

The Saviour of the World

THE GLORY OF THE CROSS

"I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of
Christ Jesus my Lord." Phil. 3:8.

2

The Saviour of the World

By

W. W. PRESCOTT

"We have beheld and bear witness that the Father hath sent the Son
to be the Saviour of the World." 1 John 4:14.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Consecration (Poem)	5
The Reality of Christianity	7
The Eternal Son of God	14
The God-Man Christ Jesus	24
The Personality of the Gospel	31
Sin and the Saviour	39

The Place Which is Called Calvary	47
A Reconciled World	57
Gaining the Keys of Death	63
A Present Christ	70
The Covenant of Grace	78
A Merciful and Faithful High Priest	87
Our Priest Upon the Throne	95
The Gospel of the Sabbath	103
The Desire of Jesus Gratified	111
The Consummation of the Gospel	119

Consecration

BY C. P. BOLLMAN

O Thou matchless Son of God,
 One with Him from times eternal,
 I would know Thee as my own,
 Share Thy wondrous love supernal.

Yield I now my all to Thee,
 Hold back nothing from my Lord,
 Make surrender full, complete,
 Rest my soul upon Thy word.

Thou hast sworn by Thine own self,
 Sealed the cov'nant with Thy blood;
 Thy oath my trust, Thy life my stay,
 Thou eternal Son of God.

The Reality of Christianity

When my soul is troubled and I am inclined to be depressed with a sense of the guilt of sin, then it is that I turn with a great longing for relief to Him who said that He "came to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10. And under such circumstances I find renewed courage and assurance in meditating upon the exalted character and the greatness of the power of Him who offers Himself to me as my Saviour. With the hope that what is helpful to me may bring fresh hope to others, I am passing on some of the

wondrous things revealed concerning the Saviour of the world.

Jesus of Nazareth is the reality of Christianity; but when I say this, I refer to the real Jesus, the Son of God, who is the leading figure in all the Scriptures. In the emasculated Jesus who is presented to us by many teachers of these modern times, I do not find a Saviour who commands my whole-hearted devotion. It is one thing to admire an ideal character, but it is quite another thing to find a person whom we are glad to accept as the absolute Lord of our lives, with full

8

confidence in both His ability and His willingness to satisfy the deepest longing of our souls for a heavenly experience. The Jesus with whom the favored twelve associated; the Jesus whom Peter proclaimed on the day of Pentecost as both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36, A. R. V.); the Jesus who revealed Himself from glory and in glory on the Damascus road, and whom Paul afterward preached as the crucified and risen Saviour (1 Cor. 1:23); and the Jesus who in living power has been both the foundation (1 Cor. 3:11) and the builder (Matt. 16:18) of the Christian church during all the centuries, is the Jesus for to-day. Modern philosophers may try to explain the present order of things without Him; modern psychologists may seek to account for all our spiritual experiences apart from Him; and modern rationalists may do their best to reduce Him to a mere impersonal force; but to those who are willing to receive Him He is still revealing Himself as the Wonderful One (Isa. 9:6), the victorious Deliverer (Rom. 11:26), and the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8). He is the blessed and adorable Saviour whom I desire to uplift as the only hope of a world in sin. He is my Saviour, and my heart rejoices in Him.

The testimony of the four evangelists establishes beyond any reasonable doubt that Jesus of Nazareth was a genuine historical person. They have not written the usual biography, and they have not idealized Him with whom they deal; but

they have presented in a simple and straightforward style which commands confidence, a report of such words and works of Jesus as furnish a solid basis for faith in Him as both the Son of God and the Son of man, the Saviour of the world. As we read their writings, we behold the Man of Galilee, not with a visible halo crowning His head, but yet as the light of the world (John 8:12), walking before us in all the power of grace and glory, a true man and the true revealer of God (Matt. 11:27).

It is absolutely essential to a genuine Christian experience that we should exercise personal faith in the Jesus of history. As we live with Him from the manger in Bethlehem to the cross on Calvary, not acting as self-sufficient critics, but as sincere and open-hearted observers, there will certainly be

9

formed in our minds the irresistible conviction that He is not only our brother, with all the characteristics of a genuine humanity (Heb. 2:11), but that He is also more than a man, even the eternal Son of God (John 9:35-37), who came to this world and lived, and died, and rose from the dead, according to the age-long purpose, in order to be the Saviour of the world (1 John 4:14). He Himself is the miracle of the ages—a man having the same flesh and blood as we have, and yet living above the dominion of sin (John 8:46).

He entered the world in a supernatural manner (Matt. 1:18-23), supernatural works were wrought through Him

10

(John 5:36), and He surrendered His life in a supernatural manner (Matt. 27:50); and yet He made Himself voluntarily just as dependent upon the power of His Father as we are dependent upon Him. Hear Him say, "I can of Myself do nothing" (John 5:30), and remember the nights of prayer (Luke 6:12) when He sought and obtained sustaining grace.

Follow Him through the Gospel of John: now He changes the water into wine (John 2:1-11); now He heals the nobleman's son without visiting his home (John 4:46-52); now He

restores to health the man at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-9); now He feeds the multitude with the five barley loaves and the two fishes which He had blessed (John 6:5-13); now He walks upon the sea to go to the relief of His distressed disciples (John 6:16-21); now He gives sight to the man who was born blind (John 9:1-7); and finally He restores to life Lazarus, who had been dead four days (John 11:38-44). And these signs are recorded that we might believe that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," and that by so believing we might "have life in His name." John 20:30, 31. But while exhibiting these convincing proofs of His deity, it is equally clear from the same record that He was a man among men, in all things "made like unto His brethren." Heb. 2:17.

It is this Jesus of the Scriptures who is the reality of Christianity. He who is the Divine One assumed our human nature, in order that we who are sinful may partake of the divine nature. This is the very essence of Christianity, and involves personal union with Christ through the indwelling Spirit. But the risen, exalted, and glorified Christ, now representing us in the courts of heaven, and revealing Himself to us as a present Saviour, is the historical Jesus who walked among men, veiling His divinity in humanity, and it is just this Jesus of history who must become the Christ of our experience.

Of course the history of Jesus did not commence when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14), but it is in His earthly life that we have the clearest revelation of His everlasting love, His saving grace, and His conquering power. He made known the love which takes no account of self (1 Cor. 13:5), the grace which brings salvation (Titus

2:11), and the power which delivers from the fiercest assaults of the enemy (Matt. 4:10,11). And all this was done, not for Himself, but for our benefit. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. . . . Him who knew no sin

He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. 5:18-21.

12

What I wish to emphasize is that there is no Christianity apart from the historical Jesus, and that the reality of Christianity is known and becomes an experience when the Jesus of history abides in our hearts and lives His own life of power and victory in us. Gal. 2:20. From such an interpretation of Christianity as this it follows that for our salvation from sin something more is needed than even the most sincere assent to an orthodox creed; something more than the most rigid adherence to form and ceremony, even though the form and ceremony be divinely prescribed; and something more than the best human endeavor to imitate the life of Jesus.

"The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ's day was, that a mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness. . . . The same danger still exists. Many take it for granted that they are Christians, simply because they subscribe to certain theological tenets. But they have not brought the truth into practical life. . . . Men may profess faith in the truth; but if it does not make them sincere, kind, patient, forbearing, heavenly minded, it is a curse to its possessors, and through their influence it is a curse to the world."

But it is not abstract truth, truth set forth in theological propositions, but "as truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21), truth personalized, that is thus a power in the life and expresses itself in Christian conduct. He who declared, "I am . . . the truth" (John 14:6), must be the truth in us. And this is the reality of Christianity.

The Jesus of history became the Christ of experience when He came forth from the tomb after having died unto sin once, ascended on high in a real yet spiritual body, and then returned in the person of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to make effective *in* believers what He had wrought out *for*

them. Thus Jesus of Nazareth became "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. 1:27. And it is absolutely true that "if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Rom. 8:9. "Apart from Me," He declared, "ye can do nothing." John 15:5.

It follows, then, that the secret of all success in Christian experience is the maintaining of a vital union with Christ, the Saviour of the world, an actual union of Spirit with spirit and of life with life, involving such an identification of our

13

will with His will that He can work in us "both to will and to work."

"When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie,- to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to *choose* another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe."

It is the purpose of this book to develop as simply and as plainly as possible some features of the Christianity of the Scriptures on the lines here indicated, to guard every reader from being deceived by a philosophy which robs us of the real Christ by substituting the Christ of evolution, and to establish an abiding confidence in "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." Jude 3. I am neither a modernist nor a fundamentalist, as these terms are generally used, for there are some teachings advocated by each one which I am unable to accept as being Scriptural, but I am a humble believer in God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and in the great salvation which the three persons of the Godhead have provided for all who will receive it. If the reading of this book shall bring to others such an increasing sense of the reality of Christianity as its

writing has brought to me, I shall feel that my work has not been in vain. May our hearts burn within us as the Spirit of truth opens our minds to a fuller and more personal understanding of the Scriptures.

The Eternal Son of God

I must first emphasize the basic fact that the person who is called Jesus of Nazareth did not commence his existence when He was born in Bethlehem, even as He did not end His existence when He was nailed to the cross on Calvary. If He were a mere man who began and closed His life just as I do, I could not have implicit confidence that He has any more power than I have, and therefore I should hesitate to commit myself unreservedly to Him. I might be willing to receive such help as by experience I found Him able to render, but how could I believe that He could completely deliver me from the enemy of my soul who has proved himself to be stronger than I am? I am sure that I should often be overwhelmed with doubt and fear if Jesus of Nazareth were only a human being, even though He were the supreme realization of the highest and best in humanity. I need a Saviour who can exercise more than human power.

But I do not need to have any questioning about this matter. I accept His own statement of His eternal existence made in these simple but wondrous words: "Before Abraham was born, I am." John 8:58. Any one who is not familiar,

15

as the Jews were, with the Scriptures of that time, which we designate now as the Old Testament, may not at once catch the full significance of this claim to pre-existence on the part of Jesus, and will perhaps be amazed to learn that He who talked with the Jews was the same person who talked with Moses at the bush. It may be well worth our while to examine again the record of this experience of the man of God, as it is given in Exodus:

"The angel of Jehovah ¹ appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, . . . I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. . . . Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt." Ex. 3:2-10.

Moses hesitated to undertake such a mission, and said: "When I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is His name? what shall I say unto them?" Ex. 3:13. The reply to this question should be directly connected with the words of Jesus to the Jews: "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is My name forever, and this is My memorial unto all generations." Ex. 3:14, 15. In meditating upon what has been here taken from the record, consider first that at the beginning of the report of this experience the words "Angel of Jehovah," and "Jehovah," and "God" are used interchangeably. All three expressions are applied to the same person, who is declared to

16

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17

be "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then note further that the statement, "I AM hath sent me unto you," means "Jehovah . . . hath sent me unto you." We are plainly warranted in the conclusion that I AM is

Jehovah, the God of Abraham. So when Jesus declared Himself to the Jews to be I AM, He revealed Himself as the Jehovah of the Old Testament, the God of Abraham manifested in human flesh. This is quite in harmony with the name announced by the prophet Isaiah to be given to the virgin-born son, and by Inspiration applied to Jesus of Nazareth; "They shall call His name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us." Matt. 1:23.

But the fact that the Jesus of the New Testament is the Jehovah of the Old Testament must not be understood as eliminating the Father, or as a denial of the Godhead-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Since the finite cannot comprehend the infinite, it were vain to attempt an analysis of the Godhead, or to liken the perfect union of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to a triumvirate of men or even of angels. Neither must we think of the three distinct persons of the Godhead as subject to any of the limitations to which men are subject. To Nicodemus the Saviour said, "No one hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven." John 3:13.

There was the divine Word made flesh, subject to the limitations of humanity, as a man just as dependent upon the Father as we are dependent upon Him; and yet, as a divine Being, still one with the Father in heaven, as declared in John 17:23. Believe it we must, but explain it, or even fully comprehend it, we cannot; and until we can, we should tread reverently as we approach the subject of the being and nature of the triune God.

This identification of Jesus of Nazareth with Jehovah of the Old Testament opens up a fertile field of study and encouragement. It would be impossible in the limits of this chapter to cover this ground, and I can only indicate in a general way and with a few illustrations, what this may mean to us, and call attention to the solid ground it furnishes for complete confidence in Jesus the eternal Son as a Saviour.

When we are tempted to doubt the power of Jesus to save us from sin and from sinning, we may call to mind that it was as Jehovah that He delivered His people from the bondage of Egypt and brought them into the Promised Land. Here are His words to Moses:

"Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments: and I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God, who bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the land which I swear to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for a heritage: I am Jehovah." Ex. 6:6-8.

Do not overlook the suggestion found in this scripture that the power pledged for the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage is the power of the cross, for when Jehovah sent to His people the assurance that He would deliver them "with an outstretched arm," He clearly fore

19

shadowed His saving act when as the Son of man His arm was stretched out upon the cross for the deliverance of the human family. That His death on the cross brought deliverance to us is made plain in these words:

"Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death He might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. 2:14, 15.

The connection between the outstretched arm and death on a cross is plainly revealed in the statement which Jesus made to Peter after His own crucifixion:

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. Now this He spake, signifying by what manner of death he would glorify God." John 21:18, 19. It is the testimony of history that Peter, like his Lord, was crucified, and so the stretched-out arm is interpreted to signify the cross.

But we must note particularly the wondrous power which attended the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. There were the plagues, each one a manifestation of the might of Jehovah. There was the passage of the Red Sea, when "the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left" (Ex.14:22), but "the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, even all the host of Pharaoh that went in after them into the sea." Ex. 14:28. This was a redemptive act, as is indicated in the song which was afterward sung; "Thou in Thy loving-kindness hast led the people that Thou hast redeemed." Ex. 15:13. There was the manna which was supplied to the great host while they journeyed through the wilderness, a fact prophecy of Him who said: "I am the living bread which came down out of heaven." John 6:51. There was the water from the rock, the meaning of which is thus stated: "They drank of a spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ."

20

1 Cor. 10:4. There were the conflicts with their enemies concerning which Moses said to the people: "Dread not, neither be afraid of them. Jehovah your God who goeth before you, He will fight for you, according to all that He did for you in Egypt before your eyes." Deut. 1:29, 30.

In all these cases, and many others, Jehovah was revealing the greatness of His power to save His people, and

a record was made of these experiences to encourage us to trust the same person, Jehovah-Jesus, revealed in the flesh to deliver us from the bondage of sin. "What time I am afraid, I will put my trust in Thee." Ps. 56:3. Nay, rather, let me say, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid: for Jehovah, even Jehovah, is my strength and song; and He is become my salvation." Isa. 12:2.

When I turn to the record of the works of Jesus of Nazareth, as it is given to us in the four Gospels, I find that the works ascribed to Him are of the same character as those

21

which, according to the testimony of the Old Testament, were wrought by Jehovah. At the beginning of His ministry He read in the synagogue at Nazareth from the prophecy of Isaiah; "He hath sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18); and then He claimed that this prophecy was a forecast of His own mission. "To-day," said He, "hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears." Luke 4:21. Later in His ministry, when John the Baptist sent messengers to inquire, "Art Thou He that cometh, or look we for another?" Jesus sent back this reply; "Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up." Matt. 11:3-5. Recalling the wonderful works which they had seen Him perform, the two disciples on the way to Emmaus designated Him as "Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." Luke 24:19. Thus by His deeds of power did Jesus of Nazareth reveal that, as of old, "Jehovah had visited the children of Israel" (Ex. 4:31), and that the Prince of Peace was "mighty God." Isa. 9:6. So I give to Him the compound name, Jehovah-Jesus.

In harmony with this interpretation I find that in the Old Testament Jehovah is declared to be the Saviour, and that there is none else. Note these statements; "I am Jehovah thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." Isa. 43:3. "I, even I, am Jehovah; and besides Me there is no saviour." Isa. 43:11. "Who hath declared it of old? have not I, Jehovah? and there is no God else besides Me, a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides Me. Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Isa. 45:21, 22.

In view of these plain declarations we should naturally expect that in the New Testament Jesus of Nazareth would be recognized as God the Saviour, and so He is. I can refer to only a few of such cases, but they are sufficient: Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Mary, the mother of Jesus, said: "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Luke 1:47. Under the same inspiration the apostle Paul admonishes

22

us that we should "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, . . . looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:10-13. In the same sentence in this same epistle the same writer refers to "God our Saviour" and "Christ Jesus our Saviour" (Titus 1:3, 4), a combination of terms which is certainly full of meaning. So also "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ," writes of "God our Saviour." Jude 25. In view of such a wondrous revelation concerning the person of Jesus of Nazareth, I think I am fully justified in referring to the Saviour of the world as "the eternal God," and I find encouragement and assurance in so doing. "If God is for us, who is against us?" Rom. 8:31.

