” The etymological sense of “to bring up or back” is a mere absurdity here.

We have now to examine the scriptural use of it in connection with sacrifice, and in particular the passage in Peter. Anenegke is a sacrificial word. It is used here (if we are to take it as it usually is taken, as referring to Isaiah 53:12) for nasa, which means “to lift up, to bear, to forgive,” and here confessedly “to bear.” It is alleged —for I have considered diligently what is alleged against

it—that it cannot mean “to bear passively with “, as would be the case with anenegke epi to. This is a mistake. Aaron was to bear the names of the children upon his heart (Exod. 28:29). So with the judgment, in verse 30.

It is said that Isaiah 53:4, is translated elabe by divine inspiration, and hence it could not be anenegke, in verse 12. But this proves, if anything (for the word may be translated differently in different places according to the sense, but if it be the Spirit’s purpose to make the difference here, it proves this), that He would not use a sacrificial vicarious word in verse 4, but would in verse 12 (that is, that the “bearing,” in verse 4, was not sacrificial, but is in verse 12); for Hebrews 9:28, that Christ was once offered eis to potion anenegkein amartias, are the very words of Isaiah 53:12. So that, if this is of any value, we have not an inference that it cannot be used in one place because it is not in another; and that Peter, if he had quoted it, would have used another word for “nasa “in verse 12, because Matthew did in verse 4 (an argument, when said to be from inspiration, which I decline characterizing), but a direct proof that inspiration will not use a vicarious sacrificial word as to Christ’s living sympathies and sorrows; but that it will and does use it when it speaks of bearing sins when offered up to God.

And now, leaving argument, which I am glad to do, what is the scriptural use of anaphero, in connection with sins and sacrifices, with or without epi to? The following instances will shew: Numbers 14:34, kai anoisousi ten porneian umon. The use of it in this passage is the more noticeable: save in Leviticus 20:19, the word always used for bearing the consequence of our own or a

father's sin (and under the old covenant this is the same thing), is lambano in the Septuagint. In Leviticus 20:19, it is aphoisousi. In Exodus 28:29, lepsetai ta onomata epi to logeion; and for the same words in verse 30, it is kai oisei tas kriseis epi ton. Indeed, the argument as to lambano may justly be carried much farther, for lambano is regularly used for bearing the fruit of one's sin, bringing sin on oneself in its consequences. It is not bearing it vicariously, but as a consequence on oneself. The only apparent exceptions that I am aware of, and they are only apparent, are Leviticus 16:22, the scapegoat; and Ezekiel 4:4, 5, 6. But the first is lepsetai eis gen abaton, "He shall carry them in to a land not habited," and in the case of Ezekiel, it was clearly not vicarious, but representative and the same as the ordinary case. In a word, amartian lambanein is not used for vicarious bearing, but bearing the consequence of one's own fault, coming under the effect of it oneself, panas luere.

But what is important is to see the actual use of anaphero, when used with sacrifice. Numbers 14:34, and Isaiah 53:11, are plain proofs that it is used for bearing sins penally. But now, as to sacrifice. The reader must bear in mind that the act of having the sin on the victim is not in itself the expiation. That puts the victim in the answering place. For the other, death and the judicial action of God must come in to put it away. It must be slain and offered on the altar—as it is said, "by means of death." Christ had to take our sins on Him, and therefore die—give His life a ransom for many. Every one, therefore, believes He had taken them on Him before He gave up the ghost. The question is, did He take them on Him in order to suffer on the cross, and

suffer the penal judgment of them there, as the victim was brought up to the altar, then the sins confessed on his head, and then the victim itself, thus made sin, slain, and burnt? Or was Christ born into this penal state, suffering it before He actually gave Himself up to be offered on the cross? Was He under the penal consequences of sin in the sufferings of His active service—was that penally from God? or in the sufferings of the cup He took to drink upon the cross from God? I believe the latter—that it was after the victim was presented as an offering to the altar (in Christ's case we must say presented Himself as a spotless victim to the cross) that the penal sufferings for sins were on Him, because our sins were on Him; and that it is to this bearing of sins alone that the passage in Peter applies. Christ offered Himself without spot to God. Jehovah laid, then, the iniquity upon Him. He who knew no sin was then made sin. Did the Lord lay the iniquity upon Him before He offered Himself without spot, a proved spotless lamb? One who knew no sin was made sin when He had bowed to His Father's will to drink that cup.

Offering has, in scripture, a double character. It is used for presenting the victim, or indeed any offering, heevi or kikriv, "to cause to come nigh"; but anaphero epi to is not used for this, though in grammar I know not why it should not be. It is for hard causes in judgment in Deuteronomy 1:17, anoisete auta ep erne, "Ye shall bring them to me," but not for offering that I can find. If the reader takes Leviticus 1 he will find for these words prospherein or prosagein, to bring up. This was the presenting the offering which was to be a victim. But as soon as the victim, or part of it, is spoken of as burnt on the altar (Lev. 3:5), then it is anoisousin auta epi to

thusiasterion. So in verse 9, the general idea of offering is prosoisousi, hikriv, and in verse 11, the burning of it on the altar, anoisousin epi to. And this is the regular use of it in Leviticus, and elsewhere, as Exodus 29:18, 25; ch. 30:20; Leviticus 2:16; ch. 3:16; ch. 4:10, 20, 26, 31; ch. 6:15, 35; ch.7:21; ch. 8:16,19,20,27; ch. 9:10,20; ch. 16:25; ch. 17:6; Numbers 5:26; ch. 18:17. This last has the same force but there is not epi to thusiasterion. That is, anaphero epi to is the technical expression for consumption or offering up to God by fire, when on the altar, in contrast with bringing up to the altar. When epi to is not used, it has practically the same force when used of offerings—that is, offering to God; but anapherein epi to has the proper peculiar force of bearing them as a victim on the altar, under the consuming fire of God, not of bringing up to. It answers to hiktir, not to hikriv. It is impossible that the use of language can be made plainer by the facts of that use.

There is another word for which it is used, which confirms this, hala (Gen. 8:20; ch. 22:2: so Exod. 24:5; Lev. 14:19, 20); where the reader will remark, comparing verse 13, that in both cases, of the sin or trespass-offering and the burnt-offering, they are killed before they are offered in this sense of the word. In Christ both went together; He died on the cross. But it is of importance to remark it here, because it shews that hala, as well as hiktir, is not bearing the sins up to the altar, but the being offered (in consuming fire) on the altar to God. The word is used in some passages generally as a burnt-offering, an offering made by fire, the sense being assumed to be known; but this shews the strict sense is, the ascending up to God as a sweet savour, under the proving and consuming fire, not the

bringing up sin to the altar. And this is so true, that as to these burnt-offerings were of a sweet savour, so no offering not made by a fire was a sweet savour. Compare Leviticus 2:9 and 12, determining the use of this word in the most positive way. They were to bring it up (takrivoo), as an offering, but they were not to offer it (yahaloo) as a sweet savour, very justly as to the sense translated “burnt” in the English. It was not to be made to ascend as a sweet savour—that is, to be burnt and mount up to God as such.

The general use may be seen in Numbers 28:2 and Deuteronomy 12:13, 14; chapter 27:6 is a proof that the horion of epi to, i.e., epi with an accusative (see below), is not so absolute, but proves that anoisei, in any case, does not mean necessarily bringing up to, for here it is used with the genitive. Judges 13:19, again shews distinctly what anaphero epi to means (here epi ten, because it was a rock); for it is added, “For it came to pass, that when the flame went up,” behaaloth, “from off” the altar. The victim was offered on the rock, and in the going up of the flame. That was what hala refers to, not the bringing up to the altar.

Additional cases will be found in Kings and Chronicles, David’s and Solomon’s offerings; but it is only repeating similar cases, which confirm, but are not needed, to prove the point. The words for which anapherein epi to thusiasterion are used (namely, burning or causing to ascend on the altar), and the uniform use of them, prove distinctly that the force of the word is the bearing under consuming fire on the altar, and not bringing sins up to it. I may quote another proof, strongly confirming the use of this word in 2 Chronicles 29:27. Verse 24, the victim was killed; verse 27, Hezekiah commands it to be

offered, anapherein epi to thusiasterion. I add, on this occasion, it is never used for bringing or bearing sins up to the altar, it is used for bringing victims to the house; but this I quote, because there it is not epi. The sins were not yet upon them; they were the spotless victims that were to become sin-bearers, and sweet savours of offerings made by fire.

Anapherein epi to thusiasterion is never used for bringing or bearing sins up to the altar; what it is used for has been fully shewn. But the supposition that epi with an accusative means actively bringing up to, and then rest, is a mistake. There may be grammatically the idea by implication that that which is epi to is not always and naturally there; but as a matter of fact, it does mean resting on a place or thing at the time spoken of. Thus, Matthew 13:2, “All the multitude stood” epi ton aigialon. So Matthew 19:28, “Ye shall sit on twelve thrones,” epi dodeka thronous. Acts 10:17; ch. 11:11, epestesan epi ton pulona epi ten oikian. Winer’s “Grammatik “(section 583) may be seen for this use and the use of epi with a genitive for motion. See a singular example in Leviticus 3:5, the pieces of the peace-offering on the burnt-offering, epi ta—on the wood, epi ta—on the fire, epi tou. This may be from the fire being always there belonging to the altar, whereas the wood was brought there: ousin will be understood then before it. In many cases, I have no doubt that the real cause of the accusative is this; when the preposition of the compound verb implies motion, there will be the accusative though the whole sense will be rest. I do not think you would ever have einai epi to. With ephistemi anaphero, you will have the accusative; so eisteke epi to in contrast with Christ’s

sitting in a boat on the sea; but Mark esan epi ges. But this is grammar, and I pursue it no farther.

It remains only to adduce the cases of anapherein, in the sense of bearing or offering. We have first Hebrews 7:27, “who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice; for this he did once when he offered up himself.” Now, here it is perfectly certain that it has nothing to do with the victim bearing sins up to the altar, but with what we have seen to be its usual and uniform sense—the high priest’s offering it on the altar, where it was a victim. So, also, we have distinct proof that it is no vicarious life, for He did it once when He offered up Himself, and it was for sins. When, consequently, it may have a more general meaning of giving Himself up to be a victim, we have the word used for that in Leviticus, prosphero, Hebrews 9:16. Hence we have in verse 28, “once offered [prosenechtheis], to bear [anapherein] the sins of many.” Thus He was once offered, and offered to bear sins as thus offered, of which it is said that He had not to offer Himself often, for then He must often have suffered; but now He has appeared once in the consummation of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself—that is, His offering, His suffering, was the sacrifice of Himself. His being born was not His sacrifice. He offered Himself—One who was a man, though by the eternal Spirit, or there could be no offering. That is, He was a man before He offered Himself, His own blessed voluntary act, the perfect act of Christ, though in obedience, and Himself already the spotless Lamb. He was thus the Man, the spotless One, to bear the sins of many. This, there can be no doubt, refers to Isaiah 53:12.

We have, further, James 2:21, “When he had offered up Isaac on the altar”; and 1 Peter 2:5, “Offer up spiritual sacrifices,” which give no proof, save that the last shews this, that it was the offering up to God, which is very important in this way, that it shews it was not the bringing up the sins when laid on the victim’s head to the altar. The offering of the victim to God is prosphero. The consumption on the altar was its offering up as a sacrifice to God; this is anaphero. The notion of bringing up a living victim to the altar is unknown to scripture; the animal was slain when he had been offered (prosenechtheis), slain by whom it might be, and the blood sprinkled on the altar, and the fat, or the whole victim burnt; the altar had to do with death and the judgment of fire, and there was the sacrifice. A living victim bringing up sins to the altar is a thought foreign and contrary to scripture. When the victim had been presented, and the hands of the offerer had been laid upon it, it was slain at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. Death was the way sin was dealt with in the victim (we know Christ’s death was on the cross, as well as the full drinking of the cup of wrath); the thought of bringing sins up livingly, as if He offered Himself and His sins, is an impossibility. No; He offered Himself, and bare (anenegke) our sins, when offered (prosenechtheis) as a dying victim. Death was the wages of sin. Thus I return to 1 Peter 2:24 with the full evidence of scripture and the Greek use of the word. All the scriptural order of sacrifice, and the language of scripture, confirming it, that the simple-hearted reader may rest in all confidence in his English translation, “He bare our sins in his own body on the tree.” The word “bear “has a sacrificial character; but that no Christian reader ever doubted in this passage.

I do not see, I confess, how any scriptural locution could be made more certain. I doubt that any other could have so ample and absolute a proof of its actual meaning, and refutation of the meaning attempted to be put upon it, and of the desired change in the authorized version.

A Letter on The Righteousness Of God

Editor's Note 62

My dear Brother,

The “Record” has pronounced a judgment; yet, as the pope’s after all was not final with Luther, but raised a question which his authority was not calculated, as he had supposed, to settle, so I apprehend it will be now. For my part, I am thankful for the article. It has kept alive a question which I believe also to be important to the Church of God. And without burning the bull, I shall profit by it to search the scriptures whether these things be so. I am glad the question is raised. Whether the journal of the evangelical party in the Establishment is wise to volunteer in thus attacking others on the subject of doctrine, I must leave for its friends to judge. However, I am glad the subject is taken up.

The article does not take up particular expressions of C.S. (and that I am glad of too), but the doctrine of the imputation of the legal obedience of Christ to sinners as their righteousness, and as the only title to eternal life, “a title which His death,” they say, does not give. This the “Record” calls the gospel. “Where it is not taught, it is another gospel.” Now I do not charge with being heretics those who hold the active obedience of Christ under the law as imputed righteousness. I have known many beloved saints holding these views; but I think they are very obscure in their gospel. And, without any animosity or reproach of antichristian doctrine, merely as taking the question fairly and distinctly up, I say, what the “Record” insists on is not the gospel; and so far from it, that what they preach is not the true gospel of

God as contained in scripture. For a long time the doctrine was held, and held confusedly, and statements made inconsistent with it by the persons who hold it; or it was partially held, and not strictly. And all I should have said was, they were not clear. In modern times, the doctrine has been insisted on with more precision. Whether ex motu proprio, or provoked by some external influence, I know not; but the “Record” has committed itself to this doctrine as so precisely taught, and I affirm it to be precisely wrong. And that which it calls the gospel is not the gospel at all, nor in the gospel as taught in scripture; so that issue is fairly joined.

I hardly ever heard a person (a charge from which I do not pretend to be exempt) who did not in preaching lose his balance a little between human responsibility and sovereign grace. In earnest love to souls he would speak to win, so as to compromise the absolute need of grace; or, in carefulness to shew the work was God’s, dim the fulness of love in his presentation of it. This is human infirmity, and we must humble ourselves and have patience. When I went to Plymouth, a vast body of the Christians there were dear old Dr. Hawker’s disciples. I did not agree with his statements, though my heart might long after his true and earnest love to his Master. The other great body of Christians were Wesleyans, with whom too I should be very far indeed from agreeing; and each of these would have denounced the other as teaching most awful doctrine. I regret the extremes, but I thank God He blest both. Between these there may be much imperfect teaching, and yet, where Christ is loved, and foundation-truth held, and souls earnestly sought, God, blessed be His name, will bless and does bless in spite of the infirmity. All error is mischievous, for we are

sanctified by the truth. Still, we have to do with a patient and gracious God; and, while we never can justify any mistake, where the truth is held He will bless. I say this, that we may discuss peacefully what is an important doctrine, without denouncing one who is not clear.

I do not think that the “Record” is wise in thus committing itself; I do not mean in abusing “Brethren” (that they are used to, and I trust may never answer mere attacks); but in committing itself to a formula of doctrine and a party. I do not think (I may be mistaken) it is quite at ease in what it is about. It puts me in mind of Erasmus’ feelings when he attacked Luther, though it may have no Luther to attack. But truth is mightier than Luther. It is obliged to reverse its previous judgment. It is very anxious to have not a word to say as to C.S.’s relationship to God. Still, the, case is so strong, if he were an angel from heaven, it must take it up. It is truly sorry to have to reverse its judgment; but it does pronounce a judgment, when they think of sundry members of their church, and how C.S. stands related to their fellow-subjects (!)—and that without much hesitation, for, unfortunately, there is not room for two opinions. I do not know why they should have any hesitation at all, if there is no room for two opinions. However they have reached the needed point of courage, and the bull is gone forth.

I suppose the “Brethren” must be making progress, and their doctrines too. At any rate, there is a recrudescence of agitation and uneasiness. Both the Establishment and Dissenters are in movement. I suppose they feel that the ground totters a little under them; and so it does. I say this with no spirit of triumph or satisfaction. It is one of

the signs of the last days. No one can shut his eyes to the fact that nothing conventional holds its ground. The Lord may see it needed— does surely see it right, or He would not allow it. He sees that, if the break-up must come (and as to the instrumentality it comes mainly from the side of evil—Rome, and rationalism, and governmental favouring of popery, through indifference to truth), the conventional order or formularies of what is breaking up cannot hold together the moral elements of good, and the souls that delight in them. Christians increasingly feel that Christians and the world cannot go on together. There may be no position taken, but there is a growing sense that Christianity ought to be and must be itself.

Hence the truth becomes of the deepest interest and the deepest importance. It rallies the soul to God, to Christ, the only true stay and centre. Faith recognizes that there is such a thing as truth, and a divine record of it; that there is a divine teaching, that we may know the truth, and that we may reckon upon it. Hence the importance of holding fast foundation truth, and having it as clearly as possible, that the enemy may have no advantage and souls not be scattered by human admixture. Rome, Puseyites, and Papists would have authority; the Evangelical churchman, the formularies of the Reformation, which have already failed in uniting godly people; the rationalist would make his own judgment the measure of enquiry, and deny the inspiration and authority of scripture, or speak of Shakespeare’s and Milton’s, by which all divine authority in the word is openly denied. In the midst of this, let faith hold the truth, and enquire with the certain standard of the word of God, what the full truth of God

is. No new truth can unsettle an old one. None can unsettle the absolute authority on which alone all truth is founded—the word of God. Let the saints do this with patience and grace, and it will be a resting-place, through divine mercy, for many an anxious soul—a haven in the storm.

It is in this spirit I would enquire into the doctrine whether Christ's obedience to the law is imputed to us as meeting our failure under it. I will at the close (as my object is in no way to attack the "Record," but to get at the truth) notice some others who have taken up the subject. To be clear, I will begin with the "Record's" doctrine. "C.S. fails to see," we are told, "that though I am pardoned, I am not justified— mere pardon is not justification." Now this is the precision I speak of.

It is not merely that Christ fulfilled the law for us so that we may be said to have fulfilled it; that is a tolerably ancient doctrine. It dates from the close of the Reformation. I am not aware that it was ever heard of before. The Reformers were not clear in everything. The Homilies of the Establishment teach that Christ fulfilled the law for us in His life. Nor, for my part, if thus vaguely and generally stated, should I have anything which would rouse me to combat what was said, though it would be probable the person was not clear. But the writer's notion of justification, its contrast with pardon, never enters into the minds of the authors of these Homilies. Thus speaks the Homily: "Every man of necessity is constrained to seek for another righteousness, or justification, to be received at God's own hands; that is to say, the forgiveness of sins and trespasses." So that for them justification was forgiveness. The two were identified with "that is to

say.” So again, in the second part, “for to have only by him remission of our sins, or justification.”

