

The Present Truth

"SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH"

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"Unto Us a Child is Born."

LISTEN to the song of the angels, as they chant their wondrous story to the shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem. "Unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

The "chiefest among ten thousand," the First-born of the Father, the adored Commander of the angels, is lying, a little babe, in Mary's arms.

life. Jesus is commissioned to make the exchange with every one, to take upon Himself human sins and sorrows, that through His stripes the wanderers may be healed. In return for the load of sin He is to give the garment of praise. He who knew no sin is to be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Cor. v. 18-21.



Heaven has given up its treasure. How greatly is earth enriched!

Will mankind prize the "unspeakable gift"? This Babe, "wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger," is in Himself "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." By this living Word the Father will reveal His love to all His alienated children.

Through this Child, the most disobedient and rebellious may receive a clean heart and a new

The angels have sung. Will their music waken echoes in the hearts of men? Listen! Earth responds, with a new song in its mouth, and this time the angels hearken. There is joy in heaven as the words are heard, rising from hearts that God's grace has touched: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder." Isa. ix. 6.

We were members of a ruined race, spoiled of our inheritance, and in bondage to a merciless foe.

We had struggled against his yoke in vain. But unto us a Son is born, "mighty to save," and He has retrieved our fortunes. He, the Hero of our race, has conquered the enemy and set His brethren free. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end."

Now, we, who were down-trodden and despised, may walk at liberty and lift up our heads. Our house is once more noble. No longer do we trace our lineage from our fallen father Adam. Jesus Christ is our victorious Head, "The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father." We are called "the sons of God." 1 John iii. 1.

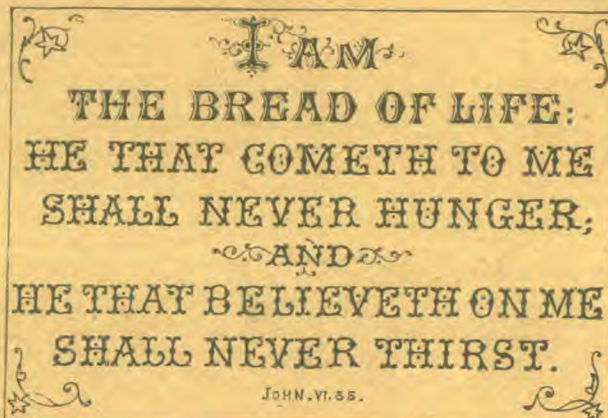
It is by His love the Saviour conquers. Men may refuse His deliverance because they love their sins, but "love is strong as death." Many waters cannot quench it. "His own received Him not," His brethren put Him to death, but some receive Him, and into them He puts His own Spirit, and so His work goes on.

Men crucified and buried their Lord, but the grave could not hold Him, and He saw no corruption. He ascended into heaven, bearing in His body the marks of the conflict, His gentle hands pierced with nail-holes. "And one shall say unto Him, What are these wounds in Thine hands? Then He shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends." Zech. xiii. 6.

But He will come again. Not this time as a babe, to endure suffering and rejection, but to gather all who have received His salvation into everlasting mansions. He still bears the scars of conflict, but then every thorn-print on His brow is a crown of dazzling glory (Rev. xix. 12), and from His pierced side streams the radiance that fills heaven and earth. "There was the hiding of His power." Hab. iii. 4, margin.

Jesus Christ is God's gift to man, given for ever, world without end. His first coming was for you, His suffering, and temptation and message were for you, His death and resurrection were for you; He ministers, a great High Priest, in the Sanctuary above, to cleanse you from all sin; He sends forth from thence the Holy Spirit for you; and when He comes again, in power and glory, to raise the dead to immortality and to translate His living people, it will be for you, if you will.

Jesus knows how to live victoriously in sinful flesh. He can do it in you. From the days of eternity He has never lost sight of *your* need, and if you will let Him have your life and lay its government on His shoulder, you will understand one day, better than you can now, what the angels meant when they sang of "good tidings of great joy" which Jesus Christ brought to you and to all people.