In the Old Testament I AM is revealed to us in His absolute deity, but when the eternal Word, who "was with God, and . . . was God," "became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:1, 14), an objective revelation of the I AM was granted to us in the person of Jesus of Nazareth who

disclosed Himself in such statements as these; "I AM the bread of life" (John

23

6:48); "I AM the light of the world" (John 8:12); "I AM the door" (John 10:9); "I AM the good shepherd" (John 10:11); "I AM the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25); "I AM the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6); "I AM the true vine" (John 15:1). Jesus of Nazareth, in His life, His death, and His resurrection, as well as in His teachings, was making known to us the I AM of the Old Testament as our Saviour, our Redeemer, and our Friend. And since there is no other Saviour, Jesus Himself declared: "Except ye believe that I AM, ye shall die in your sins." John 8:24. Surely we ought to be able to say, with a greater fullness than ever before: "God is unto us a God of deliverances." Ps. 68:20. "The eternal God is thy dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms. . . . Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, a people saved by Jehovah!" Deut. 33:27-29.

"Crown Him the Lord of years,
The Potentate of time,
Creator of the rolling spheres,
Ineffably sublime!
All hail! Redeemer, hail!
For Thou hast died for me;
Thy praise shall never, never fail
Throughout eternity."

The God-Man Christ Jesus

I frankly confess that I take up this subject with a deep sense of my inability to deal adequately with it. How can I expound this mystery of God? I cannot explain it. and I must not attempt to do so. The statement is so simple, "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14); the mystery is so overpowering: "Great is the mystery of godliness; He who was manifested in the flesh." 1 Tim. 3:16. But I cannot discount the fact. I cannot agree with those who affirm that Jesus was a man, and only a man; the flower of humanity,

but only the flower and not the Author. Let us face the inspired record, and make reason bow to revelation.

I cannot read the four Gospels, the straightforward record of eyewitnesses, without beholding Jesus the man. He was born of a woman. Gal. 4:4. He was the normal child. When He had grown to manhood, He exhibited the usual characteristics

25

of other members of the human family. He experienced hunger (Matt. 4:2), required sleep (Matt. 8:24), became weary in journeying (John 4:6), and was moved to tears by human sorrow (John 11:35). The designation which He applied to Himself, and to no other, and which no other applied to Him, was "the Son of man." Matt. 8:20. Wholly apart from any revelation upon the subject, it seems evident that He had the same flesh and blood that I have, and His genealogy shows that His ancestry was not spotless. All this is easy enough to understand, but this is not all.

While the evidence is clear and convincing that Jesus of Nazareth was a man, a true member of the human family, there is equally clear and convincing evidence that He was more than a man. He who was the Son of man was also the Son of God, and the two natures were united in the one indivisible person. What ground do I have for such statements? Well, we have already found that Jesus of the New Testament is the Jehovah of the Old Testament manifested in the flesh, and this simple fact marshals the whole Old Testament as evidence that "God was in Christ." 2 Cor. 5:19.

The Son was and is the exclusive revealer of God, as is clearly stated: "Neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him." Matt. 11:27. It seems perfectly clear to me that there were temporary revelations of the second person of the Godhead in human form before He took the flesh as the Son of man. I only need to cite some of the definite cases to show this,

simply calling attention to the fact that "the Angel of Jehovah" (Ex. 3:2, 4, 16) was often used to designate the person thus manifested. Those who are reasonably familiar with the Bible can readily call up the experience of Abraham with "three men," one of whom was later designated as Jehovah. Gen. 18:1, 2, 16, 17. Then there is the case of Joshua before Jericho, who looked, "and, behold, there stood a man over against him with His sword drawn in His hand." And then we read, "And Jehovah said unto Joshua." Joshua 5:15 to 6:2. Later the Angel of Jehovah appeared to Manoah and his wife in human form and was recognized as a man,

26

but when asked His name, replied: "Wherefore askest thou after My name, seeing it is Wonderful?" (Judges 13:3, 9, 10, 17-20), assuming the same name which was afterward applied by the prophet Isaiah to the One who was to establish the throne of David forever (Isa. 9:6).

There are other instances, but these are sufficient. They are fact prophecies of the permanent incarnation of the Son of God, and they testify that Jesus of Nazareth, while He was truly man, was in reality a manifestation in the flesh of Jehovah of the Old Testament.

"The God of the Old Testament, the Jehovah of the law and of the Psalms and of the prophets, reappears and comes nearer to us in the Lord Christ: the same in all holiness, whether the holiness of severity or of love, whether the holiness that communicates Himself or that guards His rights. But then in Him this goodness is placed before us in a strictly human presentation."

Jehovah-Jesus is also the God-man.

But why, I ask, was it necessary for the Son of God to assume human nature and live among men? There are several

27

reasons: First, to minds darkened by sin it was impossible to convey in language an adequate revelation of the character of God, and so "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth." John 1:14. "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. So completely did Jesus of Nazareth reveal the Father that He could say to Philip, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." John 14:9. As the curtains of the ancient sanctuary veiled the glory of the indwelling God, and thus made it possible for sinful men to draw near without being destroyed, so in Christ divinity was veiled in humanity, and in Him the people could come into fellowship with God, could behold His character, and could find blessing.

Furthermore, in Jesus of Nazareth, who assumed our nature and partook of our flesh and blood, God's definition of a man was given to us. He is rightly called "the second man." 1 Cor. 15:47. From the time of Adam to the time of Christ, man had been revealed, not as originally created in the image of God, but as begotten after Adam's likeness, and after Adam's image (Gen. 5:3), bearing the marks of sin both physically and spiritually. When the Son of God became flesh, He declared to the world in living characters, so simply and so plainly expressed that a child could read and understand, the Godhood of God and the manhood of man. In His life of compassion for, and devotion to, others, He translated into the language of human experience the wondrous truth that "God is love." 1 John 4:8. In the loftiness of His ideals and yet in the simplicity of His intercourse with the common people who heard Him gladly, He was constantly revealing the greatness of true humility and the humility of true greatness. He glorified both Godhood and manhood.

We cannot repeat too often, and we cannot emphasize too strongly, the great saying which has been given to us

through the apostle Paul, a personal testimony arising from his own experience; "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save

28

sinner." 1 Tim. 1:15. The keynote of this saving work is struck in these words; "Christ died for our sins." 1 Cor. 15:3. But God as God in His absolute deity could not die, and therefore the moral necessity that He who "was with God, and . . . was God" (John 1:1), should take the flesh in order that He might lay down His life.

Such is the plain teaching of inspiration, as we read: "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

29

. . . Wherefore it behooved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren." Heb. 2:14-17. The Son of God partook of the same flesh and the same blood in which we share, in order that as man, the God-man, He might lay down His life, and through His death bring deliverance to those who fear death. Inasmuch as the death of Christ for our sins is the central feature of the good news, His assumption of humanity is necessarily an essential feature of the gospel of the grace of God.

This same general purpose of the incarnation, when viewed from another angle, is thus expressed; "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8. "And ye know that He was manifested to take away sins." 1 John 3:5. The Son of God who in His absolute deity could not be seen with the natural eye, was manifested in human flesh, that through His death He might destroy both the devil and his works. But we must remember that He was the Son of God before He was

manifested in the flesh (Gal. 4:4), and that He did not cease to be the Son of God when He assumed humanity. John 9:35-37. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea and forever." Heb. 13:8. His own testimony to the apostle John more than sixty years after His death and resurrection is to the same effect: "I am the first and the last, and the Living One; and I became [margin] dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades." Rev. 1:17, 18.

During His life upon earth, Jesus of Nazareth identified Himself with the Jehovah of the Old Testament by affirming that He was I AM (John 8:58), and again after His return to heaven, in declaring that He was the first and the last, He adopted and applied to Himself the words of Jehovah as given to us through the prophet Isaiah: "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last." Isa. 44:6. "The New Testament represents our Lord as a conscious, intelligent agent, who preserves from eternity into time and onward to eternity His unbroken identity." It is conscious union with such a Saviour

30

as this which brings to us the positive assurance of eternal life.

The assumption of human nature by the divine Son of God is the foundation miracle of Christianity; or, to put it in other words, Jesus of Nazareth in his twofold nature is Himself the all-inclusive miracle. This is clearly indicated in the prophetic announcement that "His name shall be called Wonderful" (Isa. 9:6), or Miracle. Through the miracle of the incarnation He has lifted humanity to the divine plane, and through our union with Him we become partakers of the divine nature. 2 Peter 1:4. He is Himself "the mystery of God" (Col. 2:2) and through His manifestation in the flesh He became the solution of the mystery of redemption.

How encouraging is the thought that our Mediator in the heavens, who "ever liveth to make intercession for" us (Heb.

7:25), is "Himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all." 1 Tim. 2:5, 6. "We have not a High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need." Heb. 4:15, 16.

"Since Jesus came to dwell with us, we know that God is acquainted with our trials and sympathizes with our griefs. Every son and daughter of Adam may understand that our Creator is the friend of sinners. For in every doctrine of grace, every promise of joy, every divine attraction presented in the Saviour's life on earth, we see 'God with us.' . . . By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey. . . . 'God with us' is the surety of our deliverance from sin, the assurance of our power to obey the law of heaven."

"Behold, the man." John 19:5. "Behold, your God." Isa. 40:9.

The Personality of the Gospel

In my own experience I have learned the difference between the gospel as good advice and the gospel as good news. Viewed simply as good advice, the gospel tells us what we ought to be and leaves us to our own resources; but viewed as good news, it brings within our reach the possibility of realizing the best ideals of life and character.

This good news relates to the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth. From it we learn who He is, what He has done for us, what He is doing, and what He will do. The great central fact is that what He teaches, that He is; that His message is inseparable from Himself; and that in the gospel of salvation as presented to us in the Scriptures there is no development

of an abstract theology, but that saving truth becomes a personality in Jesus Christ. This is what I would like to present in such a simple way that every one who reads this chapter may receive the personal help which comes from a fuller understanding of, and a fuller appropriation of, our wonderful Saviour.

32

First, then, let us remember that the same Greek word is, in our version of the New Testament, sometimes rendered "to preach," sometimes "to preach the gospel," and sometimes "to bring good tidings." In either case it is the good news which is presented. Now note the various expressions used in the New Testament to suggest the content of this gospel, these good tidings. It is "the gospel of God" (2 Thess. 2:2, etc.); "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God" (1 Tim. 1:11); "the gospel of Christ" (1 Thess. 3:2, etc.); "the gospel of Jesus Christ" (Mark 1:1); "the gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:4); "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24); "the gospel of your salvation" (Eph. 1:13); "the gospel of peace" (Eph. 6:15); "the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 24:14); "the gospel of His Son" (Rom. 1:9), and yet there is only one everlasting gospel. But perhaps the fullest single statement concerning the gospel is contained in the following words:

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which He promised afore through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 1:1-4.

Here the gospel is clearly defined as being "the gospel of God . . . concerning His Son," and this will be found to be the all-inclusive expression. But from this complete statement we learn that the Son of God was also the seed of David, and that His resurrection from the dead designated Him also

the Son of God, and that there are three words in His name,- Jesus, His earthly name as a man; Christ, His official title as the Anointed One; and Lord, His title as sovereign. Since, then, the gospel is the good tidings concerning the Son of God, it is plain that the gospel finds its center in a person, and I have now to show that the good tidings of salvation are so manifestly embodied in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of man, Jesus Christ our Lord, that He Himself is the gospel, that the gospel is personality in Him, and that

33

Christianity is nothing less, and can be nothing more, than "conscious personal oneness with Jesus Christ."

I shall avoid any declarations of a creedal nature, and any traditional forms of expression, and confine myself to the plain words of Scripture, with the hope that the Holy Spirit, who is the only effective teacher of divinely revealed truth, will make His own doctrine very clear to us.

In seeking to find the meaning of the gospel as a matter of personal experience, I have noted what I sometimes call the five commands of Jesus: "Come unto Me" (Matt. 11:28); "Learn of Me" (Matt. 11:29); "Believe also in Me" (John 14:1); "Follow Me" (John 1:43); "Abide in Me" (John 15:4). Jesus does not bid us come to an impersonal force, or to learn of doctors of theology, or to believe in an evolutionary philosophy, or to follow in the train of any human leader, or to abide contentedly in the performance of mere ceremonies. He presents Himself as our teacher of the truth, as the object of our faith, and as our exemplar, and urges us to find unbroken communion with Himself. In other words, He proclaims Himself as the gospel. If Jesus of Nazareth were a mere man, such language as He used could only be interpreted as the very essence of egotism, and would have evoked a contemptuous rejection of His self-assertion; but the history of the Christian church and the experience of millions who have heeded His call, have demonstrated that the gospel is personalized in the Nazarene. He Himself is

His own gospel. Apart from Him there is no gospel of salvation. This is the saving gospel which I myself have appropriated.

I think that a brief study of some statements in the Scriptures will make this clearer to us. Here is a plain prophecy concerning "thy holy servant Jesus" (Acts 4:27): "It is too light a thing that thou shouldst be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth." Isa. 49:6. Jesus did not give light apart from Himself, but He Himself was the light, as He said; "I am the light of the world." John

34

8:12. The great purpose of the work of Christ was to provide salvation for all who would receive it, and this was accomplished, not by imparting salvation as something separate from Himself, but by being that salvation; and so when the devout Simeon took the child Jesus in his arms, he perceived that the prophecy was fulfilled which declared, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3:6), and he broke out in the joyous refrain: "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart, Lord, according to Thy word, in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." Luke 2:29, 30. Jesus is Himself our salvation, and "in none other is there salvation." Acts 4:12.

The gospel is essentially the good news concerning the everlasting covenant of grace, but this covenant is not the ordinary agreement or compact, an abstract document with certain provisions, but it is a personality, as it is revealed in such statements as these; "I, Jehovah, have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thy hand, and will keep thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." Isa. 42:6. "Thus saith Jehovah, In an acceptable time have I answered Thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped Thee; and I will preserve Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people." Isa. 49:8. No mere dictionary

definition of the word "covenant" will suffice for this great word of the gospel. Only when the covenant of grace is embodied in a person does it become salvation to us.

When I go forth to each day's experience, to meet the temptations common to us all, I know that I need a power beyond my own to demonstrate in my life the victory which Jesus Christ has won for me. I can see the revelation of power in nature all about me, but I find it impossible to lay hold of that power through any effort of mine. Then there comes to me the good news that the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16); that "the word of the cross is . . . unto us who are being saved [margin] . . . the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18), and that Christ crucified is "Christ the power of God." 1 Cor. 1:24. The power which saves me is not an impersonal force, bound by natural laws and devoid of compassion, but a person who loves and works for my salvation.

35

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36

"Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you." Acts 1:8. "In the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:19), is the explanation of victory in the Christian life. "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13. "In Christ" is the hall-mark of Christianity.

Christianity is the religion of hope; "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." Rom. 15:4. But the Christian's hope of salvation is not simply an earnest expectation based upon certain general conditions, not simply a deep-seated yearning for the realization of a heartfelt longing, and not simply a conviction that certain promises will be fulfilled in due course. In the Scriptures the hope which is unto salvation is a person. In the Old Testament we find, "O Jehovah, the hope" (Jer. 17:13); in the New Testament it is

"Christ Jesus our hope" (1 Tim. 1:1). The sum and substance of Christianity is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. 1:27. Such a living hope is "an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and stead-fast." Heb. 6:19.

The great aim of the gospel is to provide righteousness for us who sinned in the first Adam, and "fall short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. The natural tendency is to regard righteousness as an abstract term denoting a certain state or condition, a standard of character; but according to the teaching of the Scriptures the righteousness which is bestowed through the gospel, the righteousness which transforms our nature, is embodied in a person, and cannot be received apart from that person. And so we read; "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch. . . . In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called; Jehovah our righteousness." Jer. 23:5, 6. This righteous Branch became manifest in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who "was made unto us wisdom . . . and righteousness." 1 Cor. 1:30. Hence we are "justified in Christ" (Gal. 2:17), and righteousness becomes to us a personality.

37

There are different words which summarize the whole gospel. One of these words is "redemption." Jehovah of the Old Testament, who declares Himself to be "thy Saviour and thy Redeemer" (Isa. 49:26), took the flesh that He might redeem us from all iniquity; but it is also true that He Himself became our redemption, as is revealed in the declaration that He "was made unto us . . . redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30. And so it is He "in whom we have our redemption" (Eph. 1:7), and this redemption is embodied in His person.