So Calvin: “To justify, therefore, is nothing else than to acquit from the charge of guilt, as if innocency were proved.” (On God’s justifying the wicked.) Again, he says (Rom. 3:26), “What can be the sense, unless by the benefit of faith, to free from condemnation which their iniquity merited? “So, in Acts 13, “Thou seest how, after remission of sins, this justification is put as an interpretation (in loco interpretationis) so he absolves by the imputation of righteousness.” Further, “But in Romans 4:6-8 he first calls [it] imputation of righteousness, nor doubts to place that in the remission of sins.” And this he does very definitely; he says, after quoting the passage, “There, certainly he does not discuss a part of justification, but the whole of the thing itself; whence it appears that this justice which is spoken of is simply opposed to guilt.” So when he speaks of 2 Corinthians 5, “The righteousness of God in him,” he says, “In this place nothing else is to be understood than that we stand supported by the expiation of Christ’s death before the tribunal of God.” Again, “God by pardoning justifies.” Again, “Certainly he does not cite the prophet as a witness, as if he taught that the pardon of sins was a part of righteousness, or that it contributed to the justifying a man, but includes the whole righteousness in gratuitous remission.” All this he calls Christ’s righteousness. And his language (Inst. Ill, 17:13) excludes all idea of Christ’s making a righteousness for us by the keeping of the law. So in his commentary: “That most beautiful sentence therefore remains to us safe—he is justified by faith who is purged before God by the gratuitous remission of sins.” These

doctrines are asserted by him over and over again, and proved by scripture. Once he states on Romans 3:31, “but when we come to Christ first, the exact righteousness of the Lord is found in Him, which, by imputation, also becomes ours.” But even this makes no part of his general doctrine; and he uses it only as a proof that the law is confirmed—never as meeting our failures.

Now, I do not accept simply the doctrine of the Homilies or Calvin. But this is certain, that both carefully contradict the distinction between the forgiveness of sins and imputation of righteousness. When Calvin speaks of the words “the obedience of one,” he applies it to the satisfaction offered to His Father. Any one can see that what is charged as a grievous error is distinctly affirmed by the Homilies and by Calvin, and that for them remission of sins is justification. The truth is, the Reformers were charged, as Paul was, and as the Brethren are, with setting aside the law. They declare that they establish it; and in one place Calvin, as proving they do, says—Christ fulfilled it, which is reckoned to us; but the law is specially introduced by Calvin as an answer to works of supererogation or satisfaction. It works, you must take law (is the argument); but law does not speak of particular acts, but if you are to have righteousness by it, you must keep it all, and no man has done this. It was thus against the merit of partial works he uses the requirement of the law, and in doing this, never hints at Christ’s fulfilling it as the answer to our failure. Only in his commentary, when speaking of confirming the law by faith (not in the Institutes), he says, Christ was perfect in it, and that is ours by imputation.

If we turn to Luther, the whole thought is entirely foreign to him. He declares the law to have only ceased when Christ came, if you take it literally; and if spiritually, as soon as Christ is known in the soul; that its only use was previously on account of sin, and to convict of it, and that we have nothing more whatever to say to it; that it was given to Israel, not to the heathen at all; only that as to fundamentals, natural conscience supplied its place, and that we have nothing to say to it. His language is the strongest possible. For those who are already righteous (through faith in Christ) are far outside and above all laws (weit ausser und über all Gesetze). Therefore should the law be laid on those alone who are not yet righteous, and yet would willingly be righteous, yet not for ever, but for a time, until the righteousness which is by faith come; not that such righteousness be obtained by law, for such is not rightly using but misusing the law, but that they may, alarmed and humbled, flee to Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to all those who believe (Gal. 3:19-23). "The law is a light which makes plain and clear, not grace, also not righteousness whereby man obtains life, but sin, death—God's wrath and judgment. That is the proper and right work of the law, in which it should remain, arid not take a step further." So "when the law has accomplished its work or office, that is, given me to recognize my sin, frightened me, and revealed God's anger and judgments … it has reached its set time and end, so that it is to cease and leave me unplagued by its tyranny." So, in the first book of Moses, "The law of Moses concerns the Jews, which does not bind us any more. For the law is given to the Jewish people alone, and the heathen are excluded." He then directly refers to the moral law, saying that the heathen have the main

points in their conscience. “It is not new what Moses commands here.” He says, “Thus I keep the commandments now, not because Moses has commanded them.” “But,” he says, “it is objected, God spoke to them.” His answer is, “This is not all, that God has spoken it: we must know to whom he spoke it.” “Therefore answer, Leave Moses and his people together; it is finished with them, it does not concern me. I have the word which regards me—we have the gospel.” “Only,” he says, “it is to be preached to make men fear, so as to drive them to the gospel.”

Thus the doctrine that the blood gives pardon and the law righteousness, and that we have one without the other, is denied by the Establishment in its Homilies, diligently by Calvin; and as to Luther, so far is he from thinking of such a doctrine, that though he holds that the law may be used to condemn and burden the soul, he declares the Christian is in no way under it. It has ceased for him. Man may get light from it, but, once applied, it is only death, and only meant to be so, and ceases literally and spiritually when Christ comes. If he keeps it, it is not because Moses has commanded it, but because it agrees with natural conscience. We are to suppose that they had not the gospel, nor taught what all the Church of God held as taught in the word!

Now, I do not agree with much that remained unclear to the Reformers: consubstantiation; Christ completing His work in hell; baptismal regeneration, which they all clearly held—the putting away of original sin by infant baptism. For the Reformers I bless God unfeignedly, but they are in no way a rule of faith for me: “To the law and the testimony.” I must have the word of God. But with

these statements in the Reformers, to talk as the "Record" does is more than idle.

To clear our way yet a little, the writer's view as to obeying the law is a simple mystification. Be it that the law commands as well as forbids. It does so. But the contrasting between not merely breaking and keeping is absurd. If it is a prohibition, it is clear if I break it, I do not keep it; and if I do not keep it, I break it. But "it commands." It does: but if I do not do what it commands, I break it. God says I must love Him with all my heart. I do not do so. Well, then, I break the law. This foundation of the "Record's "system has no sense in it. There is another point remarkable in all these reasonings; not one passage of scripture is produced. We are told "that it is another gospel than that held by the whole Church of God, as taught in die word of God." I deny it is held by the whole Church of God. None of the Wesleyans hold it at all. Dr. Wardlaw declared there was no scripture for it at all. Mr. Harrison, of Sheffield, in attacking the tracts, declares he held it for fifteen years, and gave it up because he could not find a word of it in scripture. And as to the difference of pardon and justification or righteousness, the doctrine of the "Record" is contrary to the Homilies and to Calvin, contrary to the whole doctrine of the Reformation. But what I have to remark is, that when any of them who do speak of it approach any part of this doctrine (and, as I have stated, it was partially and vaguely held, that Christ fulfilled the law for us, by the reformed portion of the work of the sixteenth century, but not by the Lutheran, and not as the "Record" and their friends do, but when they approach it), scripture instantly disappears. The "Record" says, "Held by the whole

Church of Christ, as taught in scripture." Taught where? Total silence. I turn to Calvin: he luxuriates in scripture proofs when he condemns the doctrine of the "Record"; when, in a solitary passage, he at all approaches it—not a scripture to be had. He says so.

So again here: "The essence of the glorious gospel lies in this—that the Lord Jesus not only bore our penalty but did our work!! … And this whole work of His … is called in the scriptures, and proclaimed in the gospel, as the righteousness of God." Where? Silence; total silence. Is not this singular? "We have, in our Surety, suffered all the law's penalty, and fully and perfectly obeyed all its precepts. This is the righteousness which is revealed in the gospel, which is brought nigh to us, by which God is just while he is a justifier." Not so Calvin; quite the contrary. I suppose he was not of the Church of God! But let that pass. Where revealed? Not a letter of scripture to be had, but a text alluded to, entirely perverted, which really teaches quite otherwise—quite the opposite. I might add another, which we shall equally see is misapplied. What is attempted to be given from scripture proves this with an unquestionable distinctness. They give, of course, all they can, but the only pretension to use scripture is an illustration from the ark. I will examine that farther on. But why this ominous silence? Why this incapacity to produce one text for what is held by all the Church of Christ?

One text, I have said, is alluded to; I refer to the phrase, "This is the righteousness which is revealed in the gospel, which is brought nigh to us, by which God is just while he is a justifier." Now, I say that that is false and contrary to the scripture referred to. Let any one judge. It is, I must say, unless it be prejudice and carelessness,

an audacious contradiction of scripture. It is insisted that, not only “we have in the person of our Surety suffered all the law’s penalty, but fully and perfectly obeyed its precepts; and that this is the righteousness by which God is just and a justifier.” The curse of the law borne and its precepts fulfilled—that is the righteousness. Now for the passage: “Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified before God.” He does not say merely by my doing it, but not by deeds of law; no one is justified in that way. “For by the law is the knowledge of sin.” As Luther argues, “That was its use; other use of it was a misuse.” (Miszbrauch.) “But now the righteousness of God without the law [choris nomou—wholly apart from law] is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Now here we have the words “just and justifier,” but not one word of bearing the curse of the law, nor of keeping its precepts. “Redemption through his blood “is spoken of, and we are justified by that.

But this is not all. Not only is the justifying ascribed to the blood only, but we are told negatively that it is not by deeds of law. And further (to make the matter clear, as that which the apostle insisted upon, that it was not law,

whoever fulfilled it) it is said, “But now, apart from law.” Now, to quote this text, or allude to it, to prove that the righteousness by which God is just and a justifier is righteousness by law, is a monstrous and direct contradiction of scripture—a denial of the apostle’s doctrine.

“We are, in Christ,” not only pardoned but justified men; we are righteous in Him. All true, but how? is the question. The “Record” tells us that the essence of the gospel lies in this, that the Lord not only bore our penalty, but did our work, and that this is called in the scriptures, and proclaimed in the gospel, as the righteousness of God. Where? I challenge the “Record “to produce a passage. The passages I have already quoted in the “Bible Treasury.” But such subjects as these can only be judged of by scripture, and I shall quote all the passages in which the righteousness of God is spoken of besides Romans 3, already commented on, and itself sufficient to prove the contrary. They are the following: Matthew 6:33; Romans 1:17; ch. 3:5; ch. 10:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9. Now, in which of these is the keeping of the law called the righteousness of God? Not such a thought is found in them. The first is, “Seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” The second is, “The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith: as it is written, “The just shall live by faith” —a passage quoted by the apostle to shew it is not by law. “But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for the just shall live by faith: and the law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live in them” (Gal. 3:11, 12). Now, remark, it is not here the question who fulfils it, but that it is not by law because it is by faith, and the law is not of faith,

“but the man that doeth these things shall five in them”: and not then that another does it in order to justify, but that another way of justification is brought in. It is not by doing, let the doer be Christ or another. It is not by law. The principle of keeping law to justify, says the apostle, “is not of faith.” If the “Record” added, “Surely the man cannot be justified by his doing them, because he has not done them; but he is justified by doing them, because Christ has done them for him,” what would come of the apostle’s argument, “A man is not justified by works of law?” But it is added, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us”—and kept it for us besides, says the “Record.” But the Holy Ghost says not a word of the kind, though it was just the opportunity to bring it in.

“If my unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God” (Rom. 3:5). This has nothing to say to the matter; only we may remark, to exclude all controversy, that here it is God’s being justified in His ways and vengeance: hence His own righteousness in Himself.

The next is Romans 10:3: “They, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.” Thus far does not help us, but the words following do: “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” He is the end of it, not the fulfiller of it for me because I am under it now. If I am, He is not the end of it. This passage Luther uses in the sense I give to it, and insists largely on the truth. But the apostle does go on to say what the righteousness which is of faith is, and never says one word of the law, and could not if Christ was the end of it.

“We are the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor. 5:21). There is the sinless One made sin that we might be the righteousness of God in Him—not keeping the law, that we might be. Being made sin is not keeping the law.

“And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Phil. 3:9). There is never the trace of an idea of a righteousness of God by Christ’s keeping the law. All these passages refute entirely the assertion and condemn the doctrine of the “Record.”

One passage may be attempted to be cited, though the “Record” has not done so— “To them who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” I am quite willing to take it as others desire, through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. But there is not a word of the law. I am perfectly satisfied that righteousness of our God and Saviour does not mean here justifying righteousness, but the faithfulness of God to His promises. They have obtained the precious faith of Christ as God had surely promised to His people—for He writes to Jews. They have obtained it through the righteousness of God. At any rate, law does not enter in any way into the verse.

Such are the passages which speak of the righteousness of God; but I go farther, and take the passages which speak of righteousness, and challenge the “Record” to produce one which speaks of its being by law, or Christ’s fulfilling the law for us. I read of “righteousness, because I go to the Father.” God was righteous in glorifying Him. Law does not come in question; yet the

demonstration of righteousness was here— lay in this— that Christ went to the Father, and men saw Him no more. In Romans 4:3, faith is counted to Abraham for righteousness. He believed God. Not a word of law; only care taken to exclude works which were under the law. “God imputeth righteousness without works” (v. 6), not imputeth works for righteousness. And, at the close of his argument, the apostle takes care to add, “for the promise that he should be heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through law, but through the righteousness of faith.” The inheritance of promise is not by law at all, neither for Abraham nor for his seed. Chapter 5:17-21, afford us in themselves no word upon it, only it is a gift; but it is added afterwards that the law entered by the by, as a distinct thing. Of this more farther on.

Christ is made unto us righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30). The blessed fact is there, but no word of law; He Himself is it, not His keeping the law.

In Galatians 2:21, we have an important verse, “For if righteousness come by the law, Christ is dead in vain.” Now here Christ’s death and righteousness by law are contrasted. We are told pardon comes by death, righteousness by law, Christ fulfilling it. But the apostle declares that it does not come by law; that if it did, Christ is dead in vain. Indeed, why should He die, if I was righteous without it? And note here, the apostle has no thought of a being righteous and unpardoned. Yet if Christ’s life was there for us—not His death—a man were righteous and a guilty sinner at the same time. What an unscriptural notion! They do not put it in this way, I know, but they do the converse—pardoned but not

righteous. Hence, it is equally certain, he might be righteous, but not pardoned! The whole system is false.

Galatians 3:21: If a law had been given which could have given life, righteousness should have been by the law: but it was not so. And then the apostle pursues the reasoning which Luther so insists upon. The law was our schoolmaster unto Christ; but after that faith came, we are no longer under the schoolmaster; before it came, we were under the law. If I am not under it, Christ clearly has not to fulfil it for me, for I am not under it to call for it. “Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Gal. 5:4). It is not Christ must keep it for you to be justified by it, because you have not; but you are fallen from grace if you are justified on this principle. The “Record” says, We are pardoned by Christ’s death, but must be justified by law; the scripture, that we are fallen from grace, and Christ of no effect to us if we are. Titus 3:5 speaks of it—not a word of law. I had omitted one passage where righteousness of God is mentioned, James 1:20; but it does not touch our present subject.

Again, Abel obtained witness that he was righteous by the offering of Christ (typically), not by his keeping the law. “To him that worketli not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly” (Rom. 4:5). It is not by another’s works. “He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith,” etc. No thought of law or Christ’s law-fulfilling for it. It is His death and resurrection (v. 9). “Being justified by his blood.” “A man is not justified by works of law” (Gal. 2:16). But he is, if he be justified by Christ’s doing them. “That we might be justified by the faith of

Christ, not by works of law; for by works of law shall no flesh be justified." It is not merely he has not done them, but it is another way of being justified, not the Christian one. I have already quoted chapter 3:17-24. Now, what I find here is, the positive assertion of justification in another way than law; the rejection of the principle the "Record "insists on, and the declaration of the incompatibility of the two. If the "Record" has a text or a testimony of scripture which teaches that a man is justified by Christ's keeping the law, let it be produced.

There is a text referred to, "By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous." But so far from there being a word of law or obedience to law here, it is in express contrast. "Moreover the law entered," pareiselthe was no part of this great scheme in the two Adams, only came in by the by that the offence might abound. Mark, no word about keeping it. It had an object; it was to convict—bring in offence—make sin sinful. So Luther, passim. The obedience of Christ is in contrast with law. It is a monstrous idea to make Christ's obedience merely legal. He kept the law, surely; He was born under it, though as Son of man above it in title. But His obedience was absolute. What righteousness of the law called upon Him to give His fife for sinners? But that He did as obedience. What, to bear the law's curse for another? All His life was obedience, but far beyond law; He laid down His life so, not according to law. And here it is obedience as a principle contrasted with disobedience, and no thought of law. There was a disobedient man and an obedient one— Adam and Christ. The law came in by the by. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. Did the law make a

righteous man surfer? Christ's obedience was perfect and absolute. To reduce it to fulfilling the law is horrible, though He fulfilled the highest requirement of the law. The law was suited to the first man, Christ's obedience to the glory of God, into which He is entered because He finished the work His Father gave Him to do. So in Philippians 2, He was obedient unto death (mechri thanatou). It is the character and extreme possible limit of a principle of obedience—He was obedient even to death. Think of saying, He fulfilled the precepts of the law even to death! What precept commanded a person to die? No; His obedience was the principle of perfect submission to His Father's will, whatever the cost might be.

I will now take up the illustration of the ark. It really has nothing to say to the matter; and, as far as the type goes, refutes the doctrine of the "Record." That the perfection of the law was in the heart of Christ, no Christian could for a moment deny. Psalm 40 suffices to declare it. And being born under the law, He could not but be perfect under it in His Person and walk. That is above all enquiry. It is received by the simplicity of faith as the truth. But what is there in the ark which says that was imputed to meet the failure of Israelites, so that they were viewed as if they had kept the law? Had it been so, why offer sacrifices to make their failures good in another way? That the ark is a symbol of Christ, divine in the gold, human in the wood, and having the law safely kept within, I make no kind of opposition to. No man can make an illustration a matter of faith; but I do not gainsay the figure. But, as far as it goes, it is quite contrary to the "Record"; because it was a figure of Christ—not standing for man towards God and

offering what was needed, but as the seat or throne of God, on which sitting in judgment He required what His righteousness demanded; and the high priest represented Christ coming to God there seated in judgment. If the law was laid up there as righteous, they were already righteous, even as regards all their faults; and yet required expiation and atonement! The whole thought of the “Record” is confusion. God did not sit on the throne giving righteousness, but requiring propitiation. Nor was the ark in any way a figure of Christ standing before God for us. The whole idea is confusion and error, a want of discernment as to the nature of the type. At any rate, it is not Christ on man’s behalf coming to God, but that throne to which a man (and Christ as man for him) had to come, and on which blood had to be sprinkled. Was it sprinkled on a fulfilled law?

I have now gone through scripture, I trust fairly, and as completely as I could, and referred to the illustration by which alone the “Record “seeks to support its doctrine. I have referred to the Reformers, not as any authority (for the word of God alone is that), but in reply to the statement that the whole Church of God teaches this doctrine. I have quoted the Institutes of Calvin and his commentary, the commentary of Luther on the Galatians and first book of Moses, and the Homilies of the Establishment. I will add here two sentences from the “Apology for the Confession of Augsburg,” and the “Formula of Concord” (76 of part 2, article 4). The first says: “To obtain remission of sins is to be justified according to that [passage], Psalm 32.” And such is the uniform doctrine of the “Apology,” which refutes the idea of any fulfilment of law having anything to say to it,

contrasting law and promise, referring the last to Christ in contrast with the former. The “Formula of Concord” speaks thus: “We repudiate and condemn all the false doctrine which we will here recite.” The third doctrine condemned is: “That in the prophets’ and apostles’ sayings, where justification by faith is in question, the words ‘to justify and to be justified’ are not the same as ‘to absolve and to be absolved from sins, and to obtain remission of sins.”