"Mighty to Save."



AMONG those who attended the services, was a man who listened earnestly to the proclamation of liberty, but who could see nothing in it. Was he not a slave to his besetting sins? Had he not laboured and struggled to be free from the tyranny of his inherited and cultivated habits of sin? How could it be that he was free when he was so evidently enslaved?

As one after another saw the truth and testified to the peace and joy that they were experiencing in believing, he would look at them with perplexity depicted on his face, which seemed to say: "I cannot understand it; it is all foolishness to me. How can a man be free when he is a slave?" But the joyful witnessing of the others impressed him that there must be something real in it after all which he did not see.

At the close of one of the services he came to me, and said: "Will you not explain this to me privately?" Our interview lasted until midnight, but without apparent success. The following evening the same request was made with no better result.

The next afternoon I sought the Lord in prayer most earnestly for power to make the Gospel plain so that the weakest might understand. And from this audience with God I came downstairs and seated myself by the parlour fire. I had not been there long when the man came in, and said: "Mr. Ballenger, I am afraid you will be leaving before I am delivered." With a heart yearning to help him, I said: "You *are* free. The Lord has already set you free." Out of respect for me he did not contradict the statement; but his face wore an expression of pain that I should make a statement which was so apparently contradicted by facts.

"Let me help you with an illustration," I continued.

"In 1863 the President of the United States issued an emancipation proclamation, proclaiming liberty to all the slaves within the Southern States then in rebellion. After that proclamation, how many slaves were there in those states?"

"None," the man replied.

"But, notwithstanding that proclamation, there were coloured men and women who continued in slavery years after the proclamation was made; and the reason for this was that they were kept in ignorance of the proclamation that had proclaimed them free. They were driven into the cotton fields like beasts of burden, as if they had never been set free. Are they not freed men?"

"Yes;" replied the man.

"Have their former masters any right to treat them as slaves?"

"No;" was the quick reply.

"Has he any power to treat them as slaves?"

"No;" came the answer with increasing confidence.

"How long will the coloured man continue to serve as a slave?"

"Until he learns that he is *not* a slave," replied the man, with a gleam of hope in his face.

"How long will his old master continue to beat him and otherwise treat him as a beast of burden?"

"Until the man learns that he *cannot* beat him."

"Does the old master know that the moment the coloured man learns that he is free, his unlawful control over him is ended? On what then does the poor man's bondage and the slave-master's brutality rest?"

"On the ignorance of the coloured man."

"His ignorance of what?"

"His ignorance of the fact that he has been proclaimed free."

"Then he will experience freedom the moment he believes what is *already* proclaimed in the proclamation, that he is free."

"Yes."

"And so will you," I replied. "You were born a slave because you were born with a slave's nature, and through this carnal nature you have transgressed the law of God, and have thus added to your slavery. But Christ came and took your carnal nature together with your sins, and carried them all to Calvary, and there was crucified and died as your substitute. When He died as your substitute, you paid in Him the price of your deliverance from the bondage of sin, 'for he that is dead is free from sin.' Here is your emancipation proclamation. You have been free all these years; but you did not know it. You did not believe the proclamation. The President of the

universe proclaimed you free long ago: but you did not believe it, and so you have lived as Satan's slave, though proclaimed long ago to be God's free man."

"Without saying a word, the man arose and went to his room, and, kneeling beside his bed, offered praise and thanksgiving to God for the freedom which had been his so long, but which until now he had not accepted. When he returned he was indeed a transformed man, and when opportunity was offered in the evening service, he bore glad witness to the deliverance he had experienced through reckoning himself free in harmony with the Word of God.

A. F. BALLENGER.

Look and Live.

"THERE is life for a look at the Crucified One;
There is life at this moment for thee;
Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,
Unto Him who was nailed to the tree.