Formerly I regarded justification and sanctification as abstract terms designating certain experiences in the Christian

38

life, but I look at them differently now. I emphasized the teaching that we are "justified freely by His grace" (Rom. 3:24), that we are "justified by His blood" (Rom. 5:9), and that we are "justified by faith" (Rom. 5:1); but I overlooked the foundation fact that we are "justified in Christ" (Gal. 2:17), and that He "was made unto us . . . sanctification." 1 Cor. 1:30. The experience of justification and of sanctification means receiving Jesus Christ the justifier and the sanctifier, who is Himself our justification and our sanctification. It is both our privilege and our duty to seek a fuller knowledge of the infinite treasure which we have in Christ. This means growth in the Christian life,-sanctification. The more intimate our fellowship is with Christ, the more evident will be His transforming power in our lives.

I hope I have made it clear to my readers that the gospel is in reality a living personality and that it becomes personality in those who accept it as such; that salvation is not a sort of life insurance policy, issued to those who fear death, but fellowship with a person; that Christ imparts no gifts to us apart from Himself, the all-inclusive gift, the "unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15); and that every blessing is found personalized in Him, even as we read; "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." Eph. 1:3.

Such is the good news which I am glad to make known. "My God shall supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:19. The riches of His grace are found in Christ. The riches of His love are expressed in Christ. The riches of His mercy are revealed in Christ. "Christ is all, and in all." Col. 3:11. "Christ is Christianity." O that each one of us may "be found in Him"! Phil. 3:9.

Sin and the Saviour

Sin is a tremendous fact. There is no excuse for sin. Sin is rebellion against the holiness of God, against a holy God. Sin involves a degradation of the whole being, a debasement of the inner life, a prostitution of the moral powers. Sin is the expression of a perverted nature, in whatever form it may reveal itself. A sinner is one who fails to manifest the character of Christ, for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. 14:23. In other words, whatever in our lives is not the result of the active exercise of faith in Christ, a faith which accepts Him as the Lord of our lives, is sin. Self is sin personified. Self-seeking is the all-inclusive sin. Selfishness is the very essence of sin. Self-idolatry "lies at the foundation of all sin." I must be delivered from myself, for "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7:18. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is

40

exceedingly corrupt." Jer. 17:9. "From within, out of the heart of man, evil thoughts proceed, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, wickednesses, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness: all these evil things proceed from within, and defile the man." Mark 7:21-23. What a picture of the natural heart! How great is the need of a Saviour!

Sin cannot be charged to the account of God. He is not the author of sin. He did not create a sinner. On the contrary, "God made man upright." Eccl. 7:29. But sin did not take God by surprise and find Him unprepared to deal with it. To affirm this would be to deny the eternity of God and to impeach His character. "God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provisions to meet the terrible emergency."

God "saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal." 2 Tim. 1:9. The mystery of God's saving gospel,

which was revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ, was in the eternal mind through "times eternal," and was by no means an afterthought. "God is love" (1 John 4:8), and His own character was the guaranty that the image of God in which man was originally created, would be restored, in case that image should be marred by a rejection of that love which was His life. The roots of the gospel are implanted in the very nature of God, and the necessity of the gospel is found in the holiness of God.

But while I must recognize the fact of sin, and must not try to cloak its heinous character, since it is an inexcusable rebellion against a holy God, I wish to put the principal emphasis upon the provision made for the solution of the problem of sin. Sin is not an abstract term, a mere theological expression, which has been dealt with sufficiently when it has been defined and condemned as a hated intruder in God's world. Sin is manifested in persons whose natures have been changed because of this accursed thing. You and I bear the marks of it, and feel its effects. Many a time we have been

41

led to cry out, "Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" Rom. 7:24. What is the answer to this despairing cry? It is one word, "Jesus."

The simplest, and at the same time the most complete, summary of the gospel is found in these words; "Jesus bore our sins." "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 Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Isa. 53:5, 6.

Note the simple facts here presented: Our transgressions were dealt with by wounding Him. Our iniquities were atoned for by bruising Him. The chastisement which brought peace to us was suffered by Him. The stripes which inflicted pain

upon Him resulted in healing for us. The iniquity of us all was laid upon Jesus, and He was treated as we deserved to be treated in order that we might be treated as He deserved to be treated. This is the essence of the good news. He "loved me, and gave Himself up for me." Gal. 2:20.

I know full well that the offense of the cross has not ceased. Modernism has no place for the atoning cross. The modern mind is unwilling to accept the death of Christ as a sacrificial death, and sees in it only an outstanding example of heroic devotion to a lost cause, an inspiration to us to do our best for the reform of society, even though it may cost us our lives. The simple gospel of salvation from sin through our faith in the efficacy of the work of Christ, who died and lived again, has been exchanged for an evolutionary philosophy in which our hope is made to rest upon the gradual uplift of the human family through the operation of resident forces. The definition of sin, as given in the Scriptures, is now regarded as a crude conception adapted to the limited vision of the childhood of the race, but now nullified by the discoveries of science and philosophy, and to be rejected as an exploded theory which does not appeal to the highly developed intelligence of the present day. The need of a new and more modern conception of God is now suggested.

42

All this is flattering to human pride, but there is one horrible difficulty about it: it is not true! Each one of us can demonstrate this for himself. I know that sin is a terrible reality, and that no optimistic philosophy has delivered me from its power. When the sun is shining brightly, no one can prove to me that it is dark by simply shutting his own eyes to the light. We cannot loosen the cords which bind us by asserting that there are no cords there. Our own experience cannot be so easily hoodwinked as that. There may be those who put darkness for light and light for darkness, but I cannot accept that kind of philosophy which seeks to satisfy our need by affirming that we have no need. The most

convincing reply to all such teaching is found in the unanswerable affirmation of the man whom Jesus healed of blindness: "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." John 9:25.

There is a certainty about the experience of the gospel of Christ which cannot be so easily confused by the mere assertions of a pretentious philosophy. The fact of Christ and the history of which He is Himself the condensation and the

43

inspiration, cannot be brushed aside by the mere waving of the hand of a modern theologian. The sin of the world and the saving grace of Christ have been graven in the rock of a universal consciousness with an iron pen, and vain are the attempts to erase the indelible record. Sin is here, and God has dealt with it. Sin is here, and we must recognize it as a terrible reality with which God has dealt; and we must learn to accept, each for himself, the work of God in Christ as the only solution of the problem which drew heavily upon divine wisdom and divine love. And to this solution I shall now give attention.

When John the Baptist pointed out Jesus with the words, "Behold, the Lamb of God, that beareth [margin] the sin of the world" (John 1:29), he sounded the keynote of the gospel. From the time that Abel "brought of the firstlings of his flock," and "Jehovah had respect unto Abel and his offering" (Gen. 4:4), attention had been directed through all the centuries to the shedding of the blood of another for the remission of sins. Atonement was to be made by the shedding of the lifeblood of a substitute, according to the instruction of Jehovah: "The life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life." Lev. 17:11. By the multiplied sacrifices of animals in the services of the sanctuary and of the temple, the truth was being emphasized that "apart from shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22), and yet by the very

repetition of those sacrifices it was proclaimed that "it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins." Heb. 10:4. And so they offered and waited, and waited and offered the same sacrifices continually, while an intelligent faith looked to the true sacrifice, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. 13:8, A. V. With a mind illuminated by the Holy Spirit, John the Baptist beheld in Jesus of Nazareth the one who had been foreshadowed by all the typical sacrifices, the true sin-bearer, concerning whom the prophet had declared; "Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Isa. 53:6. He it was "who His own

44

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45

self bare our sins in His body upon the tree." 1 Peter 2:24. The fullness of the time had come, all that was shadowy in the gospel of redemption through blood was to be replaced by the reality, and prophecy was to be realized in fact. "Behold, the Lamb of God, that beareth the sin of the world." John 1:29.

Every one who reads the New Testament thoughtfully must observe that the death and resurrection of Christ occupy the leading place. These are indeed the central and the essential facts of the gospel. This is clearly indicated by the importance attached to these facts as interpreted to us by the writings of the apostle Paul, who met the crucified and risen Jesus on the Damascus road: "I delivered unto you first of all ["among the chief things"] that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." 1 Cor. 15:3, 4. What is true of the apostle Paul is also true of the other New Testament writers. The death of Christ, with which is necessarily connected the resurrection, is the vitally significant theme.

"It is treated by them as a subject of central and permanent importance to the Christian faith, and it is incredible that it should have filled the place it does fill in the New Testament had it ever been regarded as of trifling consequence for the understanding, the acceptance, or the preaching of the gospel."

Furthermore, it is plain from the record that His death was not to Jesus an unfortunate ending to His career, an unforeseen and tragically fatal incident in His program of reform; but, on the contrary, that it was from the first recognized by Him as a morally necessary part of His experience in the work which He came from heaven to do. The path marked out for Him in the divine councils and portrayed by the prophets, led directly to Calvary. At twelve years of age He attended His first Passover.

"He beheld the bleeding victim upon the altar of sacrifice. With the worshipers He bowed in prayer, while the cloud of incense ascended before God. He witnessed the impressive rites of the paschal service. Day by day He saw their meaning more clearly. Every act seemed to

46

be bound up with His own life. New impulses were awakening within Him. Silent and absorbed, He seemed to be studying out a great problem. The mystery of His mission was opening to the Saviour."

A vision of the cross was vouchsafed to Him, and He beheld Himself as the Lamb of God. In the light of these scenes His life became a living sacrifice and His death a foregone conclusion.

At a later Passover, but early in His ministry, when the Jews demanded of Him a sign, Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." John 2:19. The Jews thought He referred to their beautiful temple, which required forty-six years for its construction, "but He spake of the temple of His body." John 2:21. It is plain that from the first Jesus knew that He was the Anointed

One, the Messiah, who was to "be cut off." Dan. 9:26. In fact, His own words at a later time interpret to us His view that His death was the essential feature of His vocation, for He declared; "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:28. Toward the close of His ministry, after His own disciples had confessed His Messiah ship, He repeatedly told them in plain terms that He was to be put to death by the religious leaders at Jerusalem, and that He would rise the third day. And so it was.

But why was His death necessary? Why was it required that such an infinite price should be paid for our salvation? Why must the Great Physician die in order that the sick might be healed? It was because sin was such a horrible fact. It was because it was the only solution of the problem of sin which would justify both God and man before the universe. The cross is the great center of universal history, in the light of which the eternal purpose of God and the destiny of man are to be interpreted. We do well to linger at the foot of the cross.

The Place Which is Called Calvary

What tender associations cluster around that word Calvary! There justice and mercy met together. There sufferings triumphed and glories were assured. There the depths of divine compassion found expression, and the central mystery of the gospel was revealed. I invite you to come with me to the place which is called Calvary. Let us come with open minds and with subdued hearts, for there was enacted the most touching tragedy of all human history. And while we wait at the foot of the cross, let us pray that the Holy Spirit, who has been appointed to be the teacher of saving truth, will not only enlighten our minds, but also convey to our hearts with convicting power the lessons which Calvary ought to teach us.

There is no gospel of salvation apart from the cross. I state this as the expression of my own deepest conviction, the result of my own study of the word of God and my own

48

personal experience. And so the apostle Paul writes: "The word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God." 1 Cor. 1:18. The message of the cross is the good news, the blessed truth, that God in Christ has so dealt with sin that it need not any longer be a barrier between us and God, that the hindrance to the most intimate fellowship with God has been removed, and that the gift of life eternal has been brought within our reach. A crucified and risen Christ has wrought deliverance from both the guilt and the power of sin for every believing soul, and from the agony of Gethsemane comes the joy of salvation. What a wonderful gospel! What a compassionate Saviour!

But just here I am reminded of the blinding effect of sin upon the human heart, as I am conscious of the fact, so much emphasized in these later years, that the word of the cross is an unwelcome message to the modern mind. And why is this? What constitutes the offense, or the scandal, of the cross? Ah, it is because Christ crucified, the righteous and holy one suffering for the unrighteous and doing a work for us which it was impossible for us to do for ourselves, speaks to us with a convicting power of the terrible nature of sin and of our own dreadful guilt. The cross humbles the pride of man in the dust, calls for heartfelt confession of sin, and a yielding of self to God with a sense of utter helplessness and dependence, and proclaims the absolute need of a Saviour. But all this offends the sense of self-sufficiency, and arouses antagonism in the natural heart, especially as it demands the admission of guilt. Because of its rebellion against a holy law, all the world has become guilty in God's sight, and atonement must be made for sin as guilt, and here is the scandal of the cross.

"This modern mind can easily confess its ignorance-is it not always seeking to abolish ignorance? It can confess its error-is it not forever committed to the search for truth? It can even confess its disease-did not Christianity come into the world to create doctors and nurses and comforters? It can confess its stupidity-are we not always glad to find out when we have made fools of ourselves? It can confess its feebleness-have we not dedicated ourselves to the worship of power? But its *guilt*? Never!"

49

To confess sin as guilt, to rely upon another for making atonement, to deny self, and to accept righteousness as an undeserved gift,-all this is abhorrent to the modern mind, which is committed to the principle of evolution in religion, and relies upon "resident forces" for the "progressive change" toward higher ideals. I am not given to pessimism, and I prefer to sound the note of courage and hope, but I must repeat and apply in my own experience the words of Jesus, "Apart from Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5.

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee.
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

We are now at the place called Calvary. Here we behold a cross, and Jesus of Nazareth is nailed to it. Some are deriding Him, and some are weeping over Him. What has He done to bring upon Him this death of shame? Did not Pilate, the governor, before whom He was accused, say three times over, "I find no crime in Him"? John 18:38; 19:4, 6. Did He not go about from town to town healing the sick (Matt. 9:35), cleansing the lepers (Luke 17:11-14), casting out demons (Mark 1:34), and even raising the dead to life? Mark 5:41, 42; Luke 7:14, 15; John 11:43, 44. Did He not preach the good tidings to the poor (Matt. 11:5), and bring renewed hope to many a despairing heart? What cruel fate has thus brought Him to the cross between two thieves?

It seems paradoxical to say that it was His own deliberate choice which brought Him to Calvary, but so it was. According to the terms of the covenant made between the Father and the Son "before times eternal," it was mutually agreed that, in case man should yield to the temptation to sin, the Father would give the Son, and the Son would give Himself, and thus God in Christ would give Himself, for the redemption of humanity. And so "when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4, 5); and Christ "gave Himself for our sins" (Gal. 1:4); and

50

"Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God." 1 Peter 3:18. "Behold, the Lamb of God, that beareth the sin of the world." John 1:29.

Now it is just here that some modern philosophers assume the right to sit upon the judgment seat, and to decide that it is an immoral act to give up one to death for sins which another has committed. This sounds plausible, and some seem to think that it is a mark of superiority to declare that they will not accept any such arrangement, but that they themselves will meet the consequences of their own sins. All such worldly-wise reasoning is, however, the outcome of a very superficial view of the person and the atoning work of Christ. I think this will plainly appear, if we will give some further study to the facts as they have been revealed to us. Revelation is the sufficient answer to all false reasoning.

And first I affirm that the death of Christ was absolutely voluntary, and that there was, therefore, nothing immoral in the transaction. He "gave Himself." Gal. 1:4. He "loved me, and gave Himself up for me." Gal. 2:20. He freely consented to death when in the garden He said to His father, "Nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done." Luke 22:42.

The record of His last moments upon the cross clearly indicate that not under compulsion but of His own free choice He surrendered His life, for we read: "Jesus cried again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit." Matt. 27:50. Under ordinary circumstances it often happened that days of suffering preceded death by crucifixion, but not so in this case; for while Jesus was still able to cry with a loud voice, He "gave up the ghost." Mark 15:39. Having fulfilled the last specification of prophecy, He declared to His Father, "It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit." John 19:30. Furthermore, while it is true that those who demanded and secured His death are rightly held responsible for it, yet the fact remains that the Roman soldiers did not really take His life. His own words settle this matter: "Therefore doth the Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I may take it again. No one taketh it away from

51

Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment received I from My Father." John 10:17, 18.

We must not think of the Father as demanding the death of His Son as the means of appeasing His own anger and rendering Him propitious toward us. Such a conception of the atonement arises from a perverted view of the character of God, and of the relation between the Father and the Son. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Cor. 5:19. "God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption." "God so loved the world that He gave." John 3:16.

Again, it is asserted, with an air of finality, that it is contrary to justice for one to bear the punishment due to another. But is it not possible that this form of objection to the gospel of the grace of God is based upon a misapprehension of the facts in the case? I would not use

the word "punishment" in any such connection. God did not punish Christ for our sins. Punishment implies moral responsibility and personal guilt, but Christ was not responsible for our sins and had not incurred personal guilt. What then? Christ voluntarily assumed the penalty for sin and met it, but not as punishment. He freely took upon Himself the liabilities of a world bankrupt through sin, and He provided satisfaction for those liabilities; but He did not create the liabilities, and He was not punished as a bankrupt. The heirs of the J. Ogden Armour estate recently discharged about eighteen million dollars of personal liabilities of the testator, sacrificing their own private fortune to do this, although there was no legal claim upon them, merely for the protection of the good name of the family. No one could set up the complaint that there was injustice in this act, since it was done voluntarily and not under pressure, and the parties concerned were universally lauded for their willingness to carry a family burden. I grant that this is only a feeble illustration, but it may suggest the wide difference between suffering a punishment due to another, and voluntarily paying the penalty involved in the conduct of

52

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53

another. God is no unjust. On the contrary, "righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne." Ps. 97:2.