The conclusion I draw is, that the Homilies contradict, Calvin laboriously controverts, and the Lutheran body openly condemns, that special distinction which is made essential by the “Record “and the party it represents, and declared by it to be the faith of the whole Church of God; that the Reformed or Calvinistic part of Protestantism did speak of the fulfilling of the law by Christ for us—that we may be considered as having fulfilled it in Him, but barely alludes to it as maintaining the law, and not at all as it is now taught; and that the Lutheran part of the Church rejects it altogether. I find, further, that there is no attempt to adduce scripture in proof of what they do state as to the law. The Westminster Confession speaks of Christ’s obedience and death as a satisfaction, never of the law in justifying (ch. 8:5; ch. 11:1-3). Nor, when speaking of the law, does it speak of Christ’s fulfilling it for us. The passages which it quotes are those in Romans, which exclude the law, and Jeremiah 33 and the like; though it says (what is foolish enough) that “God gave a law to Adam as a covenant of works, promising life upon the fulfilling (!), and threatening death upon the breach of it, and that this law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness, and as such, was delivered by God upon

Mount Sinai in ten commandments." I refer to this, because this notion really lies at the bottom of the whole question. I have, in the scriptures I have referred to, brought forward fully the testimony of the word of God on the subject. In these the law is excluded as a way of righteousness and life. Nor is it even hinted that Christ fulfilled it in our stead. It is declared that it was our schoolmaster up to Christ, and that now He is come, we are no longer under it; and, instead of its fulfilment by any one being our righteousness, it is declared that, "if righteousness come by law, Christ is dead in vain." If it be alleged that this referred to persons seeking it by their own works under law, supposing it were (for it is really an absolute principle), it is declared that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness" —that now faith is come, we are not under it—that we are delivered from it, having died in Him, the law having power over a man only as long as he lives. That modern Evangelicals have generally this doctrine I do not deny; but they are no rule of faith. After all, half the Christians in the world, perhaps even at this moment, have no such principle.

I hold this doctrine of the Evangelical school on this subject to be false and wrong, because it is not in scripture, but contrary to scripture. Will the "Record" fairly meet the question on the ground of scripture? I do not hold with Lutherans against Calvinists, or with the latter against Lutherans; but I bow to the word of God. The doctrine of the "Record," the modern doctrine, as to pardon and justification, we have seen rejected by the Reformation entirely—rejected by the whole of it. I have quoted their statements only to relieve people's minds from prejudice. And, without concerning myself further about the opinions of any, I shall now endeavour to shew

why I think the question is important, and what the scriptural view of it is.

Two systems are in presence. One is, that we are all under the law—Christians and all men; that the fulfilment of the law alone is righteousness; that in vain is propitiation made that we may be forgiven. That is not the means of being justified. In order to this, Christ has kept the law in our stead, and then died for our sins; but that His death is the means of pardon, but not of justification.

The other is, that we believers are not under law, but under grace; that Christ, while perfect under law in His own Person, did not keep it to make good our defects under it, or give us legal righteousness or justification by it; that He died for our sins, and thus put them away; but that we are viewed as being also dead with Him, and no longer in the flesh at all, to which law applied, but stand as risen in the presence of God, in the position in which He stands, with all the value of His work upon us, and accepted in His Person, according to His acceptance now that He is risen; that this is measured by His having perfectly glorified God in His work, and hence is glorified in and with God in heaven; and that this is our title to be in heaven and glory in due time with Him—conformed to His image—the firstborn among many brethren.

Here is the importance of the matter. The first opinion makes our righteousness to be a righteousness under law, in flesh, connecting us with Christ's position before the cross, and making our righteousness purely legal, and putting us under the law; this being the measure and principle of it, we are justified by its being kept. "Do

this and live." The second holds us to be dead to that state of flesh under law altogether; that when Christ was in the body He stood alone, and that our standing in Him is as dead and risen, the old man entirely condemned, but crucified and dead for faith; we, alive to God in Christ, risen, delivered from the law, united to Christ risen, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, because Christ has perfectly glorified God in dying, and that our place is that of having entered into God's presence through the cross, that new and living way (that is, through death, by which it is all left behind, and all that related to flesh in its relationship with God, though in fact, having to contend with it as an enemy to be overcome). They put us behind the cross under law. God has put us by the cross, and as now crucified with Christ, alive in His presence, as risen with Him.

Which is the scriptural truth? That is the question. I affirm the common modern Evangelical statement, maintained by the "Record," to be unscriptural; and that it destroys the true Christian liberty insisted on by Paul, and the claims for holiness presented by scripture, according to the new position into which grace has brought us; that it lowers Christianity and disfigures it, and denies the depth of sin and the power of resurrection; that the gospel as taught specially by Paul in conflict with Judaism, is denied by it. We both admit propitiation by blood. But they put before us a man living in flesh, and righteousness provided for him by Christ under law. Paul, I affirm, puts a believer in resurrection, and wholly dead to the former state, and accepted in Christ when he is no longer under law at all.

Now, I will commence by stating that I hold the maintenance of the law, in its true and highest

character, to be of the deepest importance, and necessary to a right and full apprehension of divine teaching. It is the abstract perfection of a creature, loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves; and this Christ most surely did in all He did. All the moral claims and teaching of law and prophets, as the Lord declares, hang on it. And if angels suggest little the thought of a neighbour where God's presence fills all things, and He only, so to speak, is thought of, still, in a general way, though not under law, we can say that the angels surely do so. Love to God and to others governs them. Still, it is because the others are objects of God's love, God has a more exclusive place with them. For love to one another is not brought out as to them in scripture, as in man. Man's wants develop it; angels can much more think of God only. For us, at any rate, the maintaining this immutable standard abstractedly as our creature perfection is, I believe, of deep moral importance. To say that it was given to Adam with a promise of life, and reproduced at Sinai, is an idle, unscriptural imagination, and utter confusion as to the ways of God. There was no promise of life to Adam innocent; it would have been out of place. It is false, and only confusion. A law to love God does not suit innocence. Loving a neighbour was not suited to Adam's position; had he remained innocent, he never would have had any, but been the head and father of his race without a neighbour. The ten commandments suppose the knowledge of good and evil: to give a law to Adam which supposed it would have falsified his position. What did stealing mean for him? And, what is yet more important, what a prohibition to lust? Sinai does take the two great commandments as basis (that we know), but supposes lust, knowledge of good and evil, and sin,

and prohibits it. Law is not made for the righteous, but for the unrighteous. That, Adam was not. He had a command which was a test of obedience, and no more—a test by that which, save by prohibition, would have been as innocent in itself as all else. The acquirement of the knowledge of good and evil changed the whole moral condition of man (coming in by sin, too, as it did); and to that condition the law undoubtedly applied. Of that condition (i.e., of a being having knowledge of good and evil) the two great commandments were perfection in the creature. Adam had a law, that is plain—a simple test of obedience before the knowledge of good and evil. Moses gave from God a law, when man had the knowledge of good and evil, and suited to that state. Both these suppose the express authority of God. They both impose a rule under a penalty. The law under Moses adds "this do and thou shalt live." Man, departed from God, was lawless. This did not alter the abstract perfection of the law; but he had abandoned God in will, had a knowledge of good and evil, but no law save the law of conscience. God gave a law to Israel, and in it set the jewel of man's perfection according to law. Christ took a double character. He was born of a woman, and born under law. He was a perfect man in the midst of evil (but much more), and had the law in all its perfection in His heart; but, besides that, grace and truth came by Him. He, not the law, was the light of the world.

But now comes the question. Man being a sinner, utterly departed from God, and if under law a law-breaker—is the law a way of justifying him, or the rule according to which he is justified? Ah, if he has kept it all right, he shall surely have righteousness by it and life.63 But we

have supposed with scripture that man is a sinner, and under law a law-breaker, so that he has not righteousness by it. How then does scripture bring in righteousness and salvation? Is it by law? Is it founded on its rules and claims? or is it, while surely maintaining the excellency and authority of the law fully, in some other way? Upon the ground of the first Adam in law, it is all over with us—the way to the tree of life shut and all access forbidden. But from the outset what hope is given? It is another Adam, the seed of the woman, not a restoration of the first on any old principle. The seed of the woman is to bruise the serpent's head. The destruction of evil is by Christ's coming in as a deliverer.

Next (and mark, for this is important and insisted on by the apostle—the special thesis of his epistle to the Galatians, which is really a treatise on this point) a promise without any condition comes, contrary in its nature to law. Promise may be attached to law; it was in Sinai, but then it depends on a condition; there are two parties, and man must be faithful to his or it fails.

Simply promise is of one, God, and then is infallible; and this promise was to the seed Christ. The promise is made to Him, simply, absolutely, unconditionally; but we may add, Abraham gives up all the promises as given to Isaac in flesh, sacrifices him, and the promise is confirmed to one risen in figure. This on every ground never can be annulled. The law comes in 430 years after, let man say what he will in dreaming about law, but it cannot touch the unconditional promise. So says the apostle; "it came in by the by," pareiselthe. Was it, then, immaterial that man was a sinner, that there was no righteousness? Was he to be blessed in his sin, and human righteousness' or unrighteousness not to be

considered? That would not do, and hence human righteousness—righteousness in flesh—of man, as a child of Adam, is proposed and required in the law, with promise of life by it, and a curse attached to its breach, and given with every help and advantage to a chosen people. The result was simple. Flesh was not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and those that are in flesh cannot please Him. The law convinced of sin, but did not touch and could not touch God's unconditional promise. Was it, then, the ground of righteousness so that man should have the promise? If it were, he must fail of the promise, for flesh could not keep it. Now comes the question: Is the law broken, always broken by flesh, the ground on which the promise or eternal life is had, by another's keeping it when man does not? Is the law our righteousness? i.e., do our righteousness and eternal life come by it, through another's keeping it? That is our point. My answer shall be the apostle's: "If righteousness [come] by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." It is as absolute and abstract as possible, ouk atheto ten charin tou theou ei gar dia nomou dikaiosune apa Christos dorean apethanen. It is not, if it be by my keeping it; but if righteousness be by law, Christ has died in vain. But God's promise was to be fulfilled. What is the relationship of promise and law? That is the first question. The second is the connection of law, and death and resurrection, though they run into one another in fact; but the first is treated more especially in Galatians, the second in Romans.

Is the accomplishment of the promise on which all rests from Adam's fall, yea, from before the worlds, founded on law-fulfilling? I answer, No. Law was the test of the

creature as its perfect rule, the test of the first man; the promise is given to and by the Second. He has magnified the law—has not left it to be the ground of righteousness. What says the apostle? As we are arrived here, we cannot do better than follow his order (that is, the guidance of God's Spirit). First, his own and Peter's course— "Knowing that a man is not justified by works of law, but by faith of Jesus Christ." Here I get two points. "Works of law" are not what justify me (it is not I am a sinner and I need pardon): the question is, What justifies? The answer, Not works of law, says the apostle. The "Record" and the Evangelicals tell me it is. Secondly, it is in contrast with the faith of Christ. Works of law are one way of justifying, faith in Christ another. They are inconsistent with one another. He had left one system to have recourse to another, and if he set up the law again, made himself a transgressor, he declares, in leaving it. But we get much more than this: "For I through law am dead to law, that I might live to God." Dead to law! What is that? Why, he has nothing more to say to it as a man in flesh. The law, which is a ministration of death, as well as of condemnation, has killed him; he does not, as in flesh, exist morally before God. If he were alive to the law, sensible to it, or did it find a point of contact in him, he would not live to God. But the law has killed him as alive in flesh, and now he can live to God. But this takes him out of all reach of law. His life is not that which was in connection with law; he is dead to it, because, as to the life with which law had to do, it has killed him. How, then, is he justified by another's keeping it for him? The law has acted, but acted in another way. It has closed his existence as responsible to it. It has done the opposite to justifying him, and can do no more, for the man is dead. We shall

see this more fully entered upon in the Romans. The way this is met and becomes real for us is, that we are crucified with Christ. Is the justified man crucified? What we find in scripture is another way of dealing with the flesh, which breaks the law and cannot be subject to it; that is, condemning it and putting the man to death, viewed as in it. Now, crucified with Christ, he yet lives; but not he, but Christ. The man again has ceased to exist for faith and in God's sight, and it is now Christ who is his life, but Christ risen from the dead. Now, that a true heart may not yet understand this, I can conceive; but the "Record" contradicts the doctrine of scripture, and adopts another—justifying by law-works done by Christ, instead of holding the man dead and condemned, but now alive in Christ, in a new position.

In the whole of chapter 3 the apostle contrasts the hearing of faith and law. Those who are of works of law are under a curse. How so, if it is fulfilled? The curse has no ground, if the law has been vicariously fulfilled. But the apostle is. more precise. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident; for the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith; but the man that doeth them shall live in them." Now, nothing can be simpler than this. The principle on which a man is justified is contrary in its nature to a man's being justified by the law. We are told that man is pardoned through blood-shedding, but justified by law-keeping. The apostle says he is not, in God's sight, because the principles are diametrically opposed to one another.

Now here was the time to explain the "Record's" system. The law brought a curse; Christ redeemed us from the curse—that is, by suffering on the cross. And will he not save the justifying by law-works to shew he did not

mean to set aside Christ's vicariously keeping it? Not a word is to be found. Instead of this, he goes on to shew that the law could not have this place at all, because God had given before it a complete, confirmed covenant, which could not be added to. And, hence, though the law did come in after it, what was said to Abraham could not be added to nor disannulled; that law only came in, therefore, by the by—added because of transgressions till the seed should come; and that when faith came, we were no longer under it. It was a temporary ground of dealing with men between the promise and its fulfilment. It was up to Christ, that we might be justified in another way. It will be at once objected, How do you reconcile this with the eternal character of the law and its subsistence? Here is just the point of the whole matter, and the mischievous fallacy of the "Record's "system. The law in its essence is the principle of creature-righteousness, the perfect rule for responsible children of Adam. The "Record" says, "Then it must be made good, that the children of Adam may be justified." Totally, ruinously false! The first Adam, and man, as such, are not justified; the Second is brought in, and we are accepted in Him. The first is condemned, killed, by the moral sentence of the law, and savingly in the death of Christ, that we may live. But we are justified, not by making out a legal righteousness for the first, which ought to have been there, and which would have been his righteousness; but by redeeming us wholly out of that condition which is condemned and set aside, and bringing us livingly into the Second. The first as a condition before God is never set up again. Are we to be both first and second in our standing before God?

The law, in itself, is eternally creature-righteousness; but the creature could not make it out. The law was given to man when he was a sinner. How could he have legal righteousness when the flesh was not subject to law? It served to prove that, when the creature is a sinner, he could not. Is then Christ come to set up its legal righteousness and reestablish it? He is not. He is come to write final condemnation on it, but by His own death, and to redeem us out of it, and bring us nigh in Himself to God. The law became a test of a sinful creature—was applied to man when he was a sinner, as a condition of obtaining life. He was saved, not by setting him up on this ground, but by taking him out of it by redemption, and giving him acceptance in another and in another condition, the old one-being put under death and condemnation, only that Christ took that on Himself. He took the condemnation of the first Adam for us, but did not set up the righteousness of the first. Thus, after the promise of the true Saviour, it came in by the by, till the seed came to whom- the promise was made; “and then,” as Luther says, “it had done its work and ceased” (Aufhorete). “We are no longer under the schoolmaster.” It is by the death of the old man (not by justifying it) the Christian is delivered from this charge. “He that is dead is freed [justified] from sin.” So Paul in the Philippians gives up, not his sins, but bis legal righteousness, viewed as such, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. The promise, then, cannot be annulled or added to. We have, therefore, the inheritance not by law; for if it is by law, it is not by promise: now God gave it to Abraham by promise. You cannot connect law-keeping with promise—you cannot connect law-keeping with faith—you cannot connect law-keeping with justifying: Christ is the seed of promise,

the object of faith, and our righteousness. The apostle declares the two incompatible, but that the law could do one thing—kill. This it had done, and his guilty self for faith existed no more. Instead of that, he had Christ, in whom it was he had died.

But more. The apostle speaks of Christ's coming under law. Surely now he will tell us of the glorious gospel, the essence of which is said to he in His keeping it to justify us! Not a word. Quite the contrary: "He was made under the law that he might redeem them that were under the law." Did He redeem by law-keeping or by blood? Did He redeem by leaving them in responsibility to law, and justifying them in it? He redeemed out of it by blood; so that we are no more servants, but sons. Now, servants are those under law. It is no longer our condition at all. Again, supposing we are justified by law, Christ is become of no effect unto us. Ah! will one say that is by our keeping it? No; it is the principle. "Ye are fallen from grace." What are we to do then as to godliness? Walk in the Spirit. Is not that right? Surely our opponents must say, Yes. But if you are led of the Spirit, you are not under law. You will do that against which there is none, and so fulfil it yourself in practice, because you are not under it. But will not the apostle glory in this righteousness which Christ has made good for him by keeping the law? No; only in the cross. In a word, on the point of justifying, the apostle sets Christ, grace, promise, faith, the Spirit, all in opposition to law-works, and declares that they are incompatible in their nature.

Indeed it is a strange system which first keeps the law perfectly in every respect surely, so that we are justified, perfectly righteous before God, and then dies for us. Yet such is the "Record's" system. We are not justified,

surely, if Christ has still to die for us. Yet Christ first lived and then died. The whole system is false. It justifies the old man instead of utterly killing and condemning him, that we may live in the new; owning, not rectification of our old position, but one wholly new consequent on Christ's death. As the fruit of Christ's death, we are past the whole settlement of the question of sin with God—that, for faith, was on the cross. He was made, sin—went through the utter hatred of compassion-less man, all that Satan could bring upon Him in terror and suffering—went through death, drank the cup of wrath—is risen out of it; and we are in Him consequent on His having gone through it all and settled the question of sin, death, wrath, and Satan's power. We are in Him as entered into what is beyond and after it, because He is; and according to the value of all He has done in glorifying God in the work through which He entered into this new position.

But let us turn to the Romans, where this subject is more fully discussed in connection with resurrection. Our thesis is this: the law is holy, just, and good; but, its application being to a sinful creature, it becomes simply death and condemnation. Our justification is, not by Christ's vicariously keeping it because we are under it as men born of Adam, so that we should be justified in that position by legal works, but (while He glorified God as a living man) through an entire deliverance from the whole standing of flesh before God, which is wholly judged and condemned by law, but in His death and our introduction into a new position in Christ risen,according to the value of His work. It is death under law, death by sin without law, in the first Adam, but death in Christ who died for us to the putting off the

old man, and we in newness of life in a position which law cannot reach, in Christ risen from the dead, living and called to live according to this new life. Such, I say, is Paul's doctrine in the Romans death for and to sin as to the old man, and a new place in Christ in resurrection. Let us examine the epistle.

The first passage I may quote as a general principle is "Therein is the righteousness of God revealed." It is according to the principle of faith; the law, we know, is no of faith.

Next, a passage I have already quoted, chapter 3, but which is too important to pass over here. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Of the last verse of the chapter hereafter. Here, then, is guilt by law. The Jew's mouth stopped, and thus all the world guilty; for the Gentiles were confessedly so. Now the

conclusions: “Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight”: none in this way whoever did them—“for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” But now the righteousness of God without the law (choris nomou, wholly apart from law) is manifested.

I cannot conceive how anything can be plainer. They tell me God’s righteousness is by Christ’s keeping the law. Paul tells me, that is, the Spirit of God tells me, that it is without the law, that the law has nothing to do with it. I believe the word of God, the teaching of the Holy Ghost in the divine word, and not the Evangelicals. “Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ” … “being justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.” Is redemption by law, or by keeping law? We are justified freely through this redemption. By faith in His keeping the law? No; by faith in His blood, to declare God’s righteousness. The law excluded wholly even for those who had been under it; justification by redemption, Christ a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare God’s righteousness. Thus God is just and the justifier.