"Oh, why was He there as the bearer of sin,
If on Jesus thy guilt was not laid?
Oh, why from His side flowed the sin-cleansing blood,
If His dying thy debt has not paid?

"It is not thy tears of repentance or prayers,
But the *blood*, that atones for the soul:
On Him, then, who shed it, thou mayest at once
Thy weight of iniquities roll."

Not the Outside But the Inside.

IT is not what is outside of us but what is inside, that makes us Christians, and keeps us so.

If you think you could be a better Christian if there were better brethren and sisters in the church, you greatly mistake. It is just the other way; if you were a better Christian, you would find better brethren and sisters in the church.

If you think you could do better if only you had better neighbours, you greatly mistake. The truth is that if you would do better, you would have better neighbours. And if you were a better Christian, you would do better. You must be better before you can do better.

Christianity does not come from ourselves, nor from anybody nor anything that is around us. It comes down straight from heaven to every soul who will receive it. And having its source in heaven, it is not and cannot be affected by anything that is of earth.

Thus the Christian has joy in sorrow, peace in perplexity, riches in poverty, society in loneliness, and friendship among strangers, and even enemies.

A. T. JONES.



It should be ours, the oil and wine to pour
Into the bleeding wounds of stricken ones;
To take the smitten, and the sick and sore,
And bear them where a stream of blessing runs;
Instead, we look about—the way is wide,
And so we pass upon the other side.

A Christian Home.



IN the great plan of salvation the place of the true home is of vast importance. Instituted in Eden by God Himself, He designed that through it, mankind should learn of the kingdom of heaven, and enjoy, even here, a foretaste of the love, joy, and peace of which

that kingdom consists.

Jesus said, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." When this great truth is realised, parents will see that their children are gifts from God, by which He seeks to link them to Himself. The teachableness and simplicity,—the love and absolute trust of childhood, are object lessons, helping us to understand the true nature of faith, and what Jesus means when He says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

And the child, trained from infancy to see in father and mother its best friends, learning continually lessons of obedience and reverence, will not, when the claims of the great Father are presented, find it hard to respond,

God's words, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him," and "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you," will not be empty sounds in the ears of one to whom father and mother have been truly pitiful and truly comforting.

The commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee," shows that God has placed mutual obligations upon parents and children—children honouring, and parents proving worthy of honour—that they may help each other to become partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

But the tie between Christ and His people is closer even than that of parent and child. "For

this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and *they two shall be one flesh.*" This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.

It is evident, then, that, through the home where Christ reigns, is given a practical illustration of the out-working of God's plans.

What a refuge in time of temptation! What a bulwark against sin! For the Chris-

tian home is the home where love reigns, and finds expression in words and acts of thoughtful kindness and gentle courtesy. "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and His children shall have a place of refuge."

Here are welcomed the downcast and afflicted, to whom are given help and cheer, that the call of Jesus, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," may reach their hearts. Says the Lord, "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke. Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"

Can we wonder that against this mighty influence for good, Satan has directed his most determined efforts? So well has he succeeded in tearing down this great bulwark against evil, that amongst the deadly sins of the present day are disobedience to parents, and a sad lack of natural affection. 2 Tim. iii. 1-5.

But God's kingdom will triumph, and already is going to the world that great message which He promised:—"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And *he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers*, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." And, amid the perils of the last days, His people triumphantly exclaim, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of Hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion."

EDITH BARTLETT.

To be a follower of Christ is to have the same purpose in life that He had, to save souls.—Torrey.

The Sign of a Finished Work.



N the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." "For He spake, and it was done: He commanded, and it stood fast." Gen. i. 1; Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9.

As the earth came forth from the hand of its Maker, it was exceedingly beautiful. Everything was perfect. Man, having been made in the image and likeness of God, was now crowned with glory and honour, and set over the works of God's hands. Heb. ii. 6-8.