But there is another phase of this question which ought to receive consideration. Jesus of Nazareth was not an outside party who intervened between two other parties with whom He had no intimate relation. He was both the Son of God and the Son of man. When He assumed human nature, "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14), not simply a man, but generic man, the family, the race. The first Adam was the head, the representative, of the whole human family, and so what he did was reckoned as having been done by the family and involved the whole family, because of the

solidarity of humanity. This principle is recognized and asserted in the Scriptural explanation of the universality of sin: "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned." Rom. 5:12. All sinned in the one man, Adam, because all were in him, just as Levi paid tithes when Abraham paid tithes, because he was in Abraham when Abraham paid tithes. Heb. 7:9, 10. But the first Adam "is a figure [or type] of Him that was to come" (Rom. 5:14); and as the sin of the first Adam was not only an individual sin but also a racial sin, and therefore brought the penalty of death upon the whole family, so the death of the last Adam, the representative man, the head of the new humanity, was justly reckoned as the death of the whole family, and met the penalty involved in the representative sin of the first Adam.

This representative idea, this principle of solidarity, is fundamental in the gospel of salvation, as is plainly taught: "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for [in behalf of, instead of] all, therefore all died." 2 Cor. 5:14. The law convinces us of sin, and assesses the penalty of death; but while I admit this, I can meet the demand by asserting that I have already paid the penalty. How?-In Christ, my representative. Although there may be a proper sense in which the word "substitute" can be used as applied to Christ in His death for us, yet I like the word

54

"representative" better, as it seems to harmonize more clearly with the idea of the human relationship between Christ and the family for whom He died. In a certain sense, He was we, and so when He died, we died. I do not attempt to explain this revealed fact, but I do wish to emphasize the great benefit arising from it.

But I can almost hear some one saying, "I do not think there is any justice in my being punished for the sin of Adam. I was not consulted, and had no choice in the matter." My

answer is, No one has been, or ever will be, punished for the sin of Adam. This is the good news which it is my joy to proclaim. As the sin of Adam occurred apart from any choice on my part, so the penalty for that sin was paid apart from any choice on my part. The first Adam sinned; the last Adam died; holiness was satisfied; I am released from the penalty incurred by that sin. There is no basis for any charge of injustice.

In saying this I do not overlook the fact that I am suffering some of the consequences of the sin of Adam. But I distinguish between consequences and punishment, and I wish to add something about consequences. In His dealing with the problem of sin, God has not only thwarted the purpose of Satan, the author of sin, but has provided a salvation which lifts man to a far higher plane than Adam occupied at the first, and makes him a sharer in the blessings and privileges which are the inherent right of the only begotten Son of God, as we read: "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with Me in My throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne." Rev. 3:21. Well might the apostle Paul exclaim, as these things were revealed to him: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to usward." Rom. 8:18. And again: "Our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. 4:17. Some of the consequences of the sin of Adam can be realized only in the glories of the eternal world, after the curse has been removed.

55

We are at the place called Calvary. There is a cross there. "What do we see inscribed on that cross? If we look through human eyes alone, we shall read the title, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." Matt. 27:37. But can we not read more than that? If our eyes are anointed with the heavenly eye salve, we may discern the words, "God is love." 1 John 4:8.

The cross where God "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Rom. 8:32), reveals both the terrible meaning of sin and the inmost nature of God—that "God is love." But what further inscription do we read upon the cross? Is it not written in letters of blood, "The wages of sin is death"? Rom. 6:23. At the cross God's condemnation of sin was expressed in such terms as to startle every created being in the universe. The Son of God Himself, being voluntarily under the condemnation of sin, could not be spared, and so "Christ died for our sins." 1 Cor. 15:3. God could not abolish His own law of righteousness, but He could and did provide an atonement for it at infinite cost. The words of the late Dr. James Denney, of Scotland, are appropriate:

"The cross is the place at which the sinless One dies the death of the sinful; the place at which God's condemnation is borne by the innocent, that for those who commit themselves to Him there may be condemnation no more. I cannot read the New Testament in any other sense. I cannot see at the very heart of it anything but this—grace establishing the law, not in a 'forensic' sense, but in a spiritual sense; mercy revealed, not over judgment, but through it; justification disclosing not only the goodness but the severity of God; the cross inscribed, God is love, only because it is inscribed also, The wages of sin is death."

Such is the gospel of the cross.

We are still at the place called Calvary. Behold, three crosses are there. On the one in the center we see Jesus of Nazareth, and on each side of Him a thief is crucified. "There they crucified Him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left." Luke 23:33. Is there any outward mark of distinction between Jesus in the center and the other two? Yes, we note that He wears a crown of thorns. How shall we interpret this contemptuous fling at His claim that He is a king? Little did the Roman soldiers think when they mockingly crowned Him with the wreath of thorns, that

they were acting their part in proclaiming the gospel of redemption; but we remember that thorns were the evidence of the curse, nature's testimony to sin, and the crown of thorns declared that He who is now "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16), bore the curse for us, and therefore "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us." Gal. 3:13. This is another message from the cross. O wondrous love! O wondrous condescension!

"O cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to hide from thee:
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red,
Life that shall endless be."

The mission of Christ did not end in merely a martyr's death, a disappointment, a failure. Oh, no! The cross is not a symbol of defeat, but of triumph. There death was abolished, and life and immortality were brought to light. O glorious victory!

We have been at the place called Calvary. What have we seen there? The mystery of redemption revealed; the love of God manifested; the justice of God vindicated; our salvation from sin assured. The glory of the cross pierces the dark shadows of a world in sin, and lights the way to heaven. The cross is our all-sufficient plea.

"Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

A Reconciled World

I have tried to make it clear that at the place which is called Calvary a work was done which set the human family-you and me-free from the penalty incurred by the sin of Adam; that Jesus of Nazareth assumed all the liabilities which were the result of that sin, and met them; and that no one ever has been or ever will be punished for that sin. I

wish now to consider the cross as the way of reconciliation between man and God.

First let us note the wide difference between Christianity and heathenism in this matter of reconciliation. In Christianity it is man who is reconciled to God, and reconciliation is an act of God; but in heathenism it is the gods who are reconciled to man, and an attempted reconciliation is an act of man. In saying this I do not forget that some who profess to represent Christianity have presented the sacrifice of Christ as a means of appeasing the anger of God, but this does not seem to me to be the teaching of the Scriptures.

I do not mean to proclaim a soft gospel. There is such a thing as God's anger. The wrath of God is a terrible reality, and must be recognized. The willful transgressors of the law

58

of holiness will be punished with "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might." 2 Thess. 1:9. But this wrath is love burning against sin, the result of love rejected and reconciliation refused. It still remains true that "God is love," and that He has done all that infinite love could suggest and infinite wisdom could devise for saving men.

When a heathen philosophy is deliberately chosen in place of the gospel of God, and when a sinner attempts to do the work of reconciliation himself instead of accepting the work of reconciliation which has already been accomplished, God cannot be held responsible for the failure. The eternal principles

59

of justice and righteousness are not subject to revision by a merely human philosophy, and God cannot imperil the stability of His government by accepting a pseudo-holiness as a satisfactory atonement for the willful transgression of the law of holiness. When God justifies, He Himself must still remain just.

The classic passage which deals with reconciliation presents the matter thus: "All things are of God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses." 2 Cor. 5:18, 19. A brief analysis of this teaching will show:

1. That reconciliation is an act of God: it was "God who reconciled."

2. That we are by God's act reconciled to Him, rather than that He is reconciled to us: "God who reconciled us to Himself."

3. That this act of reconciliation was accomplished "through Christ."

4. That it was not God apart from Christ, or Christ apart from God, who accomplished this act, but "God was in Christ reconciling."

5. That the act which was effective in reconciling "us" who are Christians, was effective for the world: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

6. That although the world is still in sin, and may refuse to recognize the fact, it is nevertheless a reconciled world. God has reconciled it to Himself.

7. That in accomplishing this work of reconciliation, the trespasses of the world were not reckoned to them.

Putting it rather briefly, but I hope correctly, I may say that reconciliation is not a process, but an act performed at a definite time; that this act was not performed in order to induce a change of feeling on the part of God toward us, but as an expression of an existing feeling; that as the result of this act God could maintain His righteous character, and yet not reckon their trespasses to a race of sinners. I have here stated what appear to me to be some of the fundamental facts

of the gospel-facts which ought to be proclaimed everywhere, and which ought to be more clearly understood than they are at present. In the face of the blasphemous utterances of atheism, in defiance of the evolutionary philosophy of modernism, and regardless of the lack of appreciation of the grace of God on the part of many nominal Christians, the message that God by His own act has reconciled the world to Himself should be proclaimed in every land, heathen and Christian, in the power of the Spirit. Christ came to a world not reconciled in fact; He left it a reconciled world. This is the good news.

But I must now ask, How was this reconciliation effected? The answer is simple and clear: Reconciliation rests upon the atoning sacrifice made upon Calvary. Jesus bore our sins.

"We were reconciled to God through the death of His Son." Rom. 5:10. Because sin was reckoned to Christ, although He knew no sin, and was judged upon Him, sin is not reckoned to those who have sinned, but they are reckoned righteous, if they are willing to be identified with Christ, their representative.

And here I must make the distinction between being reconciled and being saved. While I maintain that the world is a reconciled world, I do not maintain that it is a saved world. Universal salvation is not the same as universal reconciliation. The inspired teaching makes this plain: "If, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life; and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation." Rom. 5:10, 11. The death of Christ reconciles; the life of Christ saves; the reconciliation made through the death of Christ must be received through faith in the living Christ who died and rose again and ever liveth. The reconciliation is universal, unlimited; but the

salvation is limited to those who personally appropriate the reconciliation.

The great announcement is that God has reconciled the world to Himself; the great exhortation is, "Be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5:20. Every reconciled sinner is urged to accept the reconciliation provided by confessing that he is a

62

sinner and in need of reconciliation, by recognizing the fact that through the death of Christ reconciliation has already been made, and by accepting the risen and triumphant Christ as his life. The final result of the whole transaction is thus stated; "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. 5:21.

"Guilt rests on God's charging up sin; reconciliation rests upon God's non-imputation of sin; God's non-imputation of sin rests upon Christ's being made sin for us. . . . God made Christ sin in this sense, that God as it were took Him in the place of sin, rather than of the sinner, and judged the sin upon Him. . . . God made Him to be sin in treatment though not in feeling, so that holiness might be perfected in judgment, and we might become the righteousness of God in Him, so that we might have in God's sight righteousness by our living union with Christ, righteousness which did not belong to us actually, naturally, and finally. Our righteousness is as little ours individually as the sin on Christ was His."

I hope that the reality of this good news has not been hidden under too many or too large words. I greatly desire that the simplicity of the gospel should plainly appear, and that all my readers might be moved to accept the reconciliation made through the death of Christ. Again I emphasize the atoning value of the cross. Again I lift up the crucified and risen Jesus as our only and our all sufficient hope. "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16:31.

"In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life giving atmosphere will live, and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. . . . Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness,-all depend upon our union with Christ."

I testify the gospel of reconciliation. I testify the gospel of reconciliation received and salvation assured. Will *you* receive my testimony?

Gaining the Keys of Death

I do not propose to rest my hope of eternal life upon my own philosophy, or upon the philosophy of any other person, or upon a hoary tradition. I demand a more secure foundation than either of these furnishes. I inquire, therefore, whether there is a really satisfactory basis for the assurance that death has been conquered. I have looked upon the faces of my beloved dead, and have seen their lifeless forms con signed to their resting places in the city of the dead, and I have turned away with a biting grief in my heart which refused to be soothed by any theological dogma, no matter how ancient or how beautifully worded. I looked for some thing more satisfying, and I found it. Death does not end all. Christianity is the religion of hope, and that hope rests upon facts. Jesus of Nazareth, who is both Son of God and Son of man, died and rose again. These are the greatest

64

facts of history, and these facts constitute an unshakable foundation for an intelligent faith in the life to come. The mystery of death has been solved.

I shall not try to establish the certainty of the resurrection of Jesus by a series of labored arguments, as I do not think that is necessary, but I will call attention briefly to the ground of my own conviction that He did not remain in Joseph's tomb. "We have been at the place called Calvary. We have

seen the Man of Galilee hanged upon the tree. There He gave His life for us, and when all was over, His sorrowing followers laid His wounded body in a rich man's sepulcher.

It is now the third day after this, and I invite you to go with me to the tomb. What do we find? The tomb is empty. Those who visited it early in the morning did not find Him, although the grave clothes mutely testified that He had been there; but they were told in simple language, "He is not here, but is risen." Luke 24:6. I know that I am treading on controversial ground, and that skepticism has a ready objection to every such statement; but I have found that all such objections can be met in a satisfactory way. The theories of body-snatching, of suspended animation, of vision and of illusion, will not survive candid examination. To account for the facts in the case on either of these theories of the rationalist is as difficult as to disprove the law of gravity while you are sitting under a tree with the apples dropping upon your head.

We ought to note some of the facts. The former friends and associates of Jesus did not expect His resurrection (John 20:9), and would not believe the first report of it (Mark 16:9-14), but were later convinced by overwhelming testimony, and "were glad, when they saw the Lord." John 20:20. The change in the attitude of these former followers of His was nothing short of marvelous, and cannot be explained on the ground of vision or illusion. When the mob came upon Jesus at night, "then all the disciples left Him, and fled." Matt. 26:56. At His trial Peter, the leader of His followers, most emphatically ignored Him, saying, "I know not the man." Matt. 26:74. They were all sorely disappointed when Jesus did not work some miracle to save Himself from the

murderous intent of His enemies; and with Him they buried their hopes in Joseph's tomb, and all decided to return to their former manner of life (John 21:2, 3), hoping doubtless in this way to forget their sad mistake concerning the

Galilean and His mission. But the same Jesus who while with them in their boat had miraculously intervened to save them from losing their lives by shipwreck (Matt. 14:24-27), now intervened to save them from making shipwreck of their faith, and as their net held under the strain of 153 fishes (John 21:5, 6), so their faith held, although it embraced Him whom they had taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb (John 21:7). When he beheld the wounded hands and side, even doubting Thomas was led to exclaim, "My Lord and my God." John 20:28.

Under the guidance and in the power of the risen Jesus these men gave such testimony to the resurrection that thousands were convinced by a single address, and the high priest was constrained to say, "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." Acts 5:28. The cowardly deserters had become the courageous defenders of the crucified and risen Jesus. What had wrought such a transformation? The living Christ had revealed Him self to them on ten different occasions, and they knew Him. I have these facts and much more as the ground of my faith in His resurrection, and the theories of unbelieving hearts do not shake it.

Some one has said that the Christian church was built upon the empty tomb, and there is a suggestion of truth in such a statement, but I prefer to declare that the foundation of the church is the God-man who voluntarily permitted Himself to be laid in the grave, apparently conquered by death, in order that He might break the power of the last enemy, and be acclaimed as the conqueror of death. And the Christian church is the living monument of His victory. One must ignore some of the most significant facts in the history of nineteen centuries in the effort to deny the resurrection.

"No human being that ever trod the earth has left behind a representation of himself more clear and living, and more certain in its truthfulness, than is that which we possess of

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Him who was known at first as 'the prophet of Nazareth in Galilee;'" and no human being has ever exerted such an influence upon humanity and upon human history, and no one has ever left and is still leaving behind him in the annals of history such incontrovertible evidence of his living presence and unconquerable power. The events of nineteen centuries testify to the truthfulness of the announcement of the ascended Lord to the apostle John on the isle of Patmos: "I am the first and the last, and the Living One; and I became [margin] dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades." Rev. 1:17, 18. He was nailed to the cross, but He is still alive. The resurrection makes the connection between these two statements.

It was no mere vision when Stephen saw "Jesus standing on the right hand of God." Acts 7:55. Jesus was really there, having been raised from the dead and having ascended to heaven. The experience of the apostle Paul on the Damascus road cannot be satisfactorily disposed of by labeling it "hallucination;" for not only was there the audible voice declaring, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts 9:5), but the blinded eyes bore convincing testimony to the reality of the divine glory. Acts 9:8.