Thus far we have only His death. But the apostle goes farther, not surely to anything inconsistent. Up to this he had met the sin of the old man by the blood of Christ. Now, from chapter 4, he takes up the new man in resurrection, which presupposes death. Abraham is justified by faith, so are we who believe on Him who raised up Christ. What Christ? A Christ who kept the law for us? Not such a thought. A Christ, blessed be His most gracious name, who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. He died for the ungodly. The apostle then compares Adam and Christ, speaking of the law as come in between, but that sin and

death were there without it, and that we must not confine ourselves to those who were under law by Moses, but, taking the Second Adam, go to the first also. That, as by one man's disobedience, a mass of others connected with him were constituted sinners, so, by the obedience of One, the mass connected with Him shall be constituted righteous. That is, he ascends to the two great heads, the obedient and disobedient man. The law, he adds, came in, by the by, that the offence might abound. Have we a thought that Christ therefore kept it for us? No; its object was not righteousness, but to make the offence abound. There where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. No hint of meeting the law, as a fixed rule, by obeying it. There was disobedience and obedience. The law came in by the by, to give a special character to sin; then grace, not legal righteousness, reigns.

The apostle then turns to the common confession of Christianity in baptism. What have you come to? To death. You have been baptized to Christ's death. The initiation of a Christian has no hint in it of legal righteousness. Christ's death is the point of contact with him—nothing before—then newness of life according to His resurrection. But, then, is sin to have dominion over us because the prohibitory enactments of the law do not reach us? No; we are dead to it, and alive to God, according to Christ's resurrection. But law, what as to it? Why, sin will not have dominion over us, because we are not under it. Under what, then? Under grace. Are they, then, so diametrically opposite? Diametrically in their nature. Grace would be no more grace, nor works works. Eternal life is God's gift, not earned by law-keeping. Of this farther on.

But this leads the apostle to consider definitely the question of our being under law or not; and he lays down this principle: Law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. Now we are not alive in flesh, because Christ has died, and we are in Him risen after death. He puts the case of two husbands: the law, and (not Christ on earth keeping law, but) Christ risen. You cannot have both, says the apostle; it is mere adultery. How, then, are we delivered from law (as from sin)? Is it by blaming the law as bad, or setting it aside as such in its own nature? No: God forbid. How then? By our dying; for it has only power over a man as long as a man lives. We are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we might be to another— to Christ risen from the dead; that we might bring forth fruit to God—no fruit under law, but from Christ risen, fruit to God. Thus we are delivered from the law, having died in that in which we were held.

The Christian is dead to the law, does not exist as to it, because he died in Christ (but that was death to sin too); hence he is delivered from it. Resurrection puts me in a new place, where law, the first husband, never reaches at all. I belong exclusively to Christ, and to Christ risen (for if He takes up my case, He must die and end law and sin, as to Him and me together), not to Christ living on the earth. Hence the apostle says, “Yea, if I have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth I know him no more.” And now, mark how distinct the apostle is as to what our position is as dead and risen; and, if risen, having to say to the new husband—Christ risen—not to law: “When we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” “When we were in the flesh” — what a word is that! Then we are not in the

flesh at all? Surely not. When we were, the law was that by which the motions of sin got power, and brought in death and condemnation. But, as a child of Adam in flesh, I am not alive at all (compare Col. 2:20), because Christ has died; and not being alive, the law has no more to do with me; for it has power over a man only so long as he lives. But I am alive, and it is in Christ risen. I am not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. It is a new creation, not a justifying of the old, which had been put under the schoolmaster, but never obeyed.

The “Record” has quoted also 2 Corinthians 4, “the glorious gospel,” as referring to this keeping of the law. It is really “the gospel of the glory,” referring to the preceding chapter. The citation is an unhappy one, because it is founded on a contrast of law and Christianity; one was death and condemnation, the other righteousness and the Spirit. Christianity is the revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The glorious gospel is not the law kept by Christ, but Christ in glory in contrast with the law. If we are to be saved, it is in contrast with a righteousness by law (Rom. 10). That said, Do this and live; this, not believe Christ has done it, but Confess His name and believe God has raised Him.

Are we not saved then, made righteous, by one man’s obedience? Surely, as contrasted with Adam’s disobedience, but not by the works of law of one man. He was obedient, absolutely, unlimitedly—did not accomplish so much simply, but was intrinsically and absolutely obedient at all cost— characterized as the Obedient Man, learned it, what it was to the uttermost, by the things which He suffered. His obedience was different in nature, and went very far indeed beyond

law-fulfilling. “I come to do thy will, O God,” be it what it might, and that was to die—give up His life for those the Father had given Him—suffer all things, even to the cup of wrath, to glorify God. Was that law? It is monstrous, and, I must say, wickedness or blindness, to limit Christ’s obedience to the keeping of the law. Moreover, in Romans 5 it is in contrast with law. Christ, in offering Himself according to the roll of the book, offered Himself to do whatever God’s will might be; the great example the apostle gives is, the offering of Himself once for all. Is that law? It is outrageous, and a deadly wrong to Christ, to make this infinite obedience of devoted love a mere obedience to a prescribed rule of human righteousness, however perfect.

I know not that I can add more. The scripture teaches us, not that human righteousness according to the perfect rule of the law is made good, so that we should be justified in our old position; but that flesh is condemned, death passed on it, the old man put off, the new put on, and this through the of Christ and His resurrection. So that we say, “When we were in the flesh.” Never once does it speak of a vicarious fulfilling of the law, but of our deliverance from the state in which it applied to us, and our entrance into a new one. “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

Did not God then magnify the law and make it honourable in Christ? Undoubtedly. I have already said it was the perfect law of the creature abtsractedly; and Christ came under the law, and God glorified His law thus; and it was most right and just. But we were dead, away from God, without any law at all. It is never said,

He kept it for us. He kept it to glorify God, to honour the law of God. But in this character He was alone. Death alone connected Christ really with those who were dead in sin. As to pious life, in the new nature, He is surely, as walking on earth, the companion of those who fear God. But the sinner, looked at as a sinner, as a child of Adam (and we look at him as a sinner when we speak of justification), has no connection with Christ. They were without Christ, without God in the world; and a Jew was really the same by nature. “Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.” Christ was absolutely alone in His living state; He was perfect in it, overcame in it, knew no sin in it. But man being dead in sin, Christ never came into his condition properly known till He came into death. Really, truly man, sympathizing with him in everything, He never, as to His real state as to righteousness before God, came into man’s position, till the cup of death was there; for death was the condition of man. The keeping of the law was over really with man. As a sinner with a will he was not subject to it at all, nor could be. Christ must be perfect in the place He took in contrast with man. He was the responsible man (through grace) and never failed; and, as law was, never failed under law (and that in the midst of every difficulty, not in Paradise) as Adam had failed; but He became the head of blessing after death, and when He had taken a new position in righteousness, as Adam when he had taken a new position in sin.

But is not there the keeping of the law by us? Yes, in principle, in living in the Spirit, and by not being under it; but it is not vicariously, but really. But then it will be said, Yes, but you do not even so keep it perfectly, and how do you make out righteousness then? My friend, I

am a Christian. I do not make out righteousness by law. If it were so to be made out, Christ were dead in vain. I am righteous—the righteousness of God in Him—before I begin to do what is in the law practically. I never came under it. A vicarious keeping of the law is unknown to scripture. If it be not, let those who maintain it cite a single passage—shew it from scripture.

A poor soul says, Christ kept the law, and everything He did was precious for us. I delight in his piety, even if ignorance be mixed with it. Christ must have been all that for the glory of God. The merely coming down to die would not have failed in putting away sin, but in glorifying God as a living man. For we have seen God manifested, a perfect man before God, Satan overcome, the law kept and magnified, tender sympathies, perfect patience, and love. We have seen what God delighted in —the Bread come from heaven—the only path through a world of sin—One delighting in the sons of men—far more than I could now here speak of, more than I can think of, but not redemption till His death. And redemption is the first need of a sinner dead in trespasses and sins. And this lies at the root of the question, Is man dead in trespasses and sin? How is he brought out of it? If scripture be taken as authority, I am not afraid of the answer of any one taught of God on this subject.

As this paper, from its length (which I regret and attribute to the haste with which it was composed in the midst of many avocations) could not appear in one number of the “Bible Treasury,” I will add one or two remarks as to righteousness, and the use of this word in scripture. First, it is quite certain that in Romans 3 righteousness means God’s righteousness, as God in

contrast with Christ's work, though displayed through and in virtue of it. It is the righteousness of God without law. This is its nature and quality. It is not man's, it is God's apart from law. Such is the constant use of the genitive. Next, it is the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ. That is the way it is brought to bear on men in their favour. Then His passing over sins in times past seemed to deny this righteousness; but the death of Christ accounted for that. And so God's righteousness was, at this time, that He might be righteous and Justifier of them who beheve in Jesus. Now the person whose righteousness is spoken of is the righteous justifier, that is, God. The way is faith in Jesus. I say, then, in this capital passage it is a character or attribute of God, which is made good by the blood of Christ, when it seemed to be impossible, in respect of sinners, so as to favour them.

The righteousness of God is His consistency with Himself. Hence it shews itself in mercy when it is promised, in judgment on the wicked, in rewarding integrity, not as merit, but as that which pleased Him, and rightly—everything in which God makes good what He has revealed Himself to be. For in a certain sense He owes Himself to that, because withal it is Himself; and on this faith ought to reckon. Hence all the interventions of God in favour of His people, according to His revelation of Himself, or His promises, are called righteousness. Of course, His revelation of Himself is the truth of what He is: but this revelation is our only just way of knowing it. But it is a relative term. A person cannot be intrinsically righteousness (i.e., without reference to someone else). Man's righteousness, if he had any, would be his consistency with the revelation of

God and its requirements. “The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright.” But man was not this. Hence, when the law had been given, mercy is always put before righteousness, because the saints felt, as the Spirit taught, that he had forfeited everything. It is from this sense of righteousness (God’s consistency with Himself as revealed, His acting on the revelation of Himself) that it has been said to mean goodness, mercy, and the like. The display of it was such; the thing spoken of as displaying it was such. Still, it was God’s consistency with Himself, and this is constantly appealed to in the Psalms, and declared to be ** near “and to be “for ever “in Isaiah 51, and connected with Israel’s salvation when mercy and truth will be met together, righteousness and peace will kiss each other, and truth flourish out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven. So David speaks of bringing in everlasting righteousness amongst men when God manifests His glory, His perfect consistency with Himself, and blesses His people. The heavens will declare His righteousness, for God will be judge Himself; and the fruit of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. Thus righteousness will reign in the millennium, and peace and bliss be maintained. In the new heavens and the new earth the righteousness will dwell, and nothing can be changed; there is nothing to change.

On the other hand, we read, “Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness.” Here the godly man looks for enlargement out of distress, according to God’s consistency with His revelation of Himself—the thing he looks to as the title to be helped, he walking in fear and

faith. And the sacrifices of righteousness have the same force, sacrifices offered according to the true character in which God had revealed Himself (of course, in Israel, according to the law, but with the piety, purpose, and truth of heart which became this approach to God, and the consciousness of what He was). So, in the triumphant deliverance of His people at the end, it is righteousness sustains Him. He saw there was no man, but He was Himself, and He put it on as a breastplate, and made good His character against evil. And it is this which makes the perplexity of the saint in the Psalms who yet owns his sin. How was God's character made good when His people were oppressed, and not a promise fulfilled? Yet there is the confession of sin, and confidence in Him through grace. Integrity wrought in by grace calls on righteousness and expects an answer according to what God has said, and yet confesses sin. This last was uprightness.

But how could all this be made good, and God be really consistent with Himself, shew mercy, judge sin, bless faith and hope in Him according to promise? That was based on redemption, on Christ's work as made sin; and though there may be hope, the soul is never clear till this is known. Here God can be, yea, is, here alone is (now sin is come in), consistent with Himself in blessing. Thus He could righteously bless according to promise. "Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers" — and that effectually, only through death and resurrection.

But there was much more than this in Christ's death. God, independently of promise, was perfectly glorified in all He is— righteousness, love, truth, majesty—in all He

is. Hence a ground of righteousness is laid for every sinner. God is consistent with—glorifies—Himself in blessing. I do not mean that this was all; for it was not—there was positive substitution for the redeemed; but I confine myself now to the one point. Thus the Gentiles, who had no promise, could glorify God for His mercy. Whoever believed had a part in it. God was righteous in blessing him—just in forgiving. Hence grace reigned, but reigned through righteousness, Jew and Gentile, when the matter was fully looked into, being all alike. God did and will make good His promises, but by nature all were children of wrath. There was no difference. It was, through Christ, God's righteousness unto all; and it is upon all them that believe.

This is Paul's great theme in the Romans: to the end of chapter 3, the death which made it good; from chapter 4 to the end of chapter 8, the position into which we are righteously brought in resurrection, the sure place which this glorifying of God has obtained for us, and which He righteously puts into, and must, so to speak, in Christ; and then (chaps. 9-11) the apostle meets the objection of special promise. He had only discussed law as yet with the Jew; and the Jew could say, Yes; but what about our special promises? And his answer is, God is sovereign; or, else, if you rest it on fleshly descent, you must let in Ishmael and Esau; and God will use this sovereignty to let in Gentiles. You have forfeited all by seeking it by law, and stumbling at the stumbling-stone. And yet (so profound is God's wisdom) He has not cast you off. He will make good His promises. He could not but do it; only now you must come in under mercy like a Gentile. The prophets, too, had foretold it all.

Thus, though God did make good His character revealed to the Jew, and His promise, yet that was not a partial thing. The cross must reveal deeper truth, and, displayed in all its perfectness and grace, what God was in Himself; and thus dealt with the sinner as such, with what man was in himself, that is, nothing but sin, and brought him, through faith in Jesus, according to the value of that sacrifice, into the presence of God Himself in heaven. The Jews, as a nation, must wait till the great High Priest comes out to know the sacrifice is accepted. Then they will be blessed. To them that believe the Holy Ghost is come out, while Christ is within; and we know that He is, and are at peace, and that according to righteousness. Grace reigns through righteousness.

Of course, in an article or a tract, I can only sketch the scriptural use of this word. The reader has only to take a concordance and see how far it is just. I have no doubt the New Testament, as would naturally be the case, alludes to several of these passages. I rather think Psalm 50 was in the apostle's mind in Romans 3, or that which the Spirit had produced by it in his mind. Thus, too, the remarkable passages in Jeremiah 23 and 33, "the Lord our righteousness" —the first said of Christ, the second of Jerusalem. As Christ is righteousness to us, and we are the righteousness of God in Him, we are accepted, according to God's own character, righteously, in Him. His infinite value, including therein His work, is our title before God.

There is another point it will be well to clear up from scripture. How is eternal fife obtained? We are told, by law-keeping, I deny it. A law was not given which could give fife; Christ had, or rather was, eternal life before He kept law. Eternal life is not obtained by law-keeping.

What says the scripture? The subject is one of deep importance. Justification being one aspect of salvation, the other part of it, so to speak, is eternal life. The direct doctrine of scripture is as plain as possible. That I shall state. The Jews had connected it with the law, as they had righteousness. This connection will require more attention than the simple truth itself. The Lord, while presenting Himself to their responsibility during His lifetime, speaks in a guarded way upon it. Once rejected (and He is so viewed all through the gospel of John), all is distinct and simple. The notion of our getting life by His law-keeping, is not only not found in scripture, but is contrary to every idea the gospel gives of it.

Let us first state from scripture the simple truth on the subject. The simplest, fullest, and most direct statements of what eternal life is, are to be found, perhaps, in John's first epistle (the main object of the whole Epistle being to shew what that life is). "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the hfe was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." Here we have eternal life, erst with the Father, but manifested in the Person of Christ. So in the last chapter: "This is the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." "He is the true God, and eternal life." This, then, is most definite and distinct. The life is in the Son. He is eternal life. So the gospel: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he

given to the Son to have life in himself" (John 5). He is a life-giving Spirit; He quickens whom He will.

All this is plain. Life is in the Son, or He is life. He has it in His Person; He communicates it. It is given of God, not won. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). "I," says Christ of His sheep, "am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

We may now see how it is obtained. It is the Spirit working by the word. We are born of the Spirit; and "of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures "(James 1:18). Hence John 5:24: "He that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." So Paul's witness was "a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death." The form or character of this is resurrection. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:1, 3, 4. This and verse 20 depend on chapter 2:12, 13.) So Ephesians 2, "God … when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." And this passage shews it is the same power which raised up Christ—not of works, but in resurrection. It has its groundwork as to faith (for, being by the word, it is by faith) in the knowledge of the Father, and Jesus whom He has sent. For that was the revelation of God, as acting in grace, and to give life. So Christ gives eternal life to His sheep (John 10). This life-

receiving faith in its present object is unfolded in John 6, “Whoso seeth the Son, and believeth on him, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” “He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” First, He is received as incarnate, the bread come down from heaven. But this is particularized: He gives His “flesh for the life of the world,” and this in His death; so that if one do not eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, he has no life in himself at all: whoso does has eternal life. In order to this, therefore, He, as standing for sinful man, must die, and be in death the witness of the Father’s love who sent Him: for it was love to sinners. This is John 3:15, 16. At the close of that chapter it is confirmed: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” The power of it is in the Spirit, Jesus’ divine gift. It “is a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4). The Spirit is life if Christ be in us (Rom. 8). He was to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him (John 17).

A few accessory passages may be added. Titus 1:2,” the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began.” There is another aspect in which eternal life is viewed, namely, its full accomplishment in glory, according to the full purpose of God. In this view we are, of course, not said to have it, but to follow after it. Thus Romans 6: “Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” So Paul to Timothy: “Lay hold on, eternal life.” That is present energy, but is the earnest faith of the saint, not simply the gift of God. So of the rich giving freely, that they may lay hold on eternal life. So Romans 5: “Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” So “they that lose their life shall keep

it unto life eternal." This is put as a great general principle in Romans 2. "To them who, by patient continuance in welldoing, seek for glory and honour and incorruptibility, eternal life." This does not throw any obscurity on this great truth; it is simply—what is universal in the New Testament—the energy of faith in the wilderness journey through grace which goes onwards to the full result for which God has redeemed us. We have to go the road in order to arrive, but have sure grace and the keeping of God to go it.

This free and perfect gift and maintenance of instructive responsibility, on the footing of His inalienable gift, is ever found in God's ways in grace. "He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

We have yet a particular point to enquire into historically (for the doctrine of eternal life is clear)—how far the Jews thought of this, and how far Christ met their thoughts. The doctrine of eternal life or any life after this world was not necessary to be a good Jew. The priests and high priests were Sadducees, who believed nothing of it. It is said that Sadoc's teaching originally was only urging that rewards after this life ought not to be our motive for goodness, but the blessedness of what was good. However that may be, it ended in his followers denying resurrection, angel, and spirit, and taking this world for their portion. But, while the Pentateuch is silent as to eternal life, saying only, "The man that doeth these things shall live in them," the subsequent teaching of the Jews had brought the nation, with the exception of the Sadducees, to expect eternal life, with the grossest corruption of principles as to merit, balancing accounts of merit and demerit, and even positive superstitions.