The Rest.

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." Gen. ii. 1; i. xxxi. No taint of sin, no tear of sorrow, no pain or shadow of death marred the happiness of the holy pair that had been placed in the garden of God. The great Jehovah had clothed the whole world in a garb of beauty. Everything revealed the touch of the Master Artist. The delicate flower, the beautiful landscape, the broad expanse of the heavens, all bore silent witness to the fact that the divine Hand had wrought.

"In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed." Ex. xxxi. 17. "The eternal purpose which He purposed in Jesus Christ our Lord" (Eph. iii. 11), was now, so far as God's part was concerned, completed; it only remained for man to prove, by his loyalty to his Creator, that he was worthy of such a high calling. While the "morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job. xxxviii. 7), while the Lord took delight in His finished work, the Great Memorial of the Creator's power to complete His glorious work in righteousness was erected (Ps. cxi. 4; cxxxv. 13): the Eternal Sign that He is God was given (Ezek. xx. 19, 20).

The Memorial.

"The Lord blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." The seventh day now became the blessed, sanctified, rest day of the Creator. And, since what God blesses shall be blessed for ever (1 Chron. xvii. 27), it is still His blessed, sanctified, rest day. The Hebrew verb *qadash*, here rendered sanctified, is defined by Gesenius, "To pronounce holy, to sanctify; to institute any holy thing, to appoint." The Lord, therefore, set apart the seventh day to man's holy use for all time. Mark ii. 27.

The Fall.

This beautiful scene was soon changed. The tempter, lurking in the garden of delight, induced man to accept him as his master.

In sorrow and shame he is now driven forth from his Paradise home. Instead of the pleasant labour hitherto appointed him, he was now to be subject to anxious toil, disappointment, grief, pain, and finally to death. Before leaving his beautiful home, however, he is given the glorious promise of a Saviour. The one who made the world, and all things therein, and who upholds all things by the word of His power (John i. 3, 10; Col. i. 13-17; Heb. i. 1-3), who had given to man the Sabbath, now promised a *new creation*. The great plan of redemption was opened up to man. The Creator was to be the Redeemer. The Sabbath which had been given as the sign of the eternal power and godhead of the Creator, is now to become the *seal* of the *new and everlasting covenant* by which he is to be restored to his lost home in the "*new earth*" which "*shall remain before Me, saith the Lord,*" and in which "*affliction shall not rise up the second time.*" Ex. xxxi. 16, 17; Isa. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22, 23; Nahum 1-9.

The Promise.

All things save the marriage rite and the Sabbath,—the one the safeguard of the family, and the other of the church—are lost to man through the fall. The two sole relics of man's Edenic rest are preserved to him, are brought beyond the cherubim-guarded gates of Paradise, and the Sabbath now serves to encourage him to trust to the omnipotent arm of his Creator and Redeemer to restore him to his lost estate.

The Redeemer.

The rest, the blessing, and the sanctification which man had known while obedient to the will of God had now departed: but with extended arms and bleeding hands, in pitying love, and forgiving mercy, the great Creator calls him, saying, "Come unto Me, and I will give you *rest*." "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save," will "*bless* you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." "I will be your wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Matt. xi. 28; Isa. lxiii. 1; Acts iii. 26; 1 Cor. i. 30. At the same time He says to the man who is thus made "a new creature in Christ Jesus," "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for *it is a sign* between Me and you throughout your generations: that *ye may know that I am the Lord that sanctify you.*" Ex. xxxi. 13. It is the sign "that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. i. 6.

Thus from the moment that the gates of Paradise were closed upon disobedient man, to the blessed moment when they will once more be opened to the obedient (Rev. xxii. 14; Isa. xxvi. 2), the Sabbath remains as the SIGN OF HIS FINISHED WORK, the PLEDGE OF OUR GLORIOUS AND FINAL REST. Heb. iv. 3-11.