Furthermore, the New Testament documents, written from twenty to sixty years after the crucifixion, deal with the resurrection as an established fact, and interpret its meaning to us. To them Christianity stands or falls with the resurrection, as plainly appears from their own statements:

"If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we witnessed of God that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised: and if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." 1 Cor. 15:14-17.

Every forgiven sinner who knows in his experience "the power of an endless life" (Heb. 7:16), is a living witness to the reality of the resurrection. A dead Christ cannot be a saviour from the bondage of sin. A dead Christ cannot flood the soul with His own glory, and impart grace for acceptable

68

service. For my own part I am abundantly convinced that the same Jesus who wrought His divine works of forgiving grace and saving mercy in Judea and Galilee and Samaria, has wrought in resurrection power to deliver me from the thralldom of sin, and to impart a new life of victory. To this I gladly testify.

We must not overlook the most significant fact that He who died as our representative was also raised as our representative, and that His resurrection is the assurance of our resurrection. God "made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), and raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus." Eph. 2:5, 6. This is true of every Christian, and will be demonstrated in experience at the last day. And even as to our present life, "from the great fact that Christ has risen from the dead, proceed all the influences by which Christians are made in life and attainments, here and hereafter, like Him." And so we may each join in the earnest desire of the apostle Paul, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection." Phil. 3:10. In fact, this resurrection power is cited as being the measure of the power to be revealed in the believing Christian to give him the victory. Eph. 1:19, 20.

I must not forget to mention that the death and resurrection of Christ, the last Adam, has changed death into a sleep for all members of the human family, whether they believe on Christ or not. The representative principle still prevails: "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:22. The marked distinction between the righteous and the wicked is not fully manifested until after the resurrection. They all sleep, but "the hour cometh,

in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." John 5:28, 29. The death which is our common lot here, is not the penalty for Adam's sin, as has already been pointed out, but it is the consequence, and a universal consequence. The punishment which is meted out in the judgment, is due to the all inclusive sin of rejecting Christ, who offers Himself

69

self as the Saviour, and so rests wholly upon the act of each individual, rather than upon the one act of the generic man, the first Adam.

Christ was raised from the dead. Death has been conquered. The hope of the future life rests upon a solid basis. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." 1 Thess. 4:14. The resurrection forms the link between our life in this mortal body, subject to temptation and trial, and our life of eternal joy and perfect blessedness in the immediate presence of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, for "we shall see Him even as He is." 1 John 3:2.

The risen Christ is the holder of the keys of death and of Hades, having gained them through His own death and resurrection. I have surrendered all to him, and He is the Lord of my life. If it be His will, I will rejoice to be among those who will greet Him with exceeding joy when He comes with the clouds; but if not, I shall sleep in confidence of the resurrection, "for I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12. "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:57.

A Present Christ

The death and the resurrection of Christ are the great central facts of His earthly experience, as appears plainly in the New Testament record, and we must always ascribe to them the value which justly attaches to them; but His work as Saviour was not completed when He came forth from Joseph's tomb and returned to the Father. He "was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19), but His interest in us, and His active service in our behalf, were not thus brought to a close. While here upon earth, Jesus of Nazareth was a victor in every hour of temptation (Heb. 4:15) and conquered the world (John 16:33); but if He came merely to set us an example which we are to try to imitate, we would soon become disappointed, disheartened, defeated. The gospel is not an exhortation to live the life of Jesus, but the good news of the provision made

71

so that Jesus may live His own life in us. The difference between these two experiences is just the difference between failure and success in the Christian life.

In the instruction which we usually designate as the sermon on the mount, given in the early part of His ministry, Jesus emphasized the conditions of citizenship in the kingdom of heaven, and the duties and obligations which are involved in such citizenship. He gave a more severe interpretation of the law of God than is found in the Old Testament, showing that it demanded right thoughts as well as outwardly correct conduct (Matt. 5:27, 28), and insisted that a formal profession could not possibly be substituted for entire conformity to the will of God. Matt. 7:21. Then in His daily life He revealed just what it meant to translate His own words into practical experience, and so taught us what it means to be a Christian. But He did not stop there, and for this I am indeed thankful. He not only left us an example that we should walk in His steps (1 Peter 2:21), but He guaranteed our success. This guaranty is found in His

instruction concerning the coming and the work of the Holy Spirit, who is absolutely indispensable to our success in the Christian life. This is what I now wish to make clear, with the hope that it will inspire renewed courage in the heart of every one to whom this message comes.

By the coming of Christ in the flesh a fuller and clearer revelation of the gospel of the grace of God was made known, as He Himself recognized in these words; "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not." Matt. 13:16, 17. The glory of God which could be discerned behind the veil of the tabernacle in the wilderness, was revealed as saving grace and living truth when the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us, and the gospel of the sanctuary became a clearer message as the typical was supplanted by the reality. But there was still more to follow. The fullness of blessing was yet to be realized. A more intimate relationship was anticipated in the purpose of God between Jesus and the believer than was experienced while He dwelt among His disciples;

72

and concerning this more spiritual dispensation our Lord Himself gave instruction on that memorable night just before He went to the cross.

Let us give attention to the simple words which conveyed to that little company of Galileans the most blessed message to which the ears of mortal men have ever listened. Only the Teacher of divine truth can impart their full meaning to us. He who, according to the prediction of the prophet, had been despised and rejected of men (Isa. 53:3), had now come to the closing scenes of His mission-the climax of His whole life of devotion to the good of others. He faced the agony of Gethsemane and the heartbreaking burden of Calvary; and yet, instead of seeking for sympathy and comfort from His

associates, He spoke to them with words of cheer: "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in Me." John 14:1. These are the words of Him who, being man, could fully appreciate the sadness which ruled the minds of His immediate friends, and being more than man, could provide the remedy for their sadness. To the last He presents Himself, not as an example of faith, but as the true object of faith. Trustful confidence in Him is the only real cure for all human trouble. So it was then; so it is now.

In spite of their failure to appreciate fully what Jesus might be to them, these men of Galilee had found in Him a companion highly prized, and His announcement that He was about to leave them filled their hearts with dark forebodings. Why need He leave them? Why should they be deprived of the presence of their best Friend? Would not we have felt the same, if we had been of their number? It was to dispel these gloomy anticipations and to open up to them, and to us, the final purpose of His mission, that Jesus then spoke to them of the coming and the mission of the Comforter: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth." John 14:16, 17.

Note the new word here met with for the first time, "Comforter." No new agent is here designated. We have read of the Spirit from the first chapter of Genesis, but now in the historical development of the gospel of our salvation, the

Spirit enters upon a new mission, introducing a new dispensation, and it is fitting that a new title should be applied. When the Son of God assumed our human nature and took up His residence in a new way upon earth in order that He might accomplish the work assigned to Him in providing salvation for us, He did not cease to be God, but at the same time applied to Himself a new designation-the Son of man. He was the same person, and yet different. So when the Spirit of God, in succession to the God-man, took up His

residence upon earth in a new way in order that He might accomplish the work assigned to Him in providing salvation for us, it was fitting that this new relationship should be recognized by a new title-the Comforter.

The world deals with the material, the tangible, but is wholly unable to treat as real that which it cannot see. Therefore the world cannot receive the Comforter, "for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." John 14:17. "We see at once that Jesus presents the Comforter as a real person, but as invisible, and here many seem to be thrown into perplexity. The difficulty is that they are trying to define and to limit infinite beings by finite terms, giving to these terms the same meanings as when they are applied to the members of the human family.

In order to avoid error in the interpretation of the truth revealed to us through the Spirit of God, we must allow the same Spirit to convey to us the meaning of the terms employed. That is to say, we must compare scripture with scripture, and thus allow Scripture to be its own interpreter. So far as I can find, the word "person" is not used in the Bible as applied to any one of the Godhead. The apparent exception in Hebrews 1:3 disappears in the Revised Version. I do not object to the use of the word "person" in speaking of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but I urge that we must not depend upon the English dictionary and the use of the word as applied to finite beings, for its meaning when applied to the Godhead. To think of the Holy Spirit as a person, it is not necessary to think of Him as having a tangible body. Our bodies are designed to be His temple. Unless we learn to deal with the invisible persons who constitute

74

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75

the Godhead with the same sense of reality as we deal with our brothers and sisters in the flesh, we have not advanced

beyond the world. We must learn to endure, "as seeing Him who is invisible." Heb. 11:27.

In a few simple words Jesus now indicates the transition from the dispensation of the Son to the dispensation of the Spirit: "Ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you." John 14:17, 18. Jesus did not enter into a philosophical or psychological discussion of the personality of the Comforter, and neither shall I. What is clear is that Jesus regarded the Comforter as a real, though invisible, person, who would be His successor on earth, and yet so intimately identified with Himself that the coming of the Comforter would mean His own presence in the Spirit.

As the advent of the Son was the coming of the Father to the world, so the coming of the Comforter would be the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus, "I come unto you." Not only so, but this advent of the Comforter would be a concrete exposition of the bond of spiritual unity between the Father, the Son, and the believing disciple: "In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." John 14:20. Here we find the very essence of Christianity—not in a theoretical discussion of the nature and personality of each of the three persons of the Godhead, but in the experience of spiritual union between infinite and finite beings, rendered possible by the operation of the Holy Spirit of God now manifested as the Spirit of the God-man, in whom divinity and humanity are united. "The mystery which hath been hid for ages and generations," but which was made known at Pentecost, is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. 1:26, 27. The most gifted theologian cannot explain this mystery, but the humblest child of God may enter into the benefits which it entails.

Jesus desired to impress upon His disciples the comforting fact that His departure from them and His return to His Father did not really involve a separation from them, but that, on the contrary, the withdrawal of His bodily

presence was only preliminary to His presence with them in the Spirit,

76

and that His presence in the Spirit would be the means of manifold greater blessing than they could possibly enjoy so long as He continued with them in the flesh. This is the evident meaning of His own explanation of His departure to the Father: "Now I go unto Him that sent Me; and none of you asketh Me, Whither goest Thou? But because I have spoken these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you." John 16:5-7. Explanations and arguments are not required here. The simple fact is evident. The sending of the Comforter was a step in advance. The presence of the Comforter, the presence of Christ in the Spirit, would be better for His disciples, and for us, than His presence in the flesh. In other words, "Christ *in* you" is better than Christ *among* you. The union of Spirit with spirit is the closest possible fellowship, being the union of life with life, and is the experience toward which all the work of Jesus of Nazareth tended. The gift of the Comforter is the climax of all blessing.

Jesus continued; "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him." John 14:21. The evident impression created in the minds of His listeners was that He Himself, and not an influence emanating from Him, was to be revealed to them, and they failed to understand how such a privilege could be granted to them and the world not share in it. This led to the question of Judas: "Lord, what is come to pass that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" John 14:22. This inquiry led to a further unfolding of the blessing involved in the coming of the Comforter: "If a man love Me, he will keep My word: and My Father will love Him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John

14:23. The presence of both the Father and the Son is vouchsafed to us through the indwelling Spirit in the coming of the Comforter. What greater blessing, what greater privilege, could be desired?

From my own experience I am inclined to think that more, even among professed Christians, are inclined to regard

77

Christ as a Saviour up in heaven than to meditate upon Him as a Saviour dwelling within in all the power of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. I would not in the least even appear to belittle the work of Christ in heaven, for "He ever liveth to make intercession for" us (Heb. 7:25), but all the other work of Christ, even His sacrificial death on Calvary, would be of on avail if it were not for the office of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to make effective *in* us what Christ has wrought out *for* us.

I fear that Satan has been successful in shutting away from many the wondrous truth of the indwelling Christ, and in depriving them in large degree of the victorious power which is in Him who is Himself the power of God. My sincere wish is that this brief meditation upon these words of Jesus, uttered in the very shadow of the cross, may bring into the experience of each one of us a more vivid realization of His gracious presence and His keeping power.

The Covenant of Grace

When I become confused over the apparent chaos in world affairs, and am perplexed over some of my own trying experiences, and a suggestion of doubt about the love of God arises in my mind, I find an antidote for such a poisonous atmosphere by thinking of Jesus and Calvary. God does love us. His thoughts toward us are "thoughts of peace." Jer. 29:11. He has given us full proof of His love. What more could He do for us that He has not done? Isa. 5:4. "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He that spared not His own Son, but

delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:31, 32. Away with doubt and fear! "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee; because he trusteth

79

in Thee." Isa. 26:3. "O Jehovah, Thou art my God; I will exalt Thee, I will praise Thy name." Isa. 25:1.

In considering the wondrous love of God as revealed to us in redeeming us from sin and its dreadful consequences, it may throw light upon the whole problem of His manifested grace if we give some thought to the divine purpose in creating us. This is clearly stated in the Scriptures. God speaks of His sons and daughters as those "whom I have created for My glory." Isa. 43:7. And He further says of Israel, "Thou art My servant; Israel, in whom I will be glorified." Isa. 49:3.

Creation was an act of love on the part of a holy God in bringing into existence beings who could reveal the glory of His own love. Love formed us in His own image, that we might love. Gen. 1:26. Hence the fundamental law of our being, and the very purpose for which we have been redeemed, was expressed by our Lord when He was asked to distinguish between the commandments in the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets." Matt. 22:37-40. In our relation to God nothing can take the place of this love. "If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing." 1 Cor. 13:3. A burning body cannot be substituted for burning love. And why?-Because God made us to reveal His character of love by living with Him in the atmosphere of His love; anything short of this will not satisfy the heart of God.

Sin banishes love and engenders hatred. Sin seeks to abolish the law of love to God and man, and to put in its place the law of selfishness. Sin has no time or place for the worship of God, but sets up the idolatry of self. Sin must be dealt with in order that the purpose of God in our creation may not be thwarted, but that the image of God may be restored in us. And God has dealt with sin.

Man was originally crowned with glory and honor, and given dominion over the world (Ps. 8:5; Gen. 1:26), empowered

80

to reign upon a throne of love; but distrust of God dethroned him, and he became the slave of sin. The purpose of God in the gospel is to restore man to his place on the throne by renewing the love of God in his heart, and so enabling him to conquer selfishness; "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with Me in My throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne." Rev. 3:21. Love is the all-conquering power, and love will win.

The source and ground of our salvation is the grace of God, which is love dealing with sin. The assurance of this love manifested in saving grace is made known to us in the promises of God, which constitute the covenant of grace.²² The fundamental promises, designated as the "new covenant," are thus expressed; "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will accomplish [margin] a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I

81

took them by the hand to lead them forth out of the land of Egypt; for they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will covenant [margin] with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and on their heart also will I write them: and I will be to them a God, and

they shall be to Me a people: and they shall not teach every man his fellow citizen, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and their sins will I remember no more." Heb. 8:8-12.

That which clearly distinguishes the new covenant, the covenant of grace, from the covenant made with the fathers at Sinai, is that it consists wholly of promises made by God Himself, instead of being a compact based upon mutual promises. Both covenants have reference to the same law, and the object sought in both cases is the same,-obedience to that law. In the old covenant the blessings were conditioned upon the promise of the people (Ex. 19:8), who relied upon their own power to fulfill that promise, not realizing their need of a mediator; in the new covenant all depends upon the promises of God, and a mediator is provided. And so we read: "Now hath He obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises." Heb. 8:6. The new covenant, the covenant of grace, is as much better than the old covenant, the covenant of works, as the promises of God are better than the promises of man.

But the moral law, which is to be written in the heart, is the law of love. It is the expression of the very nature of the God of love as interpreted to us in the life and teachings of Christ, who said, "I have kept My Father's commandments." John 15:10. To keep this law is to love as God loves. To the natural heart this is impossible, and so God has promised to give us a new heart: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Eze. 36:26. In harmony with this provision is the prayer of David: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a steadfast [margin]

spirit within me." Ps. 51:10. We may call this conversion, or regeneration, or the new birth, or the new creation; but in any case it is the impartation of a new life from God, that life which is love, and is revealed in loving. Those who have this experience are "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), and that nature is expressed in obedience to the divine law of love.

"When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new covenant promise is fulfilled, 'I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.' And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? . . . Here is the true test. If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in us, our feelings, our thoughts, our purposes, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God as expressed in the precepts of His holy law."

And this experience is guaranteed to us by the promise of God, and is provided for us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of love: for we know that "the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us." Rom. 5:5. "Salvation is of Jehovah." Jonah 2:9.

Obedience to the law of love is not a hardship, not a burdensome duty imposed upon us as the price of blessing from God, but the fruit and the test of our fellowship with God through the Spirit. But at the same time it is the absolute condition of maintaining our standing before God.

"At the very root of the relation of a creature to his God, and of God admitting the creature to His fellowship, lies the thought of obedience. . . . In the promise of the new covenant it takes the first place. God engages to circumcise the hearts of His people-in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ-to love God with all their heart, and to obey His commandments. The crowning gift of Christ's exaltation was the Holy Spirit, to bring salvation to us as an inward thing. The first covenant demanded obedience,

and failed because it could not find it. The new covenant was expressly made to provide for obedience. To a life in the full enjoyment of the new covenant blessing, obedience is essential."