That they did expect it we find in John. “In them ye think ye have eternal life.” So the young man who comes to Jesus acts on it: “What good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? “So the lawyer, tempting Him in Luke. But the Lord, while replying to these persons, and putting His sanction on the witness of Moses (“he that doeth these things shall live in them”), never meets the expectation of eternal life by them. “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments” —that Moses had taught. When the young man still looks for more, Jesus tests his heart, and calls on him to follow Him. So to the lawyer in Luke, on a similar question, He only says, “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” And when he seeks to excuse himself by the question, “Who is my neighbour?” the Lord shews (not who is my neighbour, but) how in grace I can be neighbour to any one—the divine principle of grace. The testimony of eternal life, given by God in Christ, remains in all its simple fulness. Only in resurrection could it be given in righteousness and in the power which passed man beyond the place and power of sin and death.

The reader, taught of God, will see that resurrection is the place where justification and life meet. “He hath quickened you together with Christ, having forgiven you all trespasses.” Resurrection is the power of a new life which I have in Christ. Having Him as my life, I am risen with Him. But He had died, and I am forgiven all trespasses through a work done before I partake of the life. He is raised for my justification, and I am in the presence of God according to the acceptance which belongs to the position in which He stands, after the putting away of sin, and all He has done to the glory of God in doing it. Resurrection is both the witness of the

righteous acceptance of Christ's work, and the entrance into the position which is the just result of it. "He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father." It is life from the dead according to the power of God. He was raised for our justification; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. I have a living place in righteousness before God. Now, if we consider the value of that which brings us into it, it is infinite. The glory of the Father was all engaged in raising Christ. He had glorified God perfectly—not merely borne our sins and been a sacrifice for sin. That was the means of our righteous forgiveness; but there was more. He glorified God in doing it in the place of, and as to, sin, but in everything in which God's nature and character consisted. "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." This is in the place of Son (John 17), and by that which gives us a title—His finishing the work. Now this was more than forgiveness, it was positive. It was not (though about sin) sin-ward, but God-ward. How could God be righteous, and shew love too? How make good His word of judgment unto death, and save? How vindicate His majesty, yet bless sinners? Christ offers Himself. There is God's perfect love infinitely glorified; there is His righteousness against sin, as nought else could shew it; there His truth, that the wages of sin is death, there His majesty vindicated. His Son is given up to death because of it; His holiness made good in repudiating sin, when His Son was made sin. Surely it was the glory of the Son of man; but God was glorified in it; and man is entered in righteousness into the glory of God. This, surely, is more than forgiveness, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. We expect to be like Christ in His Father's house,

perfectly conformed to Him—to bear the image of the heavenly, as we have borne the image of the earthy.

But, even now, we have more than forgiveness—we have Christ's own position, not in body, of course, but much more really and importantly, summed up in one word: "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." The choicest blessing to the heart is, that we are not only blessed through, but with, Christ. As to peace— "My peace I give unto you" — "that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves" — "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me." "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them." "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am … that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." And this partaking livingly in His own portion is applied to assurance in respect of future judgment. "Herein is love made perfect with us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." Wondrous privilege! and all grace, yet in righteousness. And all confirms this. Is Christ hid in God? Our life is hid with Him in God. Does He appear? We shall appear with Him in glory. Does He live? We shall live also.

Now this is more than forgiveness. He is gone to His Father and our Father, to His God and our God: and does He sit because all is finished, and "that by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"? They sit, too, in heavenly places in Him. Our reproacn bearing is His reproach. We suffer with Him and reign with Him. Such is the scriptural presentation, and much more than this, of our place. Is all this by keeping law, or

by grace? Is it by the law, or by His offering, He hath perfected us for ever?

I close. My answer to the “Record” is this: Its declaration, that the theory that pardon and justification are distinct things, and that a man may be pardoned but not justified is the universal doctrine of the Church of God, is ignorance of history. The contrary is stated by the Homilies and Calvin, and the thought is formally condemned by the Lutheran symbolical books as false doctrine. It is not the doctrine taught at the Reformation, but the contrary. The “Record” moves here in the narrow circle of its own associates. Next, I do not accept, more than the “Record” does, that justification is limited by that. A man is justified by blood—that is, by the blood of Christ. Scripture, as Calvin insists, is express upon it. But when the “Record” would correct the absolute limitation of justification to pardon, it goes back instead of forward, and makes us justified before we are pardoned—justified, before Christ dies for us, by Christ’s law-keeping before the cross. Here it is all wrong again. Scripture repudiates righteousness by law for man altogether, and declares, if it be on this ground, Christ is dead in vain, and that we are fallen from grace. The “Record” does not see the extent to which we are dead and condemned, and thus puts us under law and leaves us to make out our justification by a completing unfailing law-keeping by Christ’s perfect law-keeping; so that it is a work which goes on, the application of this righteousness being progressive and proportioned to my failures. It denies the value of law, which counts the breaker of one commandment guilty of all, and the existence of one lust sufficient to damn. It is an allowance of failure in keeping the law when put under

it; for a perfect obedience, not atonement, is provided beforehand. And the apostle's answer to this they have not got. He replies, Yes; but you are dead and risen again. How can you live in flesh when you are dead? But no such argument applies to law. Historically, the "Record "is totally wrong. When it goes beyond the defect it condemns, it goes back to law, instead of forward in the power of resurrection into Christ. Let those who search the scriptures (and I beseech Christians to do it, and not satisfy themselves with my rapid and imperfect sketch of the truth for a periodical) say whether law or resurrection is the ground on which the apostle—on which the Spirit of God—sets us in the word for justification before God, for life and acceptance in Christ.

I have not taken up particular expressions in the "Record," but the whole subject itself. I pray the reader to do the same. Of course, all of us are liable to express ourselves in a way which lays us open to attacks; but let the reader's enquiry be, What is the scripture truth on this subject? I think I have fairly taken the issue upon it.

A few words of definition (which Cicero might have taught me to put first, but which in divine subjects come, after all, better last) will complete what I have to say.

Pardon and justification are not the same thing. Pardon is the favour and kindness of a person wronged passing over faults against himself, an act of prerogative goodness; so that kindness flows forth unimpeded by the wrong—though in this case it be by the blood of Christ. Justification is the holding not chargeable with guilt. The latter refers to righteous judgment; the former, to

kindness. Where one is a sinner against God, they approach one another, and run together in fact, but are not the same, nor in the effect the same in the heart. Justified, I do not fear judgment; pardoned, my heart returns in comfort to Him who has pardoned me; but by His blood we have both. It is another aspect, not another act. So, when we connect our risen position with justifying, it is not logically exact. The justifying is always holding discharged from accusation. The way in which we so stand is not simply holding us to be clear, but by the resurrection of Christ putting us into a new position; for if He be risen, and God has acknowledged therein the satisfaction made in Christ's death, He has therein discharged or justified us. But that which justified us implies, therefore, more than pardon, an introduction into God's presence as Christ stands there. If Christ be not raised, we are yet in our sins; but if He be, we are cleared by a work which brings us into the glory of God in perfect acceptance. This is not properly justification, but it is the justification we have got, seeing how we have obtained the justification; for we are justified by being the righteousness of God in Him, and are warranted practically in taking what Christ is as the measure of our justification, because it is that which will be recognized in the day of judgment. "Herein is love made perfect with us, that we should have boldness in the day of judgment; because, as he is, so are we in this world." The day of judgment pronounces on us. We are as the Judge—clearly justified therefore. But the Lamb is the Judge too: we appear before Him who bore our sins; so that their being put away, covered (in virtue of which work all is pardoned), is our justification too; for "we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

The merits of Christ, though a most justifiable and true expression, has misled, as it is in another order of ideas from justifying. It is not by meriting that we are held free from charge. Christ has merited that we should; and so it is all well. But meriting has respect to reward; and I have no doubt this has led to connect our justifying with His keeping the law. Now, no merits could have cleared us before God without death: that was the wages of sin, and "without shedding of blood there is no remission." And this leads us to see the wisdom of God, because, being thus, there is also a putting away, an end of the old evil, and the introduction in a new life into a wholly new order of things, pure and excellent. Finally, the heart wants pardon, the conscience justifying.

I would add one word in conclusion, without thinking of dwelling on it. The "Record" speaks of its objection to the "Brethren's" dogma of baptism. I do not know what is its object in this; but I must be allowed to say, the "Brethren" have no dogma on baptism. Had they, they would have given up their first principles, and I for one could not be among them: first, because they would be at once sectarian, united on a particular opinion; and, secondly, that I have no such dogma. I know well that many among them have Baptist views on this subject; but many, very many, have not: many are decidedly opposed to it, I for one. I think it an utter mistake, and, from beginning to end, a want of intelligence in scripture—a confusion between the house of God and the body of Christ, and a bar to the true judgment of the state and responsibility of Christendom and of parents. The "Record's" principles have so mixed the Church and the world that the meaning of baptism has been lost. But when the Holy Ghost was in the Church consciously as

the house of God, and the devil in the world sensibly, as in a heathen country, it would be monstrous to say that the children of Christians were not to be where the Holy Ghost was, but to remain where the devil ruled outside. And the corruption that has come in, and mixed Church and world together, does not change God's truth. I say this without thinking of proving my views here, because, as I am answering the "Record" on the capital point of its article, did I let this pass, it might seem accepting it as a fact that baptism (that is, Baptist views) was a dogma of "Brethren." A few words as to other assailants. Mr. Harrison, whom I would not doubt to be a good man —though not having the faith of the Church of God nor the gospel according to the "Record"!—has attacked the tracts on the other side. I would just mention that he is mistaken as to Osiander, who was Lutheran professor at Konigsberg, not a papist. He did hold that there was an infusion of the divine nature by which the Christian became righteous. He was resisted by Lutherans and Calvinists. There is morally speaking an infusion of the divine nature, though I do not admire the term, for it is a new life; but certainly righteousness is not by it, though it cannot be without it. Here I think Mr. Harrison is on slippery ground, because he says we cannot be accounted what we are not. It is something like denying imputed righteousness altogether. Now that we must have this divine nature to be accounted righteous is true; yet we are not accounted righteous for this, but for Christ's sake in Himself. I am imperfect in result; but before God, "as he is, so am I in this world." Without being aware of it, Mr. Harrison has slipped into Osiander's doctrine, which I do not hold at all, but reject. Does he mean to say that a man is reckoned just when he is so? His words are, "Reckons them to be what

they really are." If so, it is only in the divine nature of which we are made partakers; and it is Osiander's doctrine. I do not think Mr. Harrison at all clear on this head. Next, as to Dr. Crisp, he is quite mistaken. I had never seen the book when I read Mr. Harrison's tract. I lit on it since and looked at it; but Crisp's doctrine is the common one of Christ's law-keeping being imputed to us —His active obedience as our righteousness. Only he holds that, Christ being God, an infinite value is imparted to His human obedience. But Mr. Harrison is quite mistaken as to him, and so he is as to Mr. Stanley's tracts. I hold no communication of essential righteousness. I hold Christ Himself in His own perfection to be, as now risen, our righteousness before God; but I believe that righteousness is the true relative character of God as to good and evil, and that He accepts Christ in virtue of that character, and us in Him; but it would not be righteousness if Christ had not deserved it. To speak exactly, I do not think righteousness an essential quality at all. If I have said so, it was inexact. God is light and God is love: that is essential. But He is not righteousness nor holiness, because these are relative terms; He is righteous and holy. But righteousness is manifested and demonstrated to the world, because Christ is gone to the Father. He had glorified God, and God has glorified Him with Himself, and (leaving aside just final condemnation for the moment) therein righteousness is proved. It is righteousness in God, but would have not been so, had not Christ merited it. Let me venture to recommend Mr. Harrison to read my "extraordinary language" in his page 30 again, and see if he cannot understand it, comparing 1 John 4; for I think it very sound truth indeed.

Two other points I would refer to: the Septuagint, and 2 Peter 1:1. As to the first, though I read and study, it would be wrong in me to pretend to be learned. My life, as I dare say Mr. Harrison's does, lies in other things, and I should be glad of any light on the New Testament, particularly from such a source as the Septuagint. I could not quite apply, however, Septuagint language absolutely to the Greek of the New Testament, however great a help it may be. I believe the Holy Spirit guided the New Testament writers. And while the general tone of language may be drawn from the Septuagint, because they lived in it, habitually on all important subjects they gave what the Holy Spirit meant them to give, and, in point of fact, do not follow the Septuagint when it does not give the divine mind, as may be seen in Randolph's tract. On all subjects they give it; but I mean, in the direct teaching of truth, we must admit no accepted language which may induce imperfectness of thought. I therefore deliberately maintain the sense given to Romans 1. I do not, of course, deny the Hebrew rule, given by Gesenius and other Hebrew grammarians, that a determining noun renders the determining article unnecessary, and that the LXX, who were not famous scholars (some at least of the translators), follow the Hebrew idiom much. In two of the examples, however, given by Mr. Harrison, the verb substantive is a reason why there should be no article, and in the only case in which Jehovah's righteousness is mentioned in scripture (Mr. Harrison gives no case at all), the article is found in the Septuagint. It is in Micah 6:5. In the other passages where the righteousness of God is mentioned, it is "my righteousness," and, in spite of Hebrew, has necessarily the article. It could hardly be otherwise, so that I do not cite it in proof of anything. The only other cases are "the

Lord our righteousness," applied to Israel and to Jerusalem as a name. But the absence of the article in the New Testament I hold to be purposed, and the true mind of the Holy Ghost. Thus, where it is said (perhaps alluding to Jer. 33:16), "we are made the righteousness of God," there is no article. The article here would say a great deal too much: either that we were it, intrinsically and abstractedly so; or that we were the whole thing, and that there was no other righteousness of God but ourselves. As it stands, it does not say this, but merely that we have this standing and character in Christ. Our place, title, privilege, is not merely mercy, which it is as to us in an infinite degree; but our salvation, looked at in Christ, is the display of God's righteousness. He is consistent with Himself in it. We are the expression and display of this righteousness, not in contradiction with it; and this is a glorious truth wrought out by Christ's work. "The heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge himself." Thus, though the fact is that the LXX give the article with the righteousness of God, and the New Testament does not, I do not rest merely on this, but on the teaching of the Holy Ghost in the word as perfect in itself.

As to 2 Peter 1 I still think also it is nothing to the purpose. It is not imputed righteousness here, nor anything to do with it, nor a righteousness presented to God (Christ's righteousness, as men speak in this sense), but a righteousness exercised by God in virtue of which they got Christianity, or the precious faith. It was not a righteousness accepted, but a righteousness of God, which gave according to promise, and revealed grace. And so the English translators understood it, and, I have no doubt at all, rightly. I do not know that I have any

subject of controversy with Mr. Harrison, and I have no wish to have any. I think he runs a little into inherent righteousness, or is in danger of it—i.e., Wesleyanism; and I think he has not yet at all understood our position in Christ risen, as something else than His dying for us, though the fruit of it. I trust he will believe that I say this with no assumption, nor as a reproach, and that he will weigh it in the spirit I say it in; for I am quite ready to believe him more faithful to the light he has than I am. But still I think there is truth in scripture on this subject which he has not received.

As I am upon attacks, I notice very briefly two that have been sent me— "Adelphos," and the "Eclectic Review." I was begged to read the first and have run through it, but I do not think it calls for any answer. I agree with the writer in thinking that discussions on the Person of Christ are mischievous, but I do not think the rejection of blasphemy is. I am sorry he cannot find out the difference. Science is not knowledge, in spite of Latin. Science is the deduction of general results and principles from facts and axioms within the certain knowledge of man. But a defence of the pursuit of science, of the desires of the mind, because an experienced pastor thought a Christian ought to do his work thoroughly well, is not worth an answer. As regards the abuse of the followers of Mr. Darby, as they are called, it is a matter of course. I apprehend the writer will find them sufficiently independent in their judgment not to mind his. The tract is hardly the expression of the absence of party spirit which he so strongly recommends. As to his allegations, he ought to be better informed, or say nothing.

The “Eclectic” also has taken up arms in an article which certainly would demand no kind of notice but for the work commented on—the little tract of Mrs. Grattan Guinness. As it is stated in another of these commonplace attacks I have seen, that this is referred to by others, I allow myself to say that I should object altogether to this tract being taken as the “Brethren’s” account of themselves, or any brother’s account of them. The estimable person who gives it (and I say this very sincerely, believing Mrs. Guinness to be so) was hardly, I apprehend, born, when the “Brethren” began; and hence it cannot be surprising that her account should be inexact historically. It is very inexact indeed. But this too I should leave where it was; as the best thing for Christians to do is to serve God so that He may commend them, and then let people say what they like. But I object to Mrs. Guinness’s account, because it is a regular puff of “Brethren,” and in this point of view I feel it highly objectionable. It seems to me that in a young female it would have been better taste to have omitted characterizing any Christian, some years older than herself, as Diotrephes. She may be sure he forgives her; nor would it be of any consequence to mention it, were it not a proof that the true motives of opposition, which she so characterizes, have lost their weight in her mind. I may not have any right to expect that, what so many Christians hold to be horrible blasphemies, Mrs. Guinness should hold to be such; but I must conclude that, if she is obliged to consider the opposition to them as the spirit of Diotrephes, she cannot see in these blasphemies anything which affects her mind as such. I am sorry for her that it should be so.

62 “Bible Treasury,” 1862.

63 The scripture takes care never to say eternal life; for this is a gift of God, it is Christ Himself.

What Is The Church?

This is a question raised in many hearts by that which is passing around us—a question of the deepest interest in itself, even though circumstances did not make one feel the need of a clear and satisfactory answer. But the state of the professing world, now so much agitated on the question of the Church in every form, and in which a multiplicity of movements (in general only creating more perplexity and questions in most souls) present themselves as the reply to the need which is felt of finding the truth on this point—this state of things, I say, will render a serious examination of what the word of God says on the subject useful to many. Enlightened by that only true light, they may, by learning at the fountain of light, while putting themselves in possession of the light itself, be able to judge calmly and soundly of all that presents itself as such, and, as a consequence, claims submission, or at least adherence, to the course which is proposed, as being according to it.

But this is not all. I doubt not but that God has not only permitted, but that it has been His will, that this question should be raised, in order that His children may learn what is the extent, and what are the thoughts of His love; and that they may take morally, and with true Christian devotedness, a position practically answering to His infinite goodness. For the question of the Church, seen as presented in the Bible, is one eminently practical. The position in which the Christian is placed by the very fact that he is a member of the Church of God, governs the affections, and forms the character. This consideration makes still more

opportune a work which views the Church in the light of God's word. As a matter of fact, the question of the Church is generally presented as a question of the organization of some new body amongst Christians—a question of which the heart gets wearied. Hence it follows that many persons discard the subject altogether, as injurious to sanctification, and seek, and induce others to seek, spirituality by setting aside a point of which, after all, it is evident that the New Testament is full, and of which it treats in terms which attach to such a point great practical importance. In fine, if, as many serious Christians think, we are in the last times, although circumstances can add nothing to the essential importance of truth, the fact that we find ourselves to be near the end of the age, makes its practical importance to be more felt. The obligation under which the wise virgins were, to watch and to keep their lamps ready at all times, became an imperative duty, when the cry had gone forth at midnight, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."