E. E. ANDROSS.



The Earthly Tabernacle.

FOR I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat." The essence of the religion of Christ is self-denial and service. We are saved to serve. The natural desire of a pure heart is to serve others. When we have partaken of the feast, we should think of those less fortunate than ourselves.

There is great hunger in the world; hunger for the meat that perishes, as well as for the bread of life. Thousands are perishing about us. Sin and sickness, disease and death, meet us at every hand.

"The true light" sent into the world has been rejected, and gross darkness covers both land and people.

Ignorance of divine law, ignorance of physiology and hygiene is the rule. Who will come to the rescue, and co-operate with heavenly agencies in spreading the precious light God has given? Who will teach the people the true principles of healthful living?

The body is sacred and belongs to God. Man is the steward, and in his hands is placed the keeping of the body. Will you, dear reader, assist in teaching this grand truth, and make known to the children of the world that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."?

Are you giving meat to the hungry? "Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep." And again, "Give ye them to eat."

"I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink." How many men, and women too, thirst, but not for the water of life, or even the crystal fluid that best quenches the natural thirst of man and beast. There are plenty in the world engaged in giving drink, but it is "fire-water," as the Indian appropriately named it, that is dealt out. Drink is an awful curse in our fair land. Are you, dear reader, engaged in

combating the evil? Are you teaching the people a better way? Are you setting an example that is safe for the feeble and those that are out of the way to follow?

God holds each one responsible for his influence over others. Is yours always for true temperance? "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water . . . he shall in no wise lose his reward."

"I was a stranger, and ye took Me in." No one would really hesitate a moment, to receive the

Lord Jesus, were He to come to our door. Let us do likewise to any "one of the least" who may claim our protection and assistance, remembering that Jesus accepts the service as done to Himself.

"Naked, and ye clothed Me." When we share our clothing with the needy, we are simply covering the nakedness of Christ, and ministering to His want. He accepts the deed, whether the brother who has been clothed appreciates the gift or not. When we have done it as unto the Lord, that is, just as we would have done it if the Master Himself were here, we can have the assurance of acceptance with God, but not till then.

"I was sick, and ye visited Me." The sick, like the poor, we have always with us. Do you, dear reader, love to visit the sick and minister unto them? Do you carry them wholesome and pleasant food? Do you comfort and encourage them? Do you pray with them, and read the Word of God to them? This is your privilege.

Teach them how to live, how to care for the body, how to prepare and eat the daily food, how to bathe, and thus keep the body in health. Such a visit should abound in good cheer, and many rays of sunshine would be left behind.

"I was in prison, and ye came unto Me." If unable to gain access to the prisons, don't forget the prisoners when they are discharged. That is the time to meet them with loving confidence, and assist them to start right on the path of life. Show them that you believe in them, and trust them. Confidence begets confidence, and simple trust makes one trustworthy.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

A. B. OLSEN, M.D.

Treasures.

"LITTLE favours kindly done,
Little toils thou didst not shun,
These are treasures that shall rise
Far beyond the smiling skies."



The Temple of God in Heaven.

THE true believer never tires of recounting the experiences of the Saviour while among men. With what interest the record of every loving act is read and re-read. Each minute detail, with its depth of meaning, demands attention. And it is by dwelling much upon these themes that hearts are thrilled with the divine presence.

"Not to be ministered unto, but to minister," was His motto, and this made Him always a welcome guest. His presence was sought by the afflicted, and none were sent empty away. When the Baptist sent to know if He was the Promised One, the reply returned to the lonely prisoner was, "The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached."

The Sacrifice. We follow this life of unselfish service to the Garden, and to Calvary, where the fate of a lost world hangs in the balance. His love does not fail; He drinks the cup. We join in the tears of those who witnessed His last agony and burial, and rejoice with those who beheld Him a victor over death and the grave. We follow to Olivet, and behold His disappearing form as the cloud receives Him out of sight. We hear the message of the shining ones: "This same Jesus shall so come as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

The Priest. He has passed beyond our range of vision, but His service has not ceased. "Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum. We have such a high priest, who is set 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, and not man." Heb. viii. 1, 2.