The enabling power for such a life of obedience is ministered to us in this most helpful promise: "I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall

84

keep Mine ordinances, and do them." Eze. 36:27. This means simply that God in Christ has personally assumed the responsibility for our life of love and obedience, according to the covenant promise which He has made in these words: "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from following them, to do them good; and I will put My fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from Me." Jer. 32:39, 40. This is the gospel of the grace of God. This is the covenant of grace. Here is the distinguishing feature of Christianity as interpreted to us by Inspiration. By promise and by oath God has pledged Himself as the Saviour of those who trust in Him, that "we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us." Heb. 6:18. "Jehovah, Thou wilt ordain peace for us; for Thou hast also wrought all our works for us." Isa. 26:12. Blessed assurance! Strong encouragement indeed!

Another feature of the new covenant, the covenant of grace, which marks its superiority over the old covenant, is that it has a gloriously efficient mediator, even Jesus the Son of God. We have not come to Mt. Sinai, but to Mount Zion, and "to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant" (Heb. 12:24); to Jesus who has shared with us in our experiences of temptation (Heb. 4:15) and knows our need: "for there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, Himself

man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all." 1 Tim. 2:5, 6. Through His mediation all the blessings of the new covenant are ministered unto us. By His life of suffering obedience, culminating in His death on the cross, He has made atonement for our sins. Exalted at the right hand of God and sitting upon the throne of grace, He has "become the surety of a better covenant" (Heb. 7:22), and through His mediation the gifts of God are supplied to us, and all the requirements of God are wrought in us. Through His mediation the covenant of grace, instead of being a mutual agreement, is resolved into His "precious and exceeding great promises" (2 Peter 1:4), of which He Himself is the

85

yea: "for how many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the yea: wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us." 2 Cor. 1:20. Apart from His mediation, we should be utterly helpless, "having no hope and without God in the world." Eph. 2:12.

But some one may feel like suggesting, "You are making it too easy for the transgressor by placing all the responsibility for success in the Christian life upon God." Do not misunderstand me. There is one thing which God does not do, and which He does not permit any other person to do. He has given to us freedom of will, and He will not disregard it. I can say No to God, and He will be governed accordingly, but I must take the inevitable consequences. In this sense I am the arbiter of my own destiny. I can take my own choice. This privilege and its meaning were recognized by Moses, the man of God, when he solemnly declared to the people, "I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed." Deut. 30:19. There is no power which will compel us to choose to commit sin. There is no power which will compel us to choose to do righteousness. We alone are responsible for the choice which we make. Therefore we

commit no sin without first consenting to it, and an act is charged against us as sin when we consent to do that which we know to be contrary to the will of God.

Judas was a traitor at heart before he actually betrayed his Lord. He deliberately chose to do the infamous deed, for we read that "he consented, and sought opportunity to deliver Him unto them in the absence of the multitude." Luke 22:6. We imitate Judas when we consent to commit a known sin. The will determines our way of life.

"Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, and your thoughts will be in harmony with Him."

86

Such are the results of making a right choice.

I do not need to be told that the god of this world will use every possible means to keep us from choosing to serve God. I know it in my own experience. He paints the glories of the world in glowing colors, and promises all that the natural heart desires, if we will only choose to worship him. But we must not forget that "there is no truth in him," and that "he is a liar, and the father thereof." John 8:44. In his service all joy ends in bitterness of soul, all selfish pleasure destroys the capacity to love, and all hope is quenched in everlasting despair. Do not listen to his fables of deceit.

From the first promise of victory over the serpent, made in Eden (Gen. 3:15), to the last promise of the advent of our Lord in glory to reward those who have been redeemed by His loving mercy (Rev. 22:12), we are dealing with the covenant of grace. The call to us now, as to His people of

old, is, "Come ye, and join yourselves to Jehovah in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten." Jer. 50:5.

"Saving faith is a transaction, by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God."

Let each one of us say with absolute sincerity, "Into this covenant of a wholehearted love in God and in me I do with my whole heart now enter." Thrice blessed is he who will thus accept the inestimable blessings of the covenant of grace.

A Merciful and Faithful High Priest

I have an idea that comparatively few church members' think seriously of Christ as a real person who is doing a real work for us in a real place. It strikes me that our religion is apt to be too much a matter of feeling rather than of fellowship (1 John 1:3), of sentiment rather than of spirit (Gal. 5:25), and that we need to cultivate a stronger sense of reality in our relation to God. Perhaps some study of the office and work of Christ as our high priest may contribute something toward this experience.

From the time of Moses to the first advent of our Lord, interrupted by the period of the captivity in Babylon and by the desecration of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes, the people of God were familiar with the services of the sanctuary. The continual ministry of the priests by courses, the many sacrifices offered, both by the priest in his representative capacity and by the people individually, the variety of gifts presented, and the three great annual convocations for the celebration of the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the day of Atonement, constituted a divine object lesson concerning

88

sin, righteousness, and judgment. Along with these services, whose constant repetition testified that they were not final, but were the shadows of better things to come (Heb. 10:1, 2), was the intimation, brief but significant, that Jehovah

Himself, the promised Messiah, as the Godman, would sit upon the throne of grace as the true priest after the rank of Melchizedek. Ps. 110:4. In the epistle to the Hebrews, the one book of the New Testament in which the seven foundation facts of the gospel are combined in a single presentation of the work of Christ,³ we find the divine interpretation of the ancient typical services when reality took the place of shadows, and the merciful and faithful High Priest was made known in His relation to our Christian experience. This interpretation deserves our earnest attention.

The fact of sin is assumed in this epistle. There was no need of proving its existence." The cross had demonstrated its terrible reality. The history of the human family had revealed its destructive ravages. The great question is, What provision, if any, has been made for our salvation from sin? It is the purpose of our epistle to furnish a clear and satisfying answer.

It is significant that, although the mediatorial priesthood of Christ is the leading theme, the word "priest" does not occur until the end of the second chapter, Heb. 2:17. The first chapter emphasizes the deity and the exalted office of the Son of God, while the second chapter bears equally plain testimony to His humanity and His sacrifice for sin. This is preliminary to, and a preparation for, the unfolding of His priesthood. This way of handling the subject suggests what is afterward made quite clear, that the priesthood of Christ, was not a matter of arbitrary appointment, not an inherited office independent of character. His priesthood was inherent in His Sonship. Heb. 5:5, 6. It was because He was the eternal Son of God who assumed humanity as the Son of man, that He could be "a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." Heb. 2:17. His person made possible His efficacious

priesthood. In the very nature of His being as Son He was the only and the exclusive mediator of the mind and the operation of the Father. Matt. 11:27. We must then consider first those characteristics of His person which declare His fitness for His position as priest and mediator.

The names applied to Him in the first chapter testify to His absolute deity, He is not only called the Son of God (Heb. 1:2), but He is also addressed as God (Heb. 1:8) and Lord (Heb. 1:10), and an eternity of being is ascribed to Him in the simple statement, "Thou continuest" (Heb. 1:11), which is later developed in plain words; "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and forever." Heb. 13:8. He is not simply a reflector of the glory of God, but is Himself self the forthshining of that glory, an embodiment of the very essence of God. Heb. 1:3.

The reference to the relation of the Son to the original creation is not an empty rhetorical flourish for emphasis, but is designed to establish confidence in the efficiency of the same person as priest and mediator for sin. The eternal Son was the Mediator in the creation of the universe, for we read: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands" (Heb, 1:10); "Through whom also He made the worlds"

90

(Heb. 1:2); and, "All things were made through Him." John 1:3. The Bible is not a textbook in physical science, and these statements are not made merely to throw light upon the method of the original creation. The science of all sciences is the science of salvation, and when the work of God in the material universe is rightly interpreted to us, our darkened minds are better able to understand the science of salvation. "For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity." Rom. 1:20. The visible illustrates the invisible.

I have now to show the relation between these facts concerning the original creation and the real subject of our epistle, the mediatorial priesthood of Christ. This relation is an important one. Three phases of mediation are in evidence in this first chapter; mediation in the creation of the visible universe (Heb. 1:2), mediation in the administration of the same visible universe (Heb. 1:3), and mediation for sins (Heb. 1:3). The great truth which is taught is that the same person, the Son of God, is the one mediator. What our eyes are constantly beholding about us, the astonishing revelations made to us through the aid of the microscope and the telescope, and the mighty power displayed in maintaining order throughout the universe, testify convincingly to the efficiency of our Mediator.

"Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number; He calleth them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from Jehovah, and the justice due to me is passed away from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might He increaseth strength." Isa. 40:26-29.

The Mediator in creation is the Mediator in redemption, the new creation. The power which is mediated in upholding

all things, is mediated to uphold those who accept Jesus as their Mediator. An impersonal power cannot mediate itself. Here is the weakness of the theory of evolution. Power mediated by any other than one who loves us and seeks our good, is a constant menace. The gospel of our salvation is the good news that the power of a loving God mediated by the Son of His love in creating all things and in upholding all things, the power which was revealed in the works of Christ

when He stilled the tempest, healed the sick, and raised the dead, is available and is being mediated in the work of redemption. This is the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of the covenant of grace.

The second chapter of our epistle opens up to us some of the deep things of God. The humiliation and the sufferings of the eternal Son, and the purpose of such humiliation and sufferings, are here set forth. The name Jesus, given to Him by the angel before He was born of the virgin Mary, is the only one employed in this connection. We behold Him "made a little lower than the angels" (Heb. 2:9), and tasting "death for every man." Heb. 2:9. Though he is the author of our salvation, yet He is made "perfect through sufferings." Heb. 2:10. He takes His place as one among the members of the human family, identifying Himself with them so fully that "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb. 2:11. He accepts the life of trust in another (Heb. 2:13), not only in order to set us an example, but to make such a life possible and successful for us.

The mystery which was "kept in silence through times eternal" (Rom. 16:25) is now presented in its relation to the mediatorial priesthood. Those who are to be rescued through suffering were "brought forth in iniquity" (Ps. 51:5), and are "by nature children of wrath." Eph. 2:3. Sin had been a ruling power in flesh and blood for long centuries, and had successfully resisted all human effort to de throne it. Sin was inbred in flesh and blood. The flesh and blood of the whole human family had become tainted, sinful, the home of sin. The remedy for sin must be applied to those who are sharers in sinful flesh and blood, enabling them to

92

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93

live a life of righteousness even in the same sinful flesh and blood. This requirement was fully met. Jesus was "born of a woman." Gal. 4:4.

"It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocency in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam, He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us an example of a sinless life."

He partook of the same flesh and blood which we have, coming to us just where we are, that He might supply our need. The ladder which Jacob saw at Bethel was "set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven." Gen. 28:12. "If that ladder had failed by a single step of reaching the earth, we should have been lost. But Christ reaches us where we are. He took our nature and overcame, that we through taking His nature might overcome. Made 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' (Rom. 3:3), He lived a sinless life." Because He came to give help to the seed of Abraham, "it behooved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." Heb. 2:17. What a wondrous revelation of divine wisdom and divine love! Such an amazing way of saving us was certainly devised in the councils of heaven.

We must not overlook the important revelation here made, that the death of Jesus was the prominent feature of His vocation, He partook of the same flesh and blood which we have, "that through death He might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. 2:14:15. Satan overreached himself when he induced an apostate mob to demand the crucifixion of Jesus. Through the cross Jesus was the conqueror, and the prince of this world was cast out. John 12:31. At the cross there was signed in blood the

emancipation proclamation for a race in the bondage of sin.
By His victory over death

94

Jesus "abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10. This is the good news which is proclaimed from Calvary. The cross was an indispensable step to the mediatorial priesthood. The true Priest must also be the victim. The divine Mediator must mediate His own life. This is the test of the genuine gospel.

It is worth while to emphasize the qualifications of our "merciful and faithful High Priest." He is the eternal Son of God and He is God. John 1:1. He acted as the mediatorial agent in the creation of all things, and continues to act in upholding all things. He took the same flesh and blood in which we share. By His death He conquered the devil, and brought deliverance to those who were his captives. He is both victim and priest. No merely human being can claim to possess these qualifications, and therefore no merely human being can really be our "merciful and faithful high priest." Jesus is also the exclusive mediator. "For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 2:5. Jesus so completely identified Himself with our common humanity that there is no place for a human mediator to bring us to Him, and He is so completely identified with God that there is no need of a supposedly semidivine person to emphasize and make efficacious His plea in our behalf. Jesus, the God-man, is the only and the all-sufficient priest and mediator. We are safe in committing our cases to Him. "We should be willing to trust everything to the hand that was nailed to the cross for us." "For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 2:18.

Our Priest Upon the Throne

In the beginning the Son of God, because He was the Son of God, sat upon the throne of the universe, reigning jointly

with the Father. In the councils of eternity He consented to leave this throne, to come to this earth, to assume human nature, to accept the liabilities which sin had created, and by meeting those liabilities, to save the human family from eternal bankruptcy. By His life of suffering obedience which culminated in His death on the cross, He atoned to the justice and the holiness of God for our sins. Rom. 5:19. His resurrection was the vindication of His claim that He was the Son of God. Rom. 1:4. He was received up into heaven (Mark 16:19), His sacrifice for us was accepted, and He "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. 1:3. The prophecy of Zechariah was now fulfilled; "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch; . . . and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall

96

be between them both." Zech. 6:12, 13. The King has returned to His throne, but He has now become "a merciful and faithful high priest" (Heb. 2:17), and His throne is the throne of grace. As priest-king He now dispenses the blessings which He won for His own through His humiliation.

The full significance of the typical sanctuary service is now revealed. The true sacrifice has been offered. The acceptable expiation for sin has been made. The priest who "hath been made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Heb. 7:16), who is "a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 5:6) ? has taken His place upon the throne of grace, and "He because He abideth forever, hath His priesthood unchangeable. Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7:24, 25.

And who is this priest? He is Jesus of Nazareth, Son of God, Son of man, the God-man. "The law appointeth men

high priests, having infirmity; but the word of the oath . . . appointeth a Son, perfected forevermore." Heb. 7:28.

And now comes the assurance which gives the practical turn to this whole discussion about the priesthood, and makes it an intensely personal matter: "Now in the things which we are saying the chief point is this: We have such a high priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man." Heb. 8:1, 2. Let us bring it close home. *We*, you and I, have such a high priest, whose priesthood is so superior to the priesthood after the order of Aaron. *We* have a high priest who "is able to save to the uttermost." *We* have a high priest who can be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." *We* have a high priest who "ever liveth to make intercession for" us. *We* have a high priest who officiates in "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched," the sanctuary in heaven, of which the earthly was a copy. *We* have a high priest who has entered "into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us" (Heb. 9:24), who "entered in once for all

97

into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." Heb. 9:12.

Sin has made it impossible for any member of the human family to appear before God in his own behalf. He could not endure the glory of God. There must be a mediator, a representative, to deal with his case. The God-man is such a mediator, such a representative. He became "a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." Heb. 2:17. This propitiation He made by offering up Himself as an atoning sacrifice for sin (Heb. 9:26), not in order to appease the wrath of an angry God, but to make forgiveness possible on the part of a loving God. God could not condone sin, and remain a righteous God. He must deal with sin in a way

consistent with His own character as a holy God, and without imperiling the stability of His government. This He has done by giving His own Son, and Himself in His Son, as the propitiation, the atoning sacrifice (1 John 2:2), for our sins, that

98

He might freely forgive and yet remain just. This is clearly stated in these words:

"Being justified [accounted righteous] freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in His blood, to show His righteousness because of the passing over of sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the showing, I say, of His righteousness at this present season: that He might Himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus." Rom. 3:24-26.

This great act of reconciliation, of redemption, through the cross, was the central purpose of His mission to this earth. Having accomplished this sacrificial work, He returned to heaven, sat down upon the throne of grace at the right hand of the Majesty, as minister of the true tabernacle, as the priest-king, and devoted Himself to making intercession for us.

I would like now to make as clear as I can just what is meant by making intercession for us, as I think there is quite a little misunderstanding about this matter. From the ordinary meaning of words as defined in the dictionary, it might be natural to interpret this intercession as indicating that it is the office of our Intercessor to make as powerful an appeal as possible to the heart of God to induce Him to be favorable to us and to overlook our transgressions of His holy law; but such a view does the greatest injustice to the character of God. It is not a question of injured feelings, but of justice and righteousness. Sin is not a mere mistake, an inadvertent departure from the accepted standard of conduct, but a willful rebellion against a holy God, which involves guilt and

demands the payment of a righteous penalty. The safety of the universe required that an adequate expiation should be made for such deep-seated guilt. This was provided for in the eternal covenant of grace made between the Father and the Son, and became a historical fact in the person and work of Christ, "who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity." Titus 2:14. And this expiation was made, not simply on behalf of those who gladly accept it, but

99

on behalf of all, even those who persist in active rebellion, for we read: "My little children, these things I write unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." 1 John 2:1, 2.