The considerations I have just presented will have clearly pointed out to the reader the object of this paper, namely, an examination of the teaching of the word of God on the subject of the Church, and of the practical results for our souls which flow thence. My aim is not to examine the basis of individual salvation, although the teaching of the word on the Church throws much light on this point. It is even of consequence to understand that they are distinct things; for God never passes by our individual responsibility, whatever privileges may be conferred upon us by being joined to an assembly. We are saved as individuals, although God may, if He sees fit, gather into one body those whom He saves. Salvation

is a thing which, though complete in Christ, supposes in the heart of the person enjoying it, personal exercises, which go on necessarily and exclusively in his own conscience, and which bring his soul into immediate connection with God, and without which all relationship with Him—all happiness—the very existence of spiritual life—would be impossible. The intercourse between God and an intelligent and responsible soul, which before was in sin, necessarily supposes that consequent on the establishment of this new relationship many things pass within which are for that soul alone. The special form which the relationship takes may add much—may give special character to it; and this is the case; but this does not do away with personal relationship. This is one of the essential differences between the truth of the word and the idea of the Church as it is viewed by the Romanist; who, making ordinances a means of salvation, attaches salvation to being of the Church, instead of making the Church the assembly of those who are saved. If but one individual were saved, his salvation would be equally perfect and sure, but he would not be the Church. This (the Church) includes an additional thought, an additional relationship, to that of the saved individual. What is this thought? Let us lay aside human definitions, and cleave to the word.

The Church is something infinitely precious to Christ. He “loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish.” This is a revelation that makes us feel the importance which God attaches to what He calls the Church. What

an object of the affections of Christ—of His care; and how glorious will be the accomplishment of the counsels of God respecting this Church! What a privilege to be part of it! This passage teaches us, moreover, that there is, in the union of Christ and the Church all the intimacy80 that exists between a husband and a wife beloved—a feeble figure after all of the reality of this great mystery—that we are thus members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones; that the Church holds to Christ the place which Eve held with regard to Adam—the figure of Him that was to come; who was associated with Adam in the enjoyment of all that had been conferred on him by God. This last thought, it is true, is only suggested here by the analogy of the position of Eve, used by the apostle to represent that of the Church; but it is taught as a doctrine elsewhere. It is natural to suppose, that what holds so prominent a place in the mind of God should be found more than once in the word; and such we shall find to be the case in passages, the bearing of which we will presently consider. At the same time, it will be easily understood, by the nature of the thing itself, that this position is quite peculiar; that such an association with Christ is a special object of the counsels and purposes of God; for the place of a bride, like that of Eve, is a very special one. She is not the inheritance; she is more than a child, however dear, as a child, she may be to the father. It is a higher thing than being God's people, though both may be true at the same time. It is difficult to imagine anything more closely linked with self than one's own wife, one's own body. "No man," says the apostle to express it, "ever yet hated his own flesh." It is one's self. It must be evident to the reader, that from such a relationship must flow immensely practical consequences; because it is

connected at the same time, with the closest affections, and the most absolute duties. The Lord Himself expresses the force of the position of His Church, the first time He speaks of it in a formal manner after the commencement of its existence, when He says, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?”

Let us notice the three chief points presented by Ephesians 5 which has suggested these reflections. First, Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it. It is redeemed at the cost of His blood, of His life, of Himself. Having thus purchased it exclusively for Himself, He begins, secondly, to fashion it, to sanctify it, that it may be according to His own heart’s desire; that He may, in the third place, present it to Himself a glorious Church, without the least thing unbecoming the glory, or that might offend the eye or the heart of her divine Bridegroom. There is here a testimony to the divinity of Jesus, so much the more remarkable as it is only by the way; and the allusion is made as to a known truth. God, having formed Eve, presented her to the first Adam; but Christ Himself presents the Church to Himself; because if He be the Second Adam, He is at the same time the One who can present it to Himself as being the author of its existence, of its beauty, and of the perfection in which it must appear in heaven, to be worthy of such a Bridegroom, and of the glory that is there.

We will consider its history farther on: but we may already observe here, that whatever may be the circumstances through which the Church is called to pass, she is always considered as a whole, as much while she is being purified by the word upon earth, as when she is presented glorious to her Bridegroom in

heaven. The redemption of this body by the blood of the cross was made upon earth. Her purification through the word, by the Spirit, also takes place on earth. The glorious result, at the return of Christ, will take place in heaven, for which place she will have been made ready. Although the marriage has not yet taken place, the relationship has always existed as to its rights. I do not speak merely as regards the eternal counsels of God, but in fact as to the knowledge and the duties of those who were called. Since Christ purchased the Church to Himself (I speak of the fact, and historically now, always allowing time for the communication of the truth as to this, by the Holy Ghost), the Church has been His, as regards the conscience of those who were called to the enjoyment of this position. The relationship exists; and as Christ has always been faithful, the Church ought to have been so also. Her purification, on the part of Christ, had necessarily reference to this relationship, as this passage formally proves. It ought to have been viewed in the same light by Christians, by those who, alas! may fail in this relationship as in all others. But their responsibility is in connection with the obligations that flow from it.

The manner in which this truth must act upon the knowledge of an accomplished salvation, and upon sanctification, as well as upon the joy of hope, is plain. For with regard to the first, the existence of the Church is based on the fact that Christ has loved it, and given Himself for it. So that its purchase, its salvation, and the gracious, perfect love of Him who redeemed it, with the end in view, which cannot fail, of presenting it in glory to Himself, form the basis of its whole life—of its everyday relations.

It is not a people put to the test, by a rule given. The Church is the object of a perfect work, through which Christ purchased it to Himself, when it was enslaved to Satan, defiled, and guilty. It has no other responsibility, as the Church, but that which is based on its being the purchase of Christ. This tells her, no doubt, that she ought to be entirely His; but if she ought to be His, it is because she is so already. The Christian, instructed of God in this doctrine, has the peaceful assurance (an assurance which gives a calmness that is the basis of the sweetest affections) that he belongs to Christ, according to God's perfect love, and the efficacy of a work in which Christ—that His heart might have satisfaction in the object which the Father had given Him—could not fail.

The influence of this truth in the conscience is equally great as regards sanctification; for it is the purification of that which already belongs to Christ in an absolute manner, in order that it may be fit to live with Him for ever, a purification which extends consequently to the thoughts, the affections, and the manner of viewing things in all respects. Being wholly His, the Church has to do with Him in each movement of the heart, in each sentiment; if not, she fails in her relationship with Him, in every circumstance in which it is not so. As to the result which He has in view, He will certainly no more fail in that, thanks be unto God, than He has with regard to the redemption. He will present the Church to Himself without spot or wrinkle. But the heart of the Christian ought to respond to that work.

The influence of the relationship of the Church with Christ upon her hope, is no less great. She is outside the judgments which the coming of the Lord will bring upon the world— outside the course of the prophetic events

which will take place in a world of which she forms no longer part. She awaits the happy moment when the Lord will call her, taking her to Himself to realize the glory and the joy of the relationship which she already knows by grace.

Such is the position of the Church, and her relationship with Christ. But there is a consequence resulting from these, the figure of which we have seen in the connection in which Eve was placed with the creation, but on which I will make a few more remarks by the way. Christ says, the apostle, in Ephesians 1, is the Head of the Church, “which is his body, the fulness of [or that which makes complete] him that filleth all in all “\ that is to say, Christ is the Head, and the Church the body; and as the body is the complement of the head to make up a man, so it is with Christ and the Church: He as Head directing, exercising all authority over the Church, His body—but the Church, as the body, rendering complete the mystical man, according to the eternal counsels of God. For it is evident that this is no question about the divine Person of Christ, but in the counsels of God, Christ, as Head, would not have been complete without the Church.

Let us remark by the way, that it is this thought which was completely hid (hid in God) under the old covenant; and which is not found in the whole of the Old Testament. The idea of a Christ not perfect, simply in His own Person, as an individual, would have been unintelligible to the most advanced saint of the Old Testament. There was to be blessing under His government—but the being a part of the Christ, as a member of His body would have been incomprehensible. The union between Jew and Gentile, which flows from it,

will come before us afterwards. Now the effect of such a union of the Church with Christ, has been to associate the Church in His dominion over all things and with all His glory, such as He received it as Mediator from His Father. And such is the force even of Ephesians 1:21, 22, which we have just quoted. That is why he sets forth the members of the Church as a new creation; as being the fruit of that same power which placed Christ there (chap. 1:19 to 2:7). And that is connected with the whole of chapter 1, where the apostle has revealed the fixed purpose of God, as to the administration of the fulness of times; which is, that He will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, in Him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance. In the meantime, God has given us, who have believed before the manifestation of Christ, His Spirit, as the earnest until the redemption of the inheritance itself. Therefore the apostle shews, that, in order that we might enjoy the inheritance with Christ, we are the objects of the exercise of the same power which placed Him above all things, when He was in grace in our state; and that in Him we are in His state. If it be asked how such things can be, chapter 2:7 tells us the reason. But numerous declarations confirm the consequences to us of this union. We speak here only of the consequences. “The glory,” says the Lord, “which thou gavest me, I have given them, that the world may know that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.” “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ,” Rom. 8. “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?” (1 Cor. 6:2, 3). I do not speak of these things, as being all exclusively characteristic of the Church; but

as of things which to us are the consequence of our belonging to it.

After this short review of the position of the Church with regard to Christ, and the whole creation which will be subjected to Him, we will consider, in a more consecutive manner, the doctrine of the word respecting the Church itself, and then the position it holds historically in those ways of God, the course of which is given to us in detail in the Bible.

The fixed purpose of God, as it is expressly revealed to us in Ephesians 1, is to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth. The Church will be associated with Him as His body—His bride—at that time (Eph. 1:22, 23, 27). But all things are not yet put under Him. God has not yet put them all, as a footstool, under His feet; nor is the Church as yet presented in glory to Christ, who as yet is sitting on the right hand of God (Heb. 2:8). It is needless to quote passages to prove that the Church is not yet glorified nor raised. We are, dear Christian reader (you and I), proofs of it81—happy to be so—waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

Whilst waiting, then, for the happy moment of our meeting with Jesus, is there still a Church? Did it enter into the thoughts of God, that there should be a Church upon earth, till the final accomplishment of His magnificent designs respecting her glory in heaven? There can be no doubt about it to one that is subject to the word. Let us examine the word on this point. Christ Himself is the first to announce the commencement of the Church:82 “Upon this rock I will build my Church.” The declaration, that the gates of hell should not prevail

against it, shews plainly that it is not a question of the Church already presented in glory. It is upon earth.

I would notice a few important points which are revealed by this passage. The Church was yet to begin. Christ recognized as Son of the living God, was to form the foundation of a new work upon the earth. The fact that there are believers upon the earth, and even believers acknowledging Jesus to be the Christ, does not constitute the Church. It was so when Jesus spoke, and yet the Church was still to be builded. This was a work to be done as regarded the children of God; which thought is confirmed by a declaration of John respecting the involuntary prophecy of Caiaphas, that Jesus should die for the Jewish nation; “and not for that nation only,” adds the apostle, “but that he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” There were already children of God, but they were scattered abroad—isolated. Christ by His death was to gather them together; not merely to save them, so that they might be together in heaven (since they were children of God, that was done already), but He was to gather them together in one. They were believers already; but the Church83 was yet to be builded by the gathering together of these believers, and that upon the earth. We know that this has now taken place as a fact, through the word of Jesus, and through the power of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven. We may cite here the request of Jesus, that not only those already manifested, but those also who should believe through their word, might be one that the world might believe. Before passing on to the epistles, we may remark by the way, that the Lord, besides the general idea of the Church which He was about to build, gives us an insight

into the practical operation of the assembly in detail (Matt. 18); attaching to it, at the same time, the efficacy of this operation, and the authority of heaven itself—though but two or three should thus form the assembly—provided it was really in His name they were thus met. How precious the light that the word affords for times of darkness!

But through the descent of the Holy Ghost, the doctrine of the Church has received a much fuller development. The fact of her existence is declared in Acts 2. "All that believed were together,84 and had all things common," and "the number of them was "already "three thousand." "And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved."85 The union and unity of the saved ones were accomplished as a fact by the presence of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven. They formed one body upon the earth—a visible body owned of God, to which all whom He called to the knowledge of Himself joined themselves, and that as led of the Lord who was working in their hearts. It was the Church of God, so far composed of Jews only. The patience of God was yet waiting in Jerusalem; and if this city owed ten thousand talents, by the death of Jesus, He was still proposing repentance by the testimony of the Holy Ghost. God was remembering mercy, and declaring that, on the repentance of the nation, guilty as they were, Jesus would return. This is the subject of Acts 3. But Jerusalem turned a deaf ear to the call; and subsequently her rulers, resisting, as always, the Holy Ghost, stoned him through whom He was testifying. From that time, though the unity of the whole was preserved by the conversion of Cornelius, a new instrument of the sovereign grace of God appears on the

scene. Saul, who had been himself consenting also unto the death of Stephen—Saul the persecutor, the expression of the hatred of the Jews against the Christ, becomes the zealous witness of the faith he had sought to destroy. But this sovereign grace, whilst still mindful of the Jews, no longer goes out from Jerusalem as its starting point. It was from Antioch, a city of the Gentiles, that Paul went forth to fulfil his apostolical work. But this event was accompanied by a very remarkable development of the doctrine of the Church; or rather preceded by a revelation, which made not a new gospel (for the way of salvation is ever one and the same), but a new starting point in the preaching of this gospel as regarded the Person of Christ Himself. Up to this time, although they had preached a Christ exalted, the only Saviour, yet it was as a man known amongst the Jews by signs and miracles, as they knew, and whom God had raised and made both Lord and Christ. I need not say, that this testimony was quite according to God, and in its proper place in the midst of the Jews. “Ye also,” the Lord had said, “shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.” Peter and the other apostles, having accompanied Christ during the time of His ministry, followed Him up to the time that the cloud received Him out of their sight. They had received the testimony that He should return in like manner. The consequence was, that the relations of Christ with the Jews were always maintained on the ground of faith in Him— exalted to the right hand of God, no doubt—but whose sceptre was to go out from Sion, and who awaited the repentance of His people. But we have seen the testimony of the Holy Ghost to a glorified Christ rejected by the blinded nation; and the death of Stephen, in making this rejection signally manifest, reveals to us the

Son of man in the glory of God in heaven, receiving the spirit of His servant above, instead of returning to Israel here below. This transition from the character of the Christ or Messiah to that of Son of man (suffering, and inheriting all things in heaven and on earth) is often taught by Jesus in the Gospels. See, for instance, Luke 9. It is now being accomplished as a fact (the Lord, at the same time, not losing His rights as Christ). They are reserved for the age to come. But here Paul enters on the scene, and God, whilst continuing the work at Jerusalem, begins a new one; and that by a new revelation of His Son, to him who was not to know Him personally after the flesh. Saul sees Jesus for the first time in heavenly glory, too resplendent for human sight. It is not Jesus known upon earth made Lord,86 but the Lord of glory who, as such, declares that He is Jesus. But for Paul and his ministry, where is He found on earth? In those who are His. Seen unequivocally as Lord in heaven, Saul asks, “Who art thou, Lord?” “I am,” replies the Lord, “Jesus whom thou persecutest.” The saints were Himself, His body. The conversion of Paul identifies itself with the full revelation of the union of the Lord in glory with the members of His body upon earth. His starting point, his knowledge of salvation, could not be separated from these two things. They are reproduced in his epistles. Thus (2 Cor. 4) he says, “If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel87 of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” This, whilst setting forth in a still more striking manner the worth of His sufferings, invested, at the same time, the preaching of the apostle with a peculiar character.

I will not enlarge on this part of the relations88 of Paul with Christ, in order that we may come to that which concerns more directly our subject—the Church. Whatever God's way upon earth may be, it is evident that all question of Jew and Gentile was at an end when the question was about the Lord of glory and the members of His body. The relations became heavenly, and in the unity of the body of Christ thus known in heaven, there was neither Jew nor Gentile. The Church was upon earth according to this revelation of her position, for she was persecuted; but she was identified with the Lord in heaven; it was He (the Lord glorified) who was persecuted in His members.

To what precious ground does not this introduce the heart! We have (and that from the mouth and the heart of the Lord Himself) the strongest expression of our union with Him—that He considers the feeblest member of His body as a part of Himself. Let us pursue, however, our subject, that we may get the doctrine as a whole.

We will examine the epistles of Paul. Of the epistle to the Romans, the Church is not the subject. Having convicted the Gentile without law and the Jew under the law of being both guilty before God, it shews the individual justified before God, not by the law but through faith, introducing resurrection as putting him in a position quite new as regards justification, as regards life (that is, a new life outside of the dominion of sin); and as to the law, by grace the believer was justified, renewed, an heir of God, had the feelings of the Spirit, and was kept for glory by a love from which nothing could separate him. This well established, the apostle reconciles (chapters 9, 10 and 11) the admission of Jew and Gentile, without distinction, to the enjoyment of these

blessings with the promises made to the Jews; and he shews that the Gentiles have been grafted in to be a continuation of the line as children of Abraham in the enjoyment of the promises.

But, although the main subject of the epistle to the Romans does not afford opportunity for teaching concerning the Church, the exhortations at the end of the epistle furnish us with an element which flows naturally from the revelation made on the way to Damascus. It is that, being members of the body of Christ, we are necessarily for that reason members one of another (chap. 12:4). “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing,” etc.

The Church is absolutely one. It is evident here also, that the apostle speaks of what is upon earth; and even though there were members whose souls were with the Lord (thus being no longer able to glorify the Lord upon the earth, whence He had been rejected and where Satan exercised his power), he refers to those only who were still down here. The body in its practical and true sense was composed of those only.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians furnishes us with precious instructions on the point now engaging our attention. This epistle gives us details of the interior of a local and particular church, being addressed at the same time to all who call on the Lord. It teaches us that the Christians of a locality gathered in one body are the realization so far of the unity of the whole body.89 The church at Jerusalem was, at the beginning, both these

two things at once; and though there were many assemblies, yet the Christians of each locality gathered together in a body, and formed the church or the assembly of God in that locality. “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth.” There was but one. It was composed of those that were sanctified in Christ Jesus, of called saints who were at Corinth. The apostle reckoned on their being confirmed to the end. They were outside the world, a body known as entirely separated from it by their profession and common walk as a body. Their individual relations with the world are discussed, and go no farther than the ordinary communications of life; but even in these the most formal and complete distinction is marked between the brethren and the world. There were those without and those within; that is to say, it was not a moral difference in the individual walk alone, but a common walk as a body, and as a body formally separated from the world. (See 1 Cor. 5:7-13; ch. 10:17, 21, 22. Compare 2 Cor. 2 j ch. 6:16, 17.) The Lord’s Supper was the external sign that gathered them together (1 Cor. 10:17). Now the presence of the Holy Ghost was found in the body—in the whole body of the Church; but it was realized and manifested in the local body according to its state.

This presence of the Holy Ghost in the body is distinguished from the presence of the Holy Ghost in the individual. The body of the individual is the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 6:19). But the Church was also the temple (chap. 3:16, 17), because the Spirit dwelt in it.

Having gathered this scattered information, we may examine the chapter (12) which expressly treats of our subject, introduced by that of the spiritual powers which

were manifested in the assembly. The demons are many. The Spirit of God is only one Spirit, whatever may be the manifestations of His presence. These manifestations of the Spirit were found in the gifts; and these were given for common use, the Holy Spirit dividing to every man severally as He will. These gifts were found very largely developed among the Corinthians. Having long been carried away by the craft of demons, they were in danger of confounding the energetic manifestations of these demons with those of the Holy Spirit, because they were looking for power rather than for grace. The apostle gives them, first, an absolute rule for discerning between the Spirit of God and the demons, in the confession that Jesus was Lord— a confession which these demons would never make. Afterwards, he takes pains to make the Corinthians understand the true doctrine of the presence of the Holy Ghost; the effect of which went much farther than to produce the confession of the Lordship of Jesus; though this confession was the touchstone of it. The Holy Ghost united all Christians in one body; and Christian service, or the exercise of gifts, was nothing more than a member of the body exercising its functions for the good of the whole body. It was that one and self-same Spirit which divided to each, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ”90—Christ; for the Church is Himself, His body. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.” The unity of the body being thus established, all the gifts came under the idea of members of this body; that is, all exercise of ministry was the activity of the members of the body. It is well to recall here that the consequence of this truth is that the gifts have for the

sphere of their exercise all the extent of the body; it is even their duty to edify it if that be given them.