As the holy places made with hands were "like in pattern to the true," and the service of the ancient priests was an "example of heavenly things," we will briefly sketch the typical service.

The Temple. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Chap. ix. 6, 7, after noting the furnishings of the holy places, states,—“Now these things having been thus prepared, the priests go in continually into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the services; but into the second, the high priest alone, once in the year, not without blood, which he offereth for himself, and for the errors of the people.” Among the many ceremonies of the daily

service, were the trimming of the ever burning lights, the offering of a perpetual incense, a continual burnt offering, and the sin offerings which were brought occasionally as required. Here the Lamb of God was represented, as “the light of the world,” the perpetual intercessor, and the atoning sacrifice for the fallen family.

The Atonement. In the Holy of Holies was the ark containing the tables of the law, covered by the mercy seat, overshadowed by the cherubim. This was the throne from which God communed with His people. Here the closing work of the yearly service was performed, when the high priest entered on the tenth day of the seventh month, and sprinkled the blood of the sin offering on the mercy seat, making atonement for all the sins which had been confessed during the year. Then coming forth and placing his hands on the head of the scapegoat, he confessed the accumulated transgressions, “putting them upon the head of the goat.” The sanctuary was cleansed. The goat was taken into the wilderness never to return, and with him the sins of repentant Israel passed away for ever, while the unrepentant were destroyed from among the people. Lev. xxiii. 29.

The Sanctuary. Thus the whole Levitical system was a beautiful object lesson of the service of Christ. The sanctuary above is the central point in the government of the kingdom of God, the basis of all missionary operations. Human channels are used, but the Source of all light, all grace, all power, is in the sanctuary. Repentance, forgiveness of sins, righteousness, the Holy Ghost, and all other graces, are gifts secured through His continual ministration.

The Cleansing. And now, at the end of the two thousand three hundred days of Daniel's prophecy, in the autumn of 1844, we reach the closing work, the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. Dan. viii. 14. By faith we see our great High Priest draw aside the veil, and enter the Holy of Holies. Here is seen the ark of His testament, wherein are the ten precepts which condemn all sin. Rev. xi. 19. For those who, by the grace of God have overcome, forsaking all their transgressions of that holy law, atonement is made. The seal of God is set upon their foreheads, and the record of their sins is cancelled. Rev. vii. 3. While the names of those who continue in disobedience will be blotted from the book of life. Rev. iii. 5. Then the decree will go forth,—“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still.” Rev. xxii. 11. Then the

atoning blood will cleanse no more. Then the mediatorial robe gives place to the garments of the avenging King. And with the glittering crown upon the brow once pierced by thorns, He proclaims the word, "Behold I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

A few more days the door of mercy stands ajar. The "grace of God that bringeth salvation" is still accessible. Let all make haste to "do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. xxii. 14.

M. A. ALTMAN.



Signs.

IN the sun, and moon, and stars,
Signs and wonders have appeared;
Earth has groaned with bloody wars,
And the hearts of men have feared.

Soon shall ocean's hoary deep,
Tossed with stronger tempests, rise;
Darker storms the mountains sweep,
Fiercer lightnings rend the skies.

Dread alarms shall shake the proud,
Pale amazement, restless fear;
And amid the thunder cloud
Shall the Judge of men appear.

But, though from His awful face,
Heaven shall fade, and earth shall fly,
Fear not ye, His chosen race,
Your redemption draweth nigh.

—Reginald Heber.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.



ON a certain occasion Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus, and asked Him to produce a sign from heaven for their benefit. The Lord simply referred them to some well-known weather indications, and said:

"Ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" Matt. xvi. 1-3.