To atone for the sins of one person required such a sacrifice as would be sufficient to atone for the sins of all. Such is the heinous character of sin. It is not simply individual sins for which atonement must be made, but sin as sin is included.

But we must remember that there are two wills involved in this transaction, the will of God and the will of man, and that both must be absolutely free in their operation. God "would have all men to be saved" (1 Tim. 2:4), and He pleads with them to choose life that they may live (Deut.30:19); but having created man a free moral being, He cannot now force the will. It is therefore necessary that each individual should, by a definite act of his own will, accept the propitiation made for all, in order that it may be effective in his particular case. In other words, you and I must freely accept the atoning sacrifice made in our behalf, and must take Jesus Christ as our mediator and intercessor, committing our cases into His hands with confession of our sin, our helplessness, and our need, and surrendering our sinful lives to Him in order to receive His holy life. The cross is the pledge that He will

undertake for us, and that His intercession will have a successful issue.

Chief among the blessings which our Intercessor secures for us is the forgiveness of sins. He presents His righteousness, His own obedience, as our representative, as a prevailing plea in our behalf.

"We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of God's law. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in

100

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101

place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned."

Well might the psalmist exclaim; "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin." Rom. 4:7, 8. God has already reckoned sin to His Son and judged it upon Him, and this is the basis upon which it is justifiable for Him not to reckon it to us. Forgiveness rests upon propitiation, and the propitiation has already been made. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. The intercession of Christ brings this blessing to us.

Apparently supplementing the blessing of forgiveness, and yet in reality involved in it, is the impartation of the Holy Spirit. While just in the shadow of the atoning cross Jesus declared to His disciples, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever." John 14:16. This gift was made possible through

the glorification of the Son of God in His death, resurrection, and ascension. John 7:38, 39.

"Christ's ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. . . . When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers, as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people."

What in His state of humiliation Christ said He would pray for, was supplied to His disciples and to us as the result of His intercession in a state of exaltation. In the work of Christ as our high priest we find the true explanation of that remarkable experience on the day of Pentecost, as stated by the apostle Peter: "Being therefore at the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise

102

of the Holy Spirit, He hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear." Acts 2:33. The coming of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, to enter upon His mission as the vicegerent of Christ, marked the glorification of the Son of God as priest-king upon the throne of grace, and was the consummation of His sacrificial mission to this world.

Right here I wish to emphasize the two phases of the work of Christ in our behalf in solving the problem of sin. In His self-sacrificing obedience, "even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8), He atoned for the guilt of sin and set us free from its penalty. This is certainly good news, but there is much more. The forgiveness of sins is only the beginning of the experience of a Christian, and the same

Priest-King who delivered us from the guilt of sin has made provision to save us from the power of sin. We are justified by the blood of the cross, but we are justified in order that we may live above the power of sin. By the power of the indwelling life which is ministered to us from the throne of grace, we have the victory in every hour of temptation, and can testify to the efficiency of our Surety. The godly life is the incontrovertible proof that our justification is genuine. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Matt. 7:20.

In the death and resurrection of Christ, the Son of God and the Son of man, we find the ground of the work of the Priest-King upon the throne.

"In the cross we see the Priest and the priesthood; in the resurrection, the King and the royal power. To the Priest belong the absolution and the cleansing and the justifying; to the King, the impartation of blessing to the absolved and the cleansed and the justified."

Happy is he who can say without mental reservation, "Jesus is my priest-king; He ever liveth to make intercession for me."

The Gospel of the Sabbath

We live in a world of unrest. Sin has set everything awry. Great numbers live unsatisfied lives, although constantly seeking for satisfaction. Many are carrying a load of anxiety which is crushing the joy out of life and making their service bitter with hard bondage. The struggle for existence, the apparent triumph of injustice, and the misfortunes which never seem to come singly, are bringing a bitterness of soul and a hardness of heart into the experience of a larger number than we are wont to think. To such the most optimistic philosophy becomes a mockery, and exhortations to virtue and happiness are the mere mouthings of hopelessness and despair. With minds distraught and nerves frazzled, they seek to forget their troubles in a whirl of

excitement which often ends in tragedy. Angels weep and Satan rejoices when the hope of better things is thus extinguished, and the light of life goes out in a horror of great darkness. Are such experiences the inevitable lot of the human family? Is there no hope of deliverance from such a living death?

104

If we accept the evolutionary philosophy and rely upon "resident forces" as the only conquering power, we must resign ourselves to the principle of the survival of the physically fittest, even though they may be morally the most unfit, and regard the sufferings of the many as the necessary accompaniment to the advancement of the few. Such a view may nourish the pride of those who regard themselves as the fortunate few, but to average people, who constitute the great majority, it will mean the car of Juggernaut with a different label. It does not solve the problem for the man at the bottom of the pit to know that he is one of the rounds of the human ladder by which others have climbed to safety. He is still left in the pit, an unwilling sacrifice for the benefit of the few. The philosophy of continuity which shuts out all interference from without, is cold and heartless, and leaves us hopeless and "without God in the world." Eph. 2:12. It is like the mirage to the thirsty and fainting traveler, which may inspire a temporary hope, but only to deepen his despair. It is a base counterfeit.

There is only one cure for restlessness, and it is found through the work of Him who said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28. Sin is the root cause of all our troubles, and Jesus Christ gives rest from sin. For this our hearts cry out.

"O where shall rest be found-
Best for the weary soul?
'Twere vain the ocean depths to sound,
Or pierce to either pole."

The answer is found in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to this we will now give our attention, that we may enter into this rest.

There are many standpoints from which we may study the gospel of our salvation, but now we shall do so from the standpoint of the Sabbath. And first remember that the Sabbath was instituted and given to man before the entrance of sin into the world. God "rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it He rested from

105

all His work which God had created and made." Gen. 2:2, 3. Four things are here stated:

1. God rested on the seventh day.
2. God blessed the seventh day.
3. God hallowed the seventh day.

The reason for thus blessing and hallowing this particular day was that God rested on that day.

No other day was ever treated in this way, and because it has thus been treated it is distinguished by two expressions, "the seventh day" and "the Sabbath day." Do not overlook the important fact that the seventh day is God's rest day, and that He blessed it and gave it to man before the fellowship between God and man had been disturbed by sin. God created man and blessed him on the sixth day (Gen. 1:27, 28, 31), and to man, who had already been blessed, He gave the day which He had blessed, having Himself rested from all His work on that day.

This is the origin of the Sabbath. It was instituted before the reign of sin began, and it will continue after the reign of sin has come to an end. Isa. 66:22, 23. It is the perpetual memorial of that going forth of the power of God whereby the life of God became clothed with visible forms. "The invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made,

even His everlasting power and divinity." Rom. 1:20. "That which hath been made was life in Him." John 1:3, 4, margin.

By virtue of his having been created in the divine image with the capacity to recognize and worship God, man was entitled to, and was granted, the privilege of most intimate communion with his Maker, the fellowship of life with life, of spirit with spirit, than which there can be no closer union. Such fellowship could be maintained only so long as the heart of man was in tune with the heart of God; and when man deliberately chose a way of life out of harmony with the will of his Creator, he forfeited all right to, and all capacity for, the privilege and blessing of communion with God. Had it not been for the provision made "before times eternal"

106

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107

(2 Tim. 1:9) in the gospel of the grace of God, man would have utterly perished when he by his own act cut himself off from the life of God. Voluntary obedience to the will of God is the only possible basis for fellowship with God.

Before man was sent forth from the garden of Eden, there was proclaimed to him the good news of victory to be gained over the enemy through the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15)-victory through suffering-the assurance of rest from sin. Of this rest the original Sabbath became both the reminder and the pledge, and so the Sabbath had its place both in the law and in the gospel. When the meaning of love to God and love to one's neighbor was developed in a definite way by the voice of God Himself at Sinai, the Sabbath was given a central place (Ex. 20:8-11), and the reason for its observance was clearly stated. And when the gospel of salvation through the mediatorial work was proclaimed by instituting the services of the sanctuary, and the possibility of fellowship with God was thus made known, the Sabbath was appropriately made the sign of the creative power which alone can sanctify a sinner. Note these words; "Verily ye

shall keep My Sabbaths: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am Jehovah who sanctifieth you." Ex. 31:13.

I wish to emphasize this connection between the Sabbath and the gospel of sanctification, as established by the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is the ever-recurring reminder of God's rest from all His work at the close of the week of creation, and in the gospel of the grace of God it becomes the sign and the pledge to man of the restoration of that rest from sin which is the experience of sanctification and the basis of a restored fellowship which was forfeited through sin. The fitness of the Sabbath to be such a sign and pledge becomes apparent when we consider that the same creative power which was exhibited in the original work of bringing the world into existence, and which operated through the mediating agency of the eternal Son of God (Heb. 1:2), is the power of God unto salvation when mediated through the same Son of God in the new creation (Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 5:17), whereby the

108

image of God is restored in the soul, and the fellowship interrupted by sin is renewed in Christ.

The spiritual significance of the Sabbath is clearly set forth in the third and fourth chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews. The experience of the children of Israel is taken for the basis of the instruction. They were promised rest in a land out of which the Lord was to drive their enemies before them, if they would be obedient to His voice, but their failure to obey led to the loss of that rest. Thus it is stated: "To whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that were disobedient? And we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief." Heb. 3:18, 19. Immediately there follows a warning lest the experience of Israel should be repeated in the Christian church: "Let us fear therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. For indeed

we have had good tidings preached unto us, even as also they: but the word of hearing did not profit them, because it was not united by faith with them that heard. For we who have believed do enter into that rest." Heb. 4:1-3.

Plainly it is the rest of faith which is here considered, the rest of soul which comes by believing on Christ as the Saviour from sin, the rest which is forfeited through unbelief, which means disobedience. But it is equally plain that this rest of soul is in some way directly connected with the seventhday Sabbath, for there follow immediately these statements: "He hath said somewhere of the seventh day on this wise, And God rested on the seventh day from all His works; and in this place again, They shall not enter into My rest." Heb. 4:4, 5. This connection is simple and significant. The seventh day is God's Sabbath, His day of rest, in which He rested from His work. "He rested, and was refreshed." Ex. 31:17. After man's rest in God was disturbed by sin, the gospel made provision for the restoration of this rest through the operation of the creative power of God in the new creation, and physical rest on the seventh day became the sign of the spiritual rest, the rest of soul, which results from

109

the saving work of Christ. The rest which Joshua endeavored to give to the children of Israel was not the final rest, and so we read: "There remaineth therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest hath himself also rested from his works, as God did from His." Heb.4:9, 10. The original work of God in creation was absolutely perfect, for "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." Gen. 1:31. But as for man, "there is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one." Rom. 3:12. To rest from our own works and to enter into God's rest is therefore to cease from our sinful works and to accept the finished work of Christ in our behalf, and the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is the outward sign of such an experience.

The gospel of the Sabbath is therefore the good news that Jehovah has "wrought all our works for us" (Isa. 26:12) by virtue of the new creation, and that the observance of the original Sabbath is our confession that we are saved by the

110

work of another rather than by our own work. This is our constant testimony to the saving power of Christ.

It is evident that there cannot be such a thing as the change of the Sabbath from one day to another. This has been attempted, just as foretold in prophecy (Dan. 7:25), but has not succeeded, and in the very nature of the case it never can succeed, since it is God's Sabbath which was given to man, and it is forever true that the seventh day is God's Sabbath, and that He never rested upon or blessed and sanctified any other day. The attempted change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week is a mark of apostasy from the true God and from the true gospel, an apostasy which is clearly foretold and described in the Holy Scriptures (2 Thess. 2:17), and which all lovers of Christ and His saving work should repudiate.

"If thou turn thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, and the holy of Jehovah honorable; and shalt honor it, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in Jehovah; and I will make thee to ride upon the high places of the earth; and I will feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it." Isa. 58:13, 14.

During all the centuries from creation until now there have always been those who have witnessed to the true gospel by the observance of the original Sabbath of the fourth commandment, even during the Dark Ages, when the apostasy was at its height and when the light of truth seemed almost extinguished; and to-day there is a world-wide movement which is proclaiming the everlasting gospel

"unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people" (Rev. 14:6); and while rejecting the evolutionary philosophy in all its forms, it is urging a return to the original gospel of the saving power of God in Christ, and to the observance of the original Sabbath of the Lord as the sign of His sanctifying power. I have testified this gospel in many lands, and have with my own eyes seen the fruit of it in every continent upon the face of the earth. To this gospel I call all my readers.

The Desire of Jesus Gratified

In the desire which Jesus expressed to His Father in the prayer just before the crucifixion, He gave a most winning interpretation to the divine goal of the gospel: "Father, I desire that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me." John 17:24. It may seem a strange idea to some, but we must recognize that the heart of God longs for fellowship with the heart of man. Love cannot abide alone. Love must have some object. Love seeks for a response from the object of love. The God of love created man for His glory by bestowing upon him a heart tuned in love to respond to infinite love, thus forming a basis for mutual fellowship between a holy God and man made in His image. Such was the fellowship mutually enjoyed before man, by his own

112

inexcusable act, cut the cord of love, and opened the channel of envy and hatred. Thus did man become the ally of Satan in his effort to overthrow the kingdom of love.

But infinite love could not be quenched even by the overt act of rebellion against it. The act was beyond measure hateful to God, but the doer of the act was still loved. And so the provision which originated in the heart of love "before times eternal" (2 Tim. 1:9) became operative in the gospel of the grace of God; "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." John 3:16. The Father sent the Son, and

the Son came voluntarily, in order to restore the reign of love, and thus to renew that communion which had been interrupted by a deliberate separation from God. The good news is that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses." 2 Cor. 5:19. But how much was involved in this divine act!

The specific goal of the covenant of grace was that God might come into the possession of man in his inmost being, and that man might come into possession of God in reality.

"The great lack of our religion is-we need more of God. We accept salvation as His gift, and we do not know that the only object of salvation, its chief blessing, is to fit us for, and bring us back to, that close intercourse with God for which we were created, and in which our glory in eternity will be found. . . . And that only is a true and good religious life, which brings us every day nearer to this God, which makes us give up everything to have more of Him. No obedience can be too strict, no dependence too absolute, no submission too complete, no confidence too implicit, to a soul that is learning to count God Himself its chief good, its exceeding joy."

This is Christianity indeed.

The gospel of the deliverance from the power of sin and of the goal of the covenant of salvation is forcibly set forth in the promises of God relating to the rescue of the children of Israel from their life of bondage in Egypt. Read thoughtfully this message to Moses:

"I have remembered My covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with an out

113

stretched arm, and with great judgments: and I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God; . . . I am Jehovah." Ex. 6:58.

Here we find the keynote which sounds throughout the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. The sum of all Christian experience is found in these words of Moses to the children of Israel:

"Thou hast avouched Jehovah this day to be thy God, and that thou wouldst walk in His ways, and keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His ordinances, and hearken unto His voice: and Jehovah hath avouched thee this day to be a people for His own possession, as He hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all His commandments; and to make thee high above all nations that He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor; and that thou mayest be a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, as He hath spoken. "Deut. 26:17-19.

God the possession of His people, and the people the possession of God, perfect obedience to all the commandments of God as the basis for mutual intercourse between God and His people, and a life of holiness unto God in complete separation from the world,-this is the meaning of the gospel. "My people" and "your God" (Isa. 40:1) are the constant reminders of the covenant of mercy, and the pledge of ultimate salvation. God will not forget "His people." Rom. 11:2. But the full realization of this blessed mutual fellowship between God and His people is necessarily deferred until the last barrier that separates is removed, and God and His people meet in the New Jerusalem. Of this we read:

"I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. . . . And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Rev. 21:1-3. This is the goal of the gospel.

I have now to show that this desire of Jesus that those who were given to Him should be with Him and behold His

glory and share in it, can be satisfied only through His completed work of grace. He took the flesh, that as the God-man "He should taste of death for every man." Heb. 2:9. He died for our sins. 1 Cor. 15:3. He was raised for our justification. Rom. 4:25. He ascended to heaven and took His place on the throne of grace, that as our priest He might present His atoning sacrifice as the just basis for the forgiveness of our sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Heb. 8:1, 2. But all this might have been done without attaining to the real goal of the gospel-that face-to-face intercourse which will be the exalted privilege of those who are with Him where He is. How is this to be realized? Let Him tell us.