But other truths of the greatest moment are revealed to us in this chapter, and particularly the means God used to produce this unity, to form this body. “By one Spirit ye are all baptized into one body.”91 Christ having fully accomplished His work, and having ascended up on high, has received the promise of the Father; that is, the Holy Ghost, and has sent Him into this world to be, on the one hand, the witness of this accomplishment, and of the personal glory of Jesus at the right hand of God; and, on the other, to unite the members of this body to Himself, and at the same time to one another, whether Jews or Gentiles; who, all distinction being lost, form but one body, united to its Head in heaven, that is, to the Lord Jesus.

Two truths clearly result from the teaching of this chapter; first, that the formation of the body is accomplished by the presence of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven; and, second, that this body is formed upon the earth. Its unity, such as it is presented in the word, takes place essentially upon earth, since the Holy Ghost has come down here to accomplish it. The accessory circumstances confirm this truth; for it is most evident that the gifts in question are exercised upon the earth. The disciples were the body of Christ, by the union produced among them by the presence of one Spirit; who being one was found in them all, and at the same time in the whole of the united body. It is well to recall the passages already quoted, which teach us the difference between these last two points. While 1 Corinthians 3:16 reveals to us that the whole is the

temple of the Holy Ghost, chapter 6:19 shews us that each believer individually is the temple of God.

It is evident that this unity will not be lost in heaven, when all the members of the body are reunited; and that God keeps the souls of those who sleep in Jesus for that day of glory; but the manifestation of the unity of the body of Christ is now exclusively upon earth, where the Holy Ghost has come down to establish this unity. Faith knows very well that souls are preserved with Jesus for that day; but thus disunited from the body, they do not for the present enter into the account, being in a position where communion with a body on earth is no longer a possibility, any more than manifestation of unity or service for the glory of Christ.

Where the Holy Ghost has come down, and where He abides, there is the manifestation of the Church, whilst its Head is seated on the right hand of the Father. The Spirit, in speaking to the Church, addresses Himself to Christians on the earth, and to them alone. Thus it is said: “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the Church; first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that, miracles; then gifts of healing,” etc.

I need not stop to prove that this applies to earth.

Here, then, we are taught by God, that the Church, which is the body of Christ, is formed in unity down here upon earth by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, and manifesting Himself by gifts in the members of this body. Let me add that this presence of the Holy Ghost is to be distinguished from the regeneration of souls, and even from His work in the hearts of the regenerate: it is His presence in the body, sent from above as truly and

personally as the Son was sent of the Father, though not in the same manner. It is evident, from Acts 1:5, that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is the descent of the Holy Ghost.

The epistle to the Galatians treats of the question of justification, and of the right to the enjoyment of the inheritance, through promise, as contrasted with the law; and only touches the doctrine of the Church by the single declaration, that the Christians are all one in Christ Jesus (chap. 3:28).

But the epistle to the Ephesians treats the subject at length, and requires special attention.

Chapter 1 after having laid the foundation of sovereign grace, declares (v. 10) the fixed purpose of God; which is to “gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth”; and, having pointed out the children of God as sealed with the Holy Spirit for the inheritance in the end, shews us the Church united, as His body, to Him who was constituted Head over all things.

Chapter 2 reveals the working of the power which has united the Church to Christ and the manner of this union; and shewing that the Jew by nature was a child of wrath quite as much as the Gentile, and that both were dead in trespasses and sins, presents both as quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and seated together in heavenly places in Christ. Thus the distinction was lost; God having made of the two one new man; reconciling them both in one body by the cross. Now that was the Church. That work had its accomplishment in the Church. The Christian was built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (of the

New Testament, compare chap. 3:5), Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. The Gentiles were builded together with the Jews to be the habitation of God through the Spirit. This chapter teaches us then (according to the word in Matthew), that the Church, by its union with its Head in heaven, was accounted as being there; and that its calling was absolutely heavenly. As Israel was separated from the nations, so was the Church from the world—it was no longer of it. Its formation on earth began after the breaking down, by the cross, of the middle wall of partition. It was as a new man: Jews and Gentiles being reconciled to God in one body. Besides, we find that instead of a temple made with hands, where Jehovah dwelt, this union of Jewish and Gentile believers in one body, formed the habitation of God upon earth; and that this habitation was by the Spirit. This latter truth gives us the true character of the Church upon earth—a character, it is evident, of the most important bearing—a character which involves the deepest responsibility; and, let me say it, a character most precious. For the responsibilities of Christians all flow from the grace which has been shewn them. This character, in fine, thanks be unto God, in spite of its unfaithfulness to this responsibility, the Church cannot lose, because it is made to depend on the grace and the promise of God, that this other Comforter, the Spirit of truth, would not go away as Christ did, but abide for ever with those that were His. It is also most plain, that it is on the earth that all this takes place; though, being on earth, our special position is to be seated in the heavenly places in our Head, and to wait for the realization of our condition when we shall be gathered unto Him.

Chapter 3, the whole of which is parenthetic, unfolds this mystery, hid through all ages, but now revealed, of which the apostle was the minister; viz., that the Gentiles should be of the same body with all saints. But I will reserve my remarks on this passage, till we come to the second part of our subject— the place which the Church holds in the ways of God.

Chapter 4 is the application of the doctrine of the second; and the apostle beseeches the saints to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called; which vocation is, to be the habitation of God through the Spirit. The sense of the presence of God always produces humility; and the apostle, in pressing this point, exhorts them to keep the unity of the Spirit (that which has been set forth, chapter 2), in the bond of peace. For the doctrine in question is this, “There is one body and one Spirit.” This leads the apostle to the subject of gifts in connection with the body. Christ had gained the victory over Satan, and could confer on the Church He had redeemed the power which would be the testimony of that victory; for it was rescued from the slavery of the enemy, and could be the vessel of this power and this testimony. Christ, by means of these gifts, was nourishing and ministering to the growth of this body. The exercise of them was for the edification of the body of Christ. It is worth while quoting the verses which follow what we have just examined. “He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the

stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Thus the unsearchable riches of Christ, by which He fills all things in the power of the redemption which He has accomplished— these riches, I say, form the basis of the edification of the Church of Christ, who is no longer looked at as a mere Messiah fulfilling the prophecies and the promises, but in a greatness of which no prophet had any idea, and of which no prophecy had foretold the extent—each member supplying, according to the grace given, these riches of Christ to the body. The body itself, developed in its members, grows thereby into that fulness of which Christ is the measure (the truth which reveals this fulness being the means of making the body grow up into Him, whose fulness is revealed). Thus the perfect stature of Christ is always the object and the only recognized measure.

What infinite grace! Yet it could not be otherwise; since the revelation of Christ is the means by which the Church must grow; and Christ is such, filling all things, from the dust of death up to the throne of God. Having come down in love, and gone up In righteousness, He expels for faith, from the universe which He has made His by redemption as well as by creation, the conquered enemy; as, in fact, He will expel him from it, when He

accomplishes all the effects of His power. And where is this body found? Where are these gifts exercised? Where does this growth take place? Blessed be God! down here. It is that which Christ does after the accomplishment of His work, whilst He is seated on the right hand of God. It is through the Holy Ghost. It is the body—the Church—that one body which is the vessel of this ministry, and of the Spirit which accomplishes it through the members of the body; and which causes the body to grow according to the mind of God in Christ, who is the Head of it; a body, the members of which are the members of Christ. Moreover, the apostle has before him the whole body; and "the whole body" viewed upon earth. Charity necessarily embraces all the members of it, as being the members of Christ. The connection between all this and the Church, seen in the whole extent of her privileges and of the thoughts of God, is shewn in a striking manner at the end of chapter 3; where the apostle exclaims, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

I will not go over the infinitely precious teaching of chapter 5 again, because I have already called the attention of the reader to this portion in beginning our thesis; but it is clear that the epistle to the Ephesians treats the subject of a Church which is one body, whose Head is Christ—a body formed and developed upon earth, since the ascension of Jesus, by the Holy Ghost sent from above who makes it His habitation—a body in which the glory of God will be reflected throughout all ages—a body which is the vessel upon earth of the

Spirit, which He who, having gained the victory over Satan, and established the glory of His redemption everywhere, from death up to the throne of the Father, has sent to be the testimony of the power through which He has overcome; and who associates the Church with its Head in the heavens, giving it a heavenly calling, as being seated there in Him. This body, formed in its perfection at the beginning, was to grow by the energy of the Holy Spirit which dwelt in it, just as a child, perfect in all its parts, grows through the power of the life which is in him, in order to attain to the state of manhood.

The epistle to the Colossians brings before us some precious instructions on the subject we are considering. The epistle to the Ephesians has taught us that God would gather together all things in Christ, and that the Church was united to Him as His body, associated with Him in His dominion over all things. The epistle to the Colossians teaches us the same truth under another aspect. We shall also find that the idea of Christ which is presented in chapter 1 contrasts with all that He was as the hope of the Jews, according to the testimony of the prophets, as much as that which is found in the epistle to the Ephesians, but in a different manner. Let us first look at what is said of the double glory of Christ—Head over all things, and Head of the Church. In verses 15 and 16 He is presented as the First-born of every creature; and the reason if it is given—He has created all things. He who had created all things, having taken His place as a man in the midst of the creation, must at all events be the Head of it. This thought is confirmed in verse 17. The second part of the glory of Christ is declared in verse 18. He is the Head of the body, the

Church; who is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead. These are the two truths presented in Ephesians 1:22, 23; only the two things are considered separately here as two diverse glories of Christ, in whom it has pleased all the fulness to dwell. The reconciliation of all things and of the Church follows. Having made peace through the blood of His cross, the thought of God is to reconcile all things through Him, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. This answers to verse 16. Then the apostle, addressing the Christians called at Colosse, says to them, “And you that were sometime alienated … yet now hath he reconciled.” This answers to verse 18. They were part of the Church of which Christ was the Head, and of which the reconciliation takes place now. Verses 24 and 25 present, as following this distinction of the double glory of Christ and the double reconciliation, a double ministry—the ministry of the gospel to every creature under heaven, and the ministry of the Church, which is the body of Christ. This ministry, a complement in its doctrine of all the preceding revelations, completed the teaching of the word of God (v. 24-26). The Church was a mystery which had been hid from ages and from generations—a mystery which admitted the Gentiles into all the privileges which it revealed, and spoke of a Christ, not the crown and accomplishment of the glory of the Jews, but who, in the Gentiles, or in the midst of the Gentiles, in Spirit, was the hope of glory. The presence of Jesus amongst the Jews ought to have been, and will one day be, the accomphshment of the glory which had been promised to them. But the presence of Christ in Spirit among the Gentiles was the hope of glory—of a more excellent glory—a heavenly glory. In Ephesians, Christ is considered as exalted at the right hand of God, whence

He sent the Spirit to confer upon the Church the gifts which were the testimony of His victory and the manifestation of His power as man victorious over the enemy—a glorious Head of the Church which was upon earth. In Colossians, He is considered as present in the Church, securing to the Gentiles the possession of the heavenly glory into which He has Himself entered. This chapter, then, brings the Church into prominence in a very interesting manner. Christ raised is the Head—the Church is His body; its practical reconciliation takes effect now, being founded on the peace made through the blood of the cross. Gentiles belong to it quite as much as Jews; and Christ in Spirit dwells in it, the hope of glory. This last expression teaches us, without controversy, that the Church is contemplated as exclusively upon earth, though having the sure hope of a heavenly glory. Its unity is not declared as in the epistle to the Ephesians; but it is self-evident that the body of Christ can be only one.

I confine myself to the doctrine; adding that the epistle, as a whole, shews that the Colossians were in danger of losing sight of their close union with the Head of the body—Christ, in whom everything was accomplished, and they complete in Him; and of seeking, by forgetting this truth, to add something else, which was nothing but the setting aside of Him. Consequently, the epistle brings into prominence the riches and the perfection of Christ to remind the Colossians of them; whilst the Ephesians, who held fast the faith of their union with Him, were able to profit by the teaching which revealed to them the whole extent of their own privileges. The faithfulness of the one, and the unfaithfulness of the

other, have both turned, in the hand of our God, to the blessing of the Church in all ages.

The first epistle to Timothy furnishes us with some precious thoughts in a short sentence: “The house,” it is said (chap. 3:15), “of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” Here we stand on ground more connected with the practical character of the Church upon earth. It is the house of God—it is there that truth is found and nowhere else; there alone is it maintained in the world. Let us understand this declaration. The Church does not create the truth, but has been created by it. It adds to it neither authority nor weight. The truth is of God before it is received by the Church; but the latter possesses it. It exists because it possesses the truth, and it alone possesses it. Where, besides in the Church, is the truth found? Nowhere. The supposition that the truth is anywhere else would be the denial of the truthfulness and ways of God. The truth can be nothing but what God has said; it is the truth, independently of all church authority; of any but that of God, who is the source of it. But where the truth is, supposing a body to be constituted by its means, there is the Church; and the Church which possesses it, and subsists by possessing it, thereby manifests it to the world. The authority of the Church cannot make that which it teaches to be truth. Truth alone does not constitute the Church; that is, the meaning of the word ‘Church’ embraces other ideas. A single man holding the truth is not the Church; but the assembly of God is distinguished by the possession of the truth. An assembly which has not the truth, as the condition of its existence, is not the assembly of God. The passage under consideration, and the importance of

this point must be my excuse for this little digression, which is but indirectly connected with the subject of the Church.

There is one more passage, which presents the Church in so complete a manner, as to its hope and its service, that I will quote it in closing this series of testimonies from the Bible. It is that of Revelation 22: “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

In this passage we find the Spirit introduced in a very remarkable manner, somewhat analogous to Romans 8. Both passages shew how far the Holy Ghost is considered in the word of God as dwelling upon the earth since the day of Pentecost, and as identifying Himself either with the believer or with the Church. In Romans, it is “He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit; because,” it is added, “he maketh intercession for the saints according to God.” Now it is our groanings that are spoken of there. Here in the Revelation, the Spirit and the bride say, Come. The Spirit so takes His place with the bride, that the sentiment of the Church is that which the Spirit Himself expresses. The Spirit is upon earth and animates the Church, being the true source of its thoughts. The Church, animated by these very thoughts, expresses her own affections under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Had it been only an expression of affection, one might have questioned its legitimateness; and that also of the groans spoken of in Romans 8; but since the Holy Spirit connects Himself with it, this desire of a feeble heart has the power and authority of a divine thought. This, then, is what characterises the Church, in her desires

and in her hope. She desires that her Bridegroom should come. It is not a question about prophecy; it is Christ, the communicator of the prophecy, who presents Himself: “I am the bright and morning star.” The Church knows Him. She will be with Him before the great day of His manifestation comes—she will appear with Him in glory. But when He is thus presented in His Person, it awakens the earnest desire of the Bride that He should come. But there is also a testimony to be borne. It is what follows. She calls upon those who hear, but who have not understood their privilege of being of the bride, to join this cry, and to say, Come. In the meantime, she already possesses the river of living water, and, turning towards those who are athirst, she invites them to come and make a free use of it. How beautiful a position for the Church—for our hearts! The first affection of her heart is towards her Head—her Bridegroom, who is to come like the morning star, to receive her to Himself in heaven, before He is manifested to the world. Then she desires all believers to share this desire, and to reinforce her cry that He may come. In the meantime, she is the vessel and herald of grace, according to the heart of Him who has shewn grace to her.

What more blessed position could be thought of, for such poor worms as we are, than that which sovereign and creative grace has given us? If the reader examines John 17 he will find that the object of the chief part of the chapter is to place believers, beginning in a special manner with the apostles, in the same position as Jesus was; they taking His place upon the earth. We well know, that He alone, by His Spirit, can be the strength through which they can accomplish such a task.

This truth enables us to apprehend what the true position of the Church is. Christ was upon earth, but at the same time one with His Father. He was manifesting Him upon the earth. He was a man upon earth, but He was a heavenly man, displaying upon earth the spirit and sentiments of heaven, where love and holiness reign; because God is love and holiness. He says, “The Son of man which is in heaven.” He was separate from sinners and yet at the same time perfect in grace towards them. In His case, His Person was the cause of it (He being at the same time true man and acting by the power of the Holy Ghost in a dependence upon God, which constituted His perfection as man). In the case of the Church it is clear that the question is no longer of a divine person, yet she is not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world. United to her Head in heaven by the Holy Ghost come down from thence, dead and risen with Him and seated in Him in heavenly places, her character is purely heavenly. She is upon the earth, where the Holy Ghost has come down, to manifest there a heavenly walk—the motives and the mind of heaven. She lives above in Christ by the Spirit; her life is hid there with Christ in God; she seeks for nothing down here, declaring plainly that she is yet seeking her country. She is one, she knows it: it cannot be otherwise. Can her heart recognize that Christ has another bride as companion of His heavenly joys? The manner of her being necessitates her unity, as well as the character of her Bridegroom, and the unity of the Spirit. She is upon earth; she sighs after her country, but still more after the Bridegroom who will come to receive her unto Himself, that, where He is, there she may be with Him. In the meantime she bears testimony upon earth, as united into one body by the presence of the Holy Ghost.

This is the place where God owns her, till Christ comes to take her to Himself. From that time she will bear testimony in the glory and by the glory to the love which has placed her there, and to the mighty redemption which has taken poor sinners and placed them in the same glory as the Son of God, and in the same relations with His Father, except that which is essentially divine —"that in the ages to come he [God] might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

What we have already said leads us naturally to the second part of our subject—what place the Church holds in the ways of God.

The heavenly aspect of this question finds its answer in several passages which we have just examined, which treat the subject of the nature of the Church. God has willed that His Son, Ruler of all things as Son of man, should have a bride to share His glory and His dominion. Glorious position! testimony of the infinite grace of God! Such is the Church—the companion of Jesus in the heavenly glory. This will take place at the same time with the earthly glory, which will be the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament. God, for the dispensation of the fulness of times, will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him, as Head; whose bride and body the Church is. The Old Testament, which gives us the history of the ways of God upon earth, and in its prophetical part announces what the result will be, does not reveal to us this mystery. The Church, as such, does not come as part of the course of the ways of God upon earth. The object of the counsels of God from before the foundation of the world, she had been hid in the depths

of these counsels, till Christ, having been rejected upon the earth, might become her heavenly Head; and the testimony to this glory, having also been rejected by the Jews, who, in a certain sense, had a right to the promises, the door was fully opened for the revelation of this glorious mystery—hid in all ages.

In considering a little the facts, either with regard to man or with regard to the Jews, the suitableness of these ways of God will be understood without any difficulty. Until the rejection of Christ, man had been put to the test in every way— without law, under the law, and even under grace, presented in the Person of Christ, for God was in Him reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. Now man, by the death of Christ, has proved himself an enemy of God, an enemy who hated even His mercy, which was nevertheless his only resource, because it was of God. Christ, as new man, raised, glorified, at the right hand of God, outside the world, takes as man the place where man was to be in the counsels of God. There is a man at the right hand of God, to whom the Church can be united as His body by the Holy Ghost.