This answer of Christ is enough to establish the idea that, as there are signs to indicate what immediate future weather is to be, so also there must be signs to foretell the times of the near future. But to be infallible, these signs must have the assurance of the Word of God regarding their portent. Prior to Christ's first advent, signs had been placed on record, to indicate His Messiahship, and the time of His coming.

Some of these may be briefly mentioned. One prophet said: "There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." Num. xxiv. 17. This sign appeared, to lead the eastern magi to the place where lay the infant Jesus. Matt. ii. 2, 9, 10. Another said: "The Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Isa. vii. 14. This was fulfilled in

Mary the mother of Christ, as recorded in Matt. i. 20, 21.

As these signs, and others, were to establish the identity of Christ as the Messiah, and also the time of His first advent, it was fitting that Christ should ask His questioners why they had not read them. As it was proper for signs to mark the time of the first advent, so it is in place for such indications to herald the approach of the second advent.

Nor were mention of these neglected by the Saviour. To His disciples He said, when speaking of His return to earth: "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke xxi. 25-27.

Other Bible writers have mentioned other signs, all of which must appear before the expected coming of the Master. These cannot all be enumerated in detail in one short article, but some of the most prominent may be alluded to with profit. The signs mentioned to appear in the sun, moon and stars, are the darkening of the first two, and the descent of the latter as predicted in Matt.

xxiv. 29. On May 19, 1780, there was a notable obscurity of the sun, which produced "The Dark Day" of history. Making mention of this, Webster's Dictionary, (Ed. 1859) after speaking of its extremely weird effect, adds: "The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known."

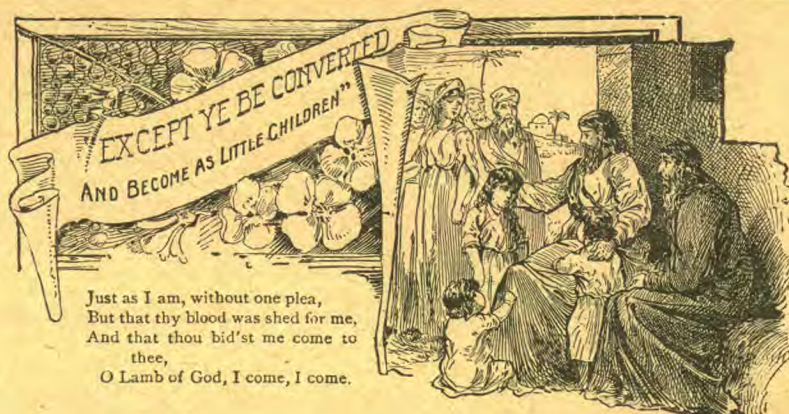
The night following was intensely and unnaturally dark. Stone's History of Beverly states: "Taking into account the fact that the record of that time says that the moon had full the previous day, the darkness of that night is unaccountable from astronomical data." Referring to the meteoric shower of November 13, 1833, Burritt's "Geography of the Heavens" says it was "the most sublime phenomenon of shooting stars of which the world has any record." Edward Dunkin, F.R.S.A., of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, in his work, "The Heavens and the Earth," says of the event that "The Apostle John might have had it before him when he indited the passage referring to the opening of the sixth seal: 'And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth.'" Upon the fulfilment of these predictions the Saviour said that, *then* should "appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven," and the "Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven." The coming of the Lord is therefore the next event in the order, for which the world should look.

The Apostle Paul says that in the "last days" perilous times would result from men having a "form of godliness," and yet being guilty of some of the worst sins. 2 Tim. iii. 1-5. Surely this sign has been, and is now being fulfilled to the letter.

But one of the most prominent signs of the near coming of Christ, is the attitude of the nations. No era of the world ever witnessed such displays of force in time of comparative peace; no such destructive engines of warfare as now employed were known to former generations. This indicates a general fear of some sudden and terrible emergency, which all seem anxious to be prepared to meet. Everything in this line shows the world to be getting ready for that "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," amid which the coming of Christ is to take place. Dan. xii. 1. The final event is drawing near, and hastens greatly, according to the signs of the times. Let all make ready for that time, so that they may meet their Lord in peace.