On the night before His crucifixion, when He had reached the last stage of His suffering obedience, He made a promise to His disciples which assures the last act in the drama of redemption; "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

Many and precious are the blessings which are granted to us while we are here on our journey heavenward,-the forgiveness of our sins, the gift of righteousness, the peace which passeth all understanding, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,-but there is yet much more for us. The demonstrated triumph over death in that day when "all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth" (John 5:28, 29), and the being caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and the ever being with the Lord, are yet future; and I now place special emphasis upon the fact that these crowning blessings can be realized only by the personal return of our Lord to the same world which He visited more than nineteen hundred years ago, when He took our flesh.

I do not overlook the claim made by many that at death the soul of the believer is ushered at once into the immediate presence of the Saviour, but I rely upon the words of inspiration:

116

"This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. 4:15-18.

The full significance of the little word "so" in the next to the last sentence should not be overlooked. The apostle Paul is speaking of the last things, the resurrection of the righteous dead and the translation of the righteous living, and he enters into quite definite particulars. Those believers who are living at the time of the second advent will have no advantage over those who have died in the faith, for those who have fallen asleep will first be raised, then the living will be

117

changed, and all will go together to meet the Lord, and so, in this way and in no other way, will they ever be with the Lord. Here is the Scriptural basis for comfort for the sorrowing, and not the unscriptural claim that our departed friends are now in heaven with Jesus. We must abide by the word of the Lord.

In view of the fact that the desire of Jesus to have His followers with Him can be fulfilled only by His returning for them, and that this is the consummation of His work in dealing with sin at the cost of His life, it is only to be

expected that much prominence should be given to the second advent.

"Bickersteth affirms, after careful examination, that one verse in thirty of the New Testament relates to the second coming of Christ. If to these are added the numerous references in the Old Testament to the same momentous event, surpassing the allusions that are made to His first coming in the proportion of at least twenty to one, some conception may be formed of the prominence given in the word of God to the doctrine here advocated."

Christianity is preeminently a religion of hope, the hope of the coming of Jesus to take His people to be with Himself. And so we read: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." Rom. 15:4.

"What St. Paul affirms of the Old Testament Scriptures generally is, that directly or indirectly they are all prophetic, all looked forward to and prepared for Christ. Similarly, all believers now look forward. St. Paul's words are applicable to the Christian Scriptures quite as thoroughly as to the Jewish; for they also are for our learning, that we by the exercise of that patience, necessarily implied in the fact that we have not as yet the full possession of the promise, and by the comfort given us by the strong conviction of our faith that Christ will come again, may have hope-the hope-that as Christ has come once to open the way of salvation for man, so He will come again to perfect His work."

And this perfection of His work will result in the gratification of His expressed desire that those who believe on Him should be with Him.

If the whole Old Testament, rightly interpreted, forms one unbroken Messianic prophecy, what shall we say of the

New Testament, in which one verse in every thirty directly refers to the return of Jesus? Surely we cannot waive all this

teaching aside on the authority of a merely human philosophy. Those who really accept Jesus as their Lord must give due weight to His own utterances concerning His way of saving the subjects of His grace. Let us listen to some of this instruction with reference to His coming again:

"Be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 24:44. "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory." Matt. 25:31. "Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." Matt. 26:64.

"Watch therefore: for ye know not when the Lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." Mark 13:35-37. "Take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth. But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:34-36.

These few utterances show how much His return to take His followers to Himself occupied the thought of Jesus. Should we, who are the objects of His love and His desire, think any the less of it than He did? Surely not.

"In earth's dark hour God's word gives light,
Its rays dispel the thickening gloom;
The path to glory now is bright-
The Bridegroom soon will come.
Then lift your voices, saints, and sing
Your sweetest strains to Zion's King-
The thrilling cry, we hear it sound,
'Prepare to meet your Lord.'"

The Consummation of the Gospel

The gospel which I am trying to present is a gospel of courage and hope. It is not mere optimism. It is not the product of a merely human philosophy. It is a direct message from the Lord of glory, conveyed to us in a well-attested and supernatural revelation. Its rock foundation is "Thus saith the Lord." It consists essentially of the promises of the living God concerning His Son, who is the Saviour of the world. Rom. 1:1-4. In the first announcement of this gospel there is the note of victory, even though it be through suffering-the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent. Gen. 3:15. The promises which lead on to the achievement of this victory are found in many places in the Scriptures.

We ought, however, to have an intelligent understanding of what is involved in the triumph of the gospel of the grace

120

of God. There is no Scriptural basis for the hope that the world will be converted. The good news of the atonement and the reconciliation, and of complete deliverance from the guilt and the power of sin, is to be proclaimed to all the world, but we have no assurance that all will repent and believe in the gospel. On the contrary, the whole history of redemption shows that in all ages the loyal followers of Christ have been only a minority, often designated as the remnant. Nevertheless, the responsibility and the privilege of heralding the gospel of salvation to every creature under heaven rests upon the faithful few, sustained and encouraged by the promise of our Lord, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20. A living church is a missionary church.

But what I wish to emphasize just now is that the day of final victory is the day of the Lord, that day to which the attention of believers has been directed by the prophets from the days of Samuel until the visions of the apostle John on the isle of Patmos. The personal, visible return of Jesus

Christ in glory to execute judgment upon the incorrigibly wicked and to give the kingdom to a nation who have brought forth the fruits thereof (Matt. 21:45), is the closing act in the drama of redemption without which many prophecies and promises would be left unfulfilled, and the eternal purpose of God in Christ would never be realized. Such a denouement is unthinkable. "The firm foundation of God standeth." 2 Tim. 2:19. Jesus Christ has testified, and He is "the faithful and true witness." Rev. 3:14.

It is no marvel that the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the second advent has been, and still is, the subject of attack, of perversion, and of denial. If confidence in this doctrine can be weakened or destroyed, the great motive for godliness has been deadened (2 Peter 3:11), and what has been the longing hope of the church becomes a forlorn hope. Our Lord introduced His great prophecy concerning His return with the caution, "Take heed that no man lead you astray" (Matt. 24:4), and this warning is a timely one for today. There is a master mind, even "the god of this

121

world" (2 Cor. 4:4), himself "a liar, and the father thereof" (John 8:44), who inspires all perversions of the truth; and it is terribly significant that in these last days, when the remaining sands in the hourglass of time are running out, he has so successfully launched the un-Biblical and irreligious hypothesis of evolution in the field of science, and the un-Biblical and unscientific interpretations of modernism in the field of religion, for in neither of these man-made philosophies is there any place for the return of Christ. It is worth noting that the leaders in both of these fields, generally speaking, reject the supernatural element in Christianity, and therefore deny the fundamental features of the gospel from the virgin birth to the second advent.

But to return to our main topic. The day of the Lord as a day of judgment and blessing is a main theme of the

prophets from Joel to Malachi. While in each case it had a definite application in the time of the prophet who referred to it, yet it always had a far-reaching reference. We can doubtless perceive this more clearly than did the people of those times, since we have the benefit of the light which Jesus Himself and the writers of the New Testament have thrown upon this subject. In His prophetic outline of the events from His own time to His second coming, our Lord declared:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. 24:29, 30.

But the prophet Joel, who was the first to indicate the meaning of the day of the Lord, designated these same phenomena of nature as the signs which would indicate the approach of the finality of that day: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah cometh." Joel 2:31. In his foreview of the destruction of Babylon, "the glory of kingdoms, the

122

beauty of the Chaldeans' pride" (Isa. 13:19), an event which in its final phase is completed in the destruction of the world, the prophet Isaiah likewise connects the day of the Lord with the signs which Jesus mentioned as marking the nearness of His return:

"Behold, the day of Jehovah cometh, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger; to make the land a desolation, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in its going forth, and the moon shall not cause its light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and

the wicked for their iniquity: and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible." Isa. 13:9-11.

In view of the instruction which Jesus has given concerning the signs which point to His coming on the clouds of heaven, we are warranted in affirming that these prophets connected the final victory of the gospel with the return of Jesus.

But it is in the New Testament that this truth is developed most clearly. There the day of the Lord, or the day of Jehovah, becomes "the day of Christ" (Phil. 1:10, etc.), "the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6), "the day of God" (2 Peter 3:12), "the day of the Lord" (2 Peter 3:10, etc.), "the day of judgment" (2 Peter 2:9, etc.), and "that day" (2 Tim. 1:12); and the day thus so often mentioned is plainly shown to be the day when Jesus Christ will appear to give the reward to His followers. And so the apostle Paul wrote: "The time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved His appearing." 2 Tim. 4:6-8. The crown of righteousness, elsewhere called "the crown of glory" (1 Peter 5:4), will be bestowed at that crowning day when Jesus "shall come in His glory" (Matt. 25:31), and apart from that crowning day there will be no crown, no trophy of victory.

123

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124

To the same effect are the words of the apostle Peter: "Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. . . . But the day of the Lord will

come as a thief; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. . . . But, according to His promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:3-13.

No teaching could be more emphatically clear. The overthrow of the kingdom of evil, the utter destruction of "this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4), and the ushering in of the kingdom of righteousness, are directly connected with the coming of the Son of man on the clouds of heaven. Until His coming the kingdom of evil will continue, this present evil world will remain, and "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," will still be future.

"One of the most complete types of the history of redemption is to be found in the ceremonies of the day of atonement. It was an essential part of the work of the high priest on that day that he should come forth from within the veil to bless the waiting congregation. Our great High Priest is now within the veil. He has offered the atoning sacrifice on the altar of Calvary, and with the merit of that sacrifice He has gone in to appear in the presence of God for us. But the great day of atonement is not yet closed. When His work within the veil is ended, He shall come forth, arrayed again in His garments of glory and beauty, for the final blessing of His waiting people. 'Having been once offered to bear the sins of many, He shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for Him, unto salvation.'"

What an eternal disappointment it would be, both to Jesus Himself and to His waiting people, if He should not return! This is the devil's if. He will return. The consummation of the gospel is just at hand.

In this connection it seems fitting to mention, at least briefly, some of the indications that the return of our Lord is near. That it will be literal and visible, and not a spiritual

coming to the heart of the believer, is positively assured by the message to the disciples when He ascended: "This Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven." Acts 1:11. He went away in a bodily form, visible to the natural eye, and He will come again in a bodily form, equally visible and in manifested glory. We are plainly instructed that we may know when that coming is near, although we do not know the day or the hour. Matt. 24:36. But what are the signs?

1. The periods of time in the books of Daniel and the Revelation, which have a bearing upon the close of Christ's redemptive work, have all come to a close. This is capable of being satisfactorily demonstrated, but I have not the space to do so here. I know the prejudice which some entertain against making use of time prophecies as the basis of any belief, but inasmuch as Jesus Christ asserted that His first coming was in fulfillment of just such a prophecy (Mark 1:14, 15), evidently referring to the expiration of the sixty-nine weeks of years of Daniel 9:25, I feel entirely warranted

126

in referring to other time periods made known through the same prophet as evidence concerning the second coming.

2. The outline of the world empires which would precede the setting up of the everlasting kingdom of God, has now become history. We are living in the days when the voices in heaven were heard, saying, "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ: and He shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 11:15.

3. The conditions in the religious world are such as are foretold would characterize the last days: "Know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, . . . holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3:1-5. There are more members of churches than ever, but alas! the evidence of

the saving power of the gospel is sadly lacking in the lives of an increasing number.

4. The conditions in the political world meet the specifications for the last days. "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. When they are saying, Peace and safety, then suddenly destruction cometh upon them." 1 Thess. 5:2, 3. The Peace Pact, which has been signed by about fifty of the governments of the world, is hailed as the most significant event of modern times, making aggressive wars a thing of the past and paving the way for universal peace. At the same time the official reports show that there are more men under arms in Europe than at any time since the opening of the recent World War, and the ingenuity of the best minds is being taxed to invent more and more destructive methods of warfare. The divine interpretation of this unique situation is the correct one.

5. The very fact that the end of the world and the coming of Christ are being denied for reasons based upon the evolutionary philosophy of the natural order, is itself one of the signs designated by Inspiration to indicate the last days: "Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from

127

the beginning of the creation." 2 Peter 3:3, 4. Modern scientists are seeking to bind the Lord Himself with the law of continuity, a law of their own making.

6. The prophecies of the great apostasy heading up in the man of sin have been fulfilled in the Roman Catholic Church and in apostate Protestantism, and the last call of the gospel, just before the day of the Lord is ushered in, is: "Come forth, My people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached even unto heaven, and

God hath remembered her iniquities." Rev. 18:4, 5. This clarion call is now being sounded throughout the world in the great second advent movement.

7. The instruction which Jesus gave to His disciples in response to their question, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matt. 24:3) found in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew, describes with much clearness the conditions which should prevail when "He is nigh, even at the doors." Matt. 24:33. The thoughtful student of current history will be almost compelled to testify that these are the very conditions which we now face.

8. The conditions in the industrial world, with the serious conflict between capital and labor (James 5:1-5), the rich in the meantime growing richer and the poor growing poorer, were described long centuries ago as characteristic of the last days. The conditions include the fabulous increase in wealth on the part of some of the captains of industry. The old proverb, "As rich as Crúsus," is now entirely out of date.

9. The great missionary movements of the last century are a divinely foretold indication that the end is near: "This gospel of the kingdom," declared Jesus to His disciples, "shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14. The wonderful achievements of the great Bible Societies, both American and English, are an important factor in this work. The self-sacrificing devotion of Morrison, Carey, Livingstone, John Williams, James G. Paton, not to mention the names of

128

the thousands who have made and are making the same sacrifice in recent years, bears convincing testimony that the end of sin is just at hand, and that the reign of righteousness is about to be ushered in. Blessed are those who will act their part in hastening that glorious day.

10. According to prophecy there should arise in the very last days a movement which would have for its avowed

purpose the world-wide announcement of the near coming of our Lord and the renewed proclamation of the gospel of righteousness by faith in its fullness as the preparation for translation. Rev. 14:6-16. Such a movement is now being carried forward by Seventh-day Adventists, who are working in 127 countries and 279 languages, and extending their work every year.

These general indications of the nearness of the end could be supplemented by many particular specifications, but this is sufficient for my purpose. Any one who becomes interested in these statements can pursue the subject further in other books devoted especially to it.

I hope I have made it plain that the consummation of the gospel, the full realization of the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus, waits upon the second advent of our Lord in glory, and that that glorious event is near at hand. The work of preparing the way has been committed to human agencies under divine guidance and with the assurance of divine power. The apostle John, in the closing words of the last book of the Bible, voiced the prayer of the true church of Christ in all the centuries in three words, "Come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20. It is our privilege in these closing days to watch, to work, to wait with expectant hearts, "looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13), the Saviour of the world.

¹ Wherever in the Authorized Version the word "Lord" is spelled with a capital L and ord in small capitals, thus, Lord, in the American Revised Version it is rendered "Jehovah." It is a different Hebrew word which is translated "Lord" both in the Authorized and the Revised Version.

² The ordinary meaning of the word "covenant," as applied in the common affairs of life, makes it a compact, or agreement, between two parties, involving certain obligations which are generally mutual. If either party fails to meet the obligations assumed, the covenant is broken and becomes void. But such is not the basis of the covenant of grace, whose meaning in the gospel we can best learn from its use in the Scriptures.

In the call of Abraham we find this promise: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. 12:3. After his great test of faith, the promise is repeated with a slight change of wording, and is confirmed with an oath: "By Myself have I sworn, . . . in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. 22:16-18. Under the illuminating guidance of the Holy Spirit this promise to Abraham is interpreted in the preaching of Peter to be a covenant which God made with the fathers: "Ye are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Acts 3:25. There is no indication of any mutual agreement here, but simply an undertaking on the part of God to bless the world through the seed of Abraham.

But this is not an isolated instance of the interpretation of God's promise of grace as a covenant. Through the prophet Nathan, Jehovah promised to of David an everlasting kingdom: "Thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever." 2 Sam. 7:16. In "the last words of David" this promise is thus characterized: "Verily my house is not so with God: for He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." 2 Sam. 23:5.

In view of this indication of the basic idea of covenant as interpreted by inspiration, we need not be surprised to find that "covenant" and "promise" are used interchangeably in unfolding God's plan of salvation to us as in the following passage: "Now this I say: A covenant confirmed before hand by God, the law which came four hundred and thirty years after, doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect." Gal. 2:17.

Furthermore, the promises to Abraham and to David are those broad expressions of God's gracious purposes of salvation which contain implicitly all that was afterward developed from them, and we are therefore warranted in affirming that all the promises found in the Scriptures which pertain to our salvation, and which express the undertakings of God to rescue and to restore us, constitute the covenant of grace.

³ His deity (Heb. 1:8); incarnation (2:14); death (2:14); resurrection (13:20); ascension (1:3); priesthood (2:17); advent (9:28).