Such a heavenly standing of the saints could not possibly exist before. The body could not be before the Head, to which it was to be united, had taken His place, such as it had been prepared for Him in the counsels of God. There was not a glorified man in heaven before, to whom the Church could have been united.

If we consider the Jews, the thing is still more intelligible for other reasons. They had prophecies and promises. Christ was to be presented to them. Till they had rejected Him, God ever faithful, could not set them

aside to establish anything else which denied their privileges, blotting out all distinction between Jew and Gentile—a distinction which the Jew was bound carefully to maintain. The crucifixion of Jesus has put an end to all that. No one is a Jew in heaven. But man having completely failed in his responsibility, and the Jews having rejected the one in whom the fulfilment of the promises had been presented to them, God (before fulfilling them, as He will do) has revealed the hidden mystery which was connected with the heavenly glory of the Son of man; that is, with the body united to Him, gathered during the rejection of Israel—a body which was to be manifested in glory with Him, when He should in His sovereign grace resume His dealings with Israel upon earth: for "blindness, in part, has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Israel, unfaithful as men, have lost all title to the enjoyment of the promises by the rejection of Him in whom they were to have this enjoyment. They were, after all, children of wrath as others; but that will not hinder God from fulfilling His promises. He cannot be unfaithful to His promise, whatever the unfaithfulness of man may be. His gifts and calling are without repentance, and the blindness of Israel is only temporary. This is what Romans 11 teaches; as the Lord Himself said to them, "Your house is left unto you desolate … till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." But here is the perfect wisdom of God. Israel having rejected the Christ when He came to present Himself to the nation, they are without remedy. It will be the sovereign grace of God which will reinstate them as being only poor sinners in the enjoyment of the promises, according to the word. Israel, under chastening, and kept for that day, abide without the true

God, and without a false god, according to the prophecy of Hosea 2; and God, during this interval, brings in the fulness of the Gentiles, displaying His multiform wisdom92 in the calling of the Church, a heavenly people, established upon more than promises, on a perfect redemption, accomplished through the act by which Israel placed themselves under condemnation. But it was not only that man and Israel had been fully tried in the history of past ages, before the accomplishment of redemption. God had also displayed His wisdom in His ways with both. His power, His patience, His mercy, His government in the hands of man and according to the conditions of His holy law, by promises, and by miraculous interventions, by chastenings and blessings, by righteous judgments, by the most tender care and the most magnificent providences, had all been displayed. Even a world swallowed up in the mighty waters had borne witness, in disappearing before His judgments, to the ways of God with man upon earth.

Angels had seen these things; they had seen the wisdom and power of God in exercise in His ways with men on the earth. The Church was to supply them with quite a fresh manifestation of the depths of the counsels and wisdom of the infinite God whom they adore.

The demonstration of the inability in which man was found, to profit by the ways of God, furnished the occasion of it. It was no longer proofs that God was governing on earth, but the care which, leaving apparently in the hands of the wicked that which was the dearest object to God upon earth, prepared it thereby for heavenly glory and joy.

There remains yet one thing to which I would call the attention of my reader. It is, that, until Christ was glorified, the Holy Ghost could not come down to earth; for the object of His testimony, the heavenly glory of Christ and the redemption accomplished by His means, were yet wanting. “The Holy Ghost was not yet93 [given], because Jesus was not yet glorified.” We shall see with what clearness the word of God presents the Church to us, as quite a new revelation of that which had no existence before, save in the eternal counsels of God, who thus predestinated for her an existence outside the course of ages.

The writings of Paul, who was chosen to bear this testimony and to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ—a ministry which was connected with these truths— are full of this doctrine; bringing into prominence this glory of Christ, which was beyond all that the prophets had spoken. Thus 1 Timothy 3:16. Having spoken of the Church, in a passage already quoted, he naturally turns to the truth of which the Church was the pillar—this mystery of godliness. A Messiah, the fulfilment of the prophecies, was not a mystery; but a Christ such as the apostle presents Him in verse 16 had never been known before: “God manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” Certain elements found here were connected with Messiah upon earth: because this same Messiah, ascended up on high, must come down again to fulfil the promises made to the Jews; but such things as a whole, had never been presented to faith.

As to the Church, the thing is true in a still more absolute manner. This is what the apostle says of it, Ephesians 3:9-11: “And to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” It is impossible to get anything more absolute than “hid in God.” This mystery of the Church, hid in the depths of His counsels, did not get disclosed, nor did she exist in fact, till then. It is “now” that unto the principalities and powers is made known, by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God. They had seen His patience, His power, His government; but never a heavenly body upon the earth, united to His Son in heaven. Thus God could set aside, for the time, the course of His earthly government, to enter into relationship with a heavenly people. This passage is very clear on this point; that the Church neither existed nor was revealed before. Up to that time it was a mystery hid in God; who, having established it in His counsels, was testing man under His government, before creating a heavenly system, based upon an accomplished redemption, in union with the Second Adam in heaven. It is important that the reader should get very clearly in his mind the teaching of this passage. The object of the apostle is to shew, that the Church is a new thing. There had been other means to shew forth the wisdom and ways of God, earthly means. Now, heavenly powers saw, in the Church, a kind of wisdom quite new. Not only the Church had had, as yet, no existence; but it had not been revealed before its existence; it had been a

mystery hid in God. This last point is confirmed by other passages which we will quote; but it is well to develop the first point, by the teaching of the end of chapter 2.

The truth of the union of Jews and Gentiles in one body, the Church, is established, as the consequence of the cross, in verses 14 and 15, in the most formal manner. The middle wall of partition, established by God Himself and absolutely binding, had been broken down only by the cross; and by means of this, also, they were both reconciled in one body— those who were afar off, and those who were nigh. Then, they had been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. That is, the Church could exist only after the cross had rendered possible the union of Jews and Gentiles.94 The enmity of man against God having been manifested, the enmity of his nature—Jew or Gentile—and the Jews having lost all title to the enjoyment of the promises, grace received in a sovereign manner both the one and the other, according to the eternal counsels of God, for a better inheritance. God (having been manifested in the flesh, and having set things on the footing of eternal realities outside all earthly economy or dispensation, and, received up into glory, having acquired a people which was associated to Himself according to the election of God) purposed, before the foundation of the world, that He should share this glory with His bride and His body.

To return to the revelation of this mystery. Speaking of the Church, the body of Christ (Col. 1:26), the apostle calls it “the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” For the Jew,

Christ is the accomplishment of the glory; but Christ, present in Spirit, becomes the hope of heavenly glory for those in whom He dwells.

Thus, also in the epistle to the Romans—“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest,” etc.

The more the epistles of Paul, or of Peter, are examined, the more examples we shall find of the contrast between the hopes and the election of Jews and Christians (only Peter never treats the subject of the Church), and the more we shall find the eternal election of the Church brought into light. In Ephesians 3 this mystery is called also the mystery of Christ; for indeed before it was Christ an individual man, and not Christ the Head of a body spiritually united to Him: and the apostle declares, that it was by a special revelation that it had been made known to him (v. 3-5)—the knowledge of a mystery, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men (this mystery being, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs of the same body).95 These passages shew sufficiently the way in which Paul presents the Church as an essential doctrine of truth; but yet as a mystery, which had never been revealed under the Old Testament, and which never had any accomplishment before the death of Jesus had closed all those relations of God with Israel, which had reference to the prophecies and promises, so far as they depended upon the faith and faithfulness of man. They shew that blindness having come upon them for a time, God, who will fulfil His promises to His earthly people, has found, in the period of their blindness, the occasion of

manifesting this admirable fruit of His eternal counsels; viz., the Church which, when Israel is restored through grace to the enjoyment of the promises made to them, will shine as the bride of the Lord in the brightness in which He will Himself be manifested.

Such is her destiny! Whilst waiting, what is her place and what is her calling? We have said that the Holy Ghost, come down from heaven, gathers her upon earth. If the Bridegroom delays His coming; and if souls go to wait with Him for the moment of the assembling of all that are His, raised or changed, in His presence in the air, those of the redeemed who remain gathered down here, where the Holy Ghost the Comforter abides, always form the Church. There may be ignorance, the members may be scattered here and there, the Church may have been unfaithful and stripped of her ornaments; but it remains equally true, that until Christ calls her to meet Him in heaven, she is always the Church, always the bride of Christ. She has been espoused as a chaste virgin to Him; but it is to a heavenly Christ. Israel is His people upon earth. Whilst Christ is in heaven, the Holy Ghost is gathering the Church to be His in heaven.

However, it is not merely that the Church has a heavenly calling; this is not the whole truth as to her relations with Christ. She is also His bride and His body. When all the thoughts of God have been fulfilled, she will, as a fact, be with Him. Her thoughts and her character are (or at least they ought to be) formed after her portion, according to God. Also she is already united to Christ by the Spirit. She is one and can be one only. But she is characterized by yet other traits. When the world rejected Christ, it passed judgment and condemnation

upon itself. “Now,” said the Lord, in referring to His cross, “is the judgment of this world.”

The Church was set up in grace, when the relations of God with the world, on the footing of the responsibility of man, were ended for ever by the rejection of Christ. Thus she has been called to come out of the world to be received of God. She is Christ’s alone. “Come out from among them,” says the word, “and I will receive you.” It is a peculiar people belonging only to Him. “Ye are not of the world,” says Jesus, “as I am not of the world.” And this is true, not only as regards individuals; but “that they may be one,” says the Lord, “that the world may believe.” It is a unity perceptible to the world outside itself. “What have I to do,” says the apostle, “to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? Them that are without God judgeth.” The Holy Ghost was upon earth to establish the closest and most formal union between the members of the body; they were members one of another. This unity was recognized among them. All knew that a Christian was not of the world, because he was of the Church. If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it. This unity was truly and distinctly manifested in each locality. There was the church of each place, as the very addresses of several epistles shew. But this local unity proved the universal unity. Any one member of it was thereby a member of the universal unity. Teachers, evangelists, apostles, Timothy, Titus, Paul, did not belong to one church more than another. The gifts were members of the body. The idea of a member of a church is not found in the Bible. The thought there is very different; it is that of members of the body of Christ. But these “joints and bands” which might exercise their

activity in local churches, proved the unity of the whole body, and made it visible and perfectly perceptible to the world.

Christians acknowledged one another,, and were acknowledged as one body—a sole, well known, and well defined body, having common interests, and the most intimate ties, as a body apart from the world. The Holy Ghost cannot unite the Church with that world out of the midst of which He has taken her. Persons might come in unawares into the formal body, but it was a distinct body, into which they come as false brethren. It is plain that if the Church be one in the midst of the world, her duty is to glorify the Lord in that unity, and by that unity, and as a whole. For this responsibility cannot be separated from any position whatsoever in which we are placed by God.

But the motives are so much the more powerful as the grace of that position is excellent. We are the salt of the earth, the light of the world, a city set on a hill, the epistle96 of Christ, an epistle which ought to be read and known of all men. The body of Christ ought to reproduce, by the power of the Spirit— that power which overcomes all the separative principles which selfishness and sin have introduced into the world—the character of its Head; and thus glorify Him on the earth. The bride should manifest her attachment to the Bridegroom— that she is wholly and exclusively His!

People talk about an “invisible “church. The word says nothing about this. It is a notion which quite denies the force of the passages we have just quoted. The scattering of the children of God has hid them. Would any one venture to maintain that individuals should be

invisible; that is, that they should conceal their Christianity? “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” It is clear, then, that individuals should not be invisible. Now, if that be true, to say that the Church may be invisible means nothing short of this, that these individuals ought not to be united. Yet it is certain that the Lord says that they ought to have been one, that the world might believe.

If there be divisions, they are carnal, and walk as men. If the duty of all individuals be to let their light shine before men, and if all these individuals are closely united, and form a separate body outside the world, making everywhere a profession of their union (as it was undeniably the case at the beginning), to say that this body is invisible has no sense. “A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.” But this in passing.

The question I am now treating is not, how far the Church realizes this position. I am speaking of the Church such as it is presented in the word.

But if the Church be the bride of Jesus, she ought to desire as such to glorify Him during His absence. Her heart must be given to Him—she must receive her directions from Him alone. If she be the house of God, she must seek to keep herself pure on account of the holiness of the Spirit who dwells therein. If she be the pillar and ground of the truth, she will not be able to endure anything but the truth, which is the basis of her existence; for the glorious revelation of Christ, who has accomplished her redemption (God manifested in the flesh, preached to the Gentiles, received up into glory), has given her being; and she is the witness of it.

Conscious of being the bride of the Lamb, she will have the affections proper to such a relationship; she will long for the coming of the Bridegroom to receive her to Himself. She will understand that she belongs to Him in heaven; and consequently will not mix herself up with the world, nor confound her expectation with the coming of Jesus to judge the world, while she believes it firmly. 97 She knows that, when He appears, she will appear with Him in glory. Thus, separated from the world by the Spirit who is the power and earnest of this hope, she will seek to realize it as much as possible upon the earth "He that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

This is also the force of the teaching of Philippians 3, which, however, has an individual for its object. I quote it because I speak of the normal effect of this truth in the heart of the Christian. He who has learnt it will have the conscience that the Church is one—can be only one. He will have the conscience that she belongs to Christ and can belong to none other. He will have the conscience that she ought to manifest this unity, and render a constant and practical testimony that she is His alone. The presence in her of the Holy Ghost, who gathers the members in one body, will be the power and life of this testimony. The path will be the path of faith; and the path of faith will be the path of sufferings, but they will be the sufferings of Christ for His body, that we may be glorified together.

80 It is well to remark that it is no question in this passage of mutual affection, nor of anything connected with fleshly imaginations. It is the love of Christ only, perfect according to His own heart before the existence even of the Church, having as the object of His labour of love the presentation of the Church to Himself without

spot and glorious. All is on the side of Christ Himself, and the object perfect according to His heart.

81 I do not feel it needful specially to notice here the heresy of a handful of enthusiasts, who think that the Lord has come, and that the resurrection is past already (some avowing this latter doctrine as a necessary consequence of the other; others saying nothing about it). Revelation 22:16-21 suffices to refute this idea. It is well to bear in mind that the Revelation was written long after the destruction of Jerusalem.

82 This declaration of the Lord (Matt. 16) has a very decisive character, if we consider the circumstances under which it was uttered. In the beginning of the chapter He had pronounced the judgment of the Jewish generation, giving them His death, under the figure of Jonas, as the sign; and leaving to themselves those who were seeking a sign. Then He asked His disciples what was said of Him. Peter, on this occasion, makes the unique confession: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” This latter part is only found on this occasion, and it is what gives its peculiar importance to this confession. The Son of the living God, in building His Church, would shelter it from the power of Hades and of him who had the power of death. The death of the Messiah might break the links between Israel after the flesh and the head of their blessing, whatever grace might do afterwards for that nation; but whatever was based on the power of the resurrection (and it is in resurrection that Christ has been declared the Son of God with power) was secured against him, who, at the most, had the power of death. Peter is always full of this idea of life (1 Peter 1:3, 21, 23, 24; ch. 2:4, 5). Matthew 17 adds the millennial glory of the Son of man; and

towards the end, leading His disciples back to the subject of His rejection amongst the Jews, explains the ways of grace, and on this occasion introduces Church action (chap. 18:17).

83 Remark here, that what is falsely called an invisible church, was precisely the state of Israel—a body of professing Israelites, by birth and ordinances; and a certain number of isolated believers in the midst of that, enjoying through faith the goodness of God, and their common faith when they met. (See Matthew 3:16; Luke 2:38.) It is out of this state that the Lord has brought believers by "building the Church."

84 This passage shews the futility of the objection—an objection refuted besides by a thousand experiments—that the gathering together in one is an impossibility. It may be so materially, and it was no doubt the case here. When they broke bread from house to house, they were not three thousand at once together. Yet that does not hinder, in the mind of God, their being gathered together in one place in moral and real unity. There is no question of disposition here, but of facts which demonstrated the power of the Holy Ghost.

85 The word rendered here by "should be saved" (a meaning given in other good versions) is a word used by the LXX. (and I doubt not in Luke) for the remnant of Israel, who were to escape the judgments of God. Now, what the Lord did with them was to add them to the Christian assembly.

86 An examination of the Acts of the Apostles will shew that Jesus is never preached as Son of God, before He is so by Paul after his conversion. With Peter, it is always the Man known upon earth glorified. But Paul

immediately after his conversion, preaches Jesus in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. We must not think that there is any imperfection in the ways of God here; on the contrary, it is a proof of their perfection. The expression, “raised up his Son Jesus,” is quite a different word from Son of God. It would even be more correctly translated “servant.”

87 Literally and properly, “gospel of the glory.”

88 It is, however, a subject full of interest—the contrast between a Christ, object of prophecy and of promise, and a Christ revealed in the fulness of His Person, as beginning and foundation (having accomplished His work) of the new creation, its Head, filling all things, having reestablished the relationship between God and them, a relationship ruined by sin; and, at the same time, beginning, foundation, and Head of the Church, which He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, having united it, quickened in Himself, by the Holy Ghost to Himself as His body. These two things constitute the mystery in its whole extent.

The second part is more fully treated in the word, as concerning us more particularly, and also the admission of the Gentiles which flowed from it. But what presents the highest interest in this subject is the glory of the Person of Christ Himself, which is the foundation on which the fulfilment of all these counsels of God rests.

89 People have wished to make an invisible Church of the whole body, and visible churches in which evil might be found. But it is very evident that baptism introduced not into a church, but into the Church in general upon earth, so that this way of looking at it has no support in the word. The true distinction is not between the Church

and the churches, but between the Church viewed in its human responsibility, and the Church in the counsels of God—counsels which shall be infallibly accomplished. “The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” Such are the two sides of God’s medal, and not an invisible Church and visible churches.

90 The identification of the body with its Head is expressed in a remarkable manner by the use of this word.

91 The Lord’s Supper is the sign and the external centre of this unity; as the presence of the Holy Ghost is the power of it; 1 Cor. 10:17. This declaration gives a very interesting character to the Lord’s Supper.

92 [The Greek word translated all various, multifarious (Eph. 3:10) is remarkable.—Ed.]

93 The expression “was not yet,” which is the simple and exact translation of the passage, shews to what a degree the presence of the Holy Ghost upon earth, come down from heaven, and dwelling in the Church, was a reality for the apostles, and filled their mind; as being to them, the whole of the idea of the Holy Spirit; for indeed He was there. This is evidently not a question as to the existence of the Holy Ghost as a Person; but since He was now come down and His presence was upon earth, in consequence of the redemption and the glory of Christ, this presence was to them the Holy Ghost. The same expression occurs in Acts 19: “We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.” They had been told by certain disciples of John the Baptist, that the Lamb of God would baptise them with die Holy Ghost; and what they said to Paul was, that, not only had

they not received Him, but that they did not know whether He was yet.

94 This union would have been a sin before the rejection of Christ, before the cross.

95 In the epistles it is Paul only who speaks of the Church; and as we see (Eph. 3:3), he speaks as of a truth which he had received by a particular revelation. He alone employs even the word in its application to the whole body. John speaks twice of a particular church. I recall the expression already quoted, “minister of the Church to fulfil [complete] the word of God.” There was yet wanting to this word something of the revelations willed of God, namely, the Church. God made use of the apostle Paul to administer this truth.

96 It is not said “epistles.” It is the whole of the Church of Corinth which was “the epistle.”

97 When it is a question of the responsibility of individuals, whether Christians or of the world, the New Testament speaks of the appearing of Jesus. For the joy and portion of the Church, according to the counsels of God in grace, it is the coming of Christ into the air, before His revelation, that the word presents to us as the object of faith and hope.