J. O. CORLISS.

LET prayer be the key of the morning, and the bolt of the evening.—M. Henry.



Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bid'st me come to
thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

"A People Prepared for the Lord."

THESE words were used by Zacharias when he spake concerning John the Baptist and his mission. Malachi also says, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Mal. iv. 5, 6.

The First Coming.

The first advent of Christ was preceded by a special preparatory work, of which the Saviour said, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." Matt. xi. 14. John himself declared, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias." John i. 22, 23.

The object of all this was "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke i. 17. Thus we find John preaching, "and saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. iii. 2. Sin was rebuked, hypocrisy exposed, and the people entreated to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance." The fact that men were the descendants of Abraham was in itself no surety for their acceptance. The fruit borne could alone decide the character of the tree and its destiny.

The Second Coming.

But prophecy is not confined to the first advent of Christ. It looks forward to "the great and dreadful day of the Lord," the second coming of Christ in power and great glory.

As there was a preparation for His first coming, so there will also be for His second coming. The first coming is in the past, but without His second coming, the first would be incomplete. Indeed, this is the comfort Christ left with His church. Said He, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself,

that where I am, there ye may be also." John xiv. 2, 3.

In the book of Revelation we have a description of Christ's coming in these words: "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle;" while a voice comes from heaven declaring, "the harvest of the earth is ripe." Rev. xiv. 14, 15.

Preparing the Way of the Lord.

Ere this great event can take place, there must be a preparatory work, which is brought to view in Matt. xxiv. 14. "And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." In Rev. xiv. 6-12, there is presented a three-fold message, proclaiming the everlasting Gospel throughout the earth.

The first angel calls men to repent because the kingdom of heaven is at hand. "Fear God and give glory to Him," "And worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" "For the hour of His judgment is come."

This message, if heeded, would bring about a decided reformation. Every idol would be banished from the heart, every sin would be repented of, and put away, and there would be a complete surrender of the will and every power of the being to the control of the Holy Spirit. Thus a people would be prepared for the Lord, ready to meet Him with joy at His coming.

Rejecting Truth.

In the second message a general spiritual declension is foretold. This follows inevitably as a result of not giving heed to the first message, and failing to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Instead of a genuine experience, many have but the form of godliness without its power. 2 Tim. iii. 1, 5. In this very condition is the peril of the present day.

The third angel bears a solemn warning against the apostasy, the worship of the beast and his image, and the reception of his mark, closing with the declaration, "Here is the patience of the saints. Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus." Rev. xiv. 12.

The Remnant Church.

In these words is brought to view the character of the people that will be developed under the preaching of the Everlasting Gospel, and who thus become "a people prepared for the Lord."

The Law of God is the standard of righteousness, and the test of character. "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth." John

xvii. 17. "My tongue shall speak of Thy Word; for all Thy commandments are righteousness." "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is truth." Ps. cxix. 172, 142. "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments." "But whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in Him." 1 John ii. 3, 5.

A Last Testimony.

The promise of the New Covenant (Heb. viii. 10-12) is the very work and experience presented in the messages of Rev. xiv. 6-12. This will be the special message that will precede the coming of the Lord in glory. It is being proclaimed with increasing power, and soon it will have done its work in all the earth, turning the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.

The whole country was stirred by the preaching of John the Baptist in his day. His fearless testimony brought conviction to many hearts, but of the great multitude Christ said, "Elias is come already, and they knew him not." Matt. xvii. 12. We have now reached the time when the final message of preparation is being proclaimed. Soon the last Gospel invitation will have been made, and the last call to repentance given. Shall any reader of the PRESENT TRUTH be found among those who will not know the accepted time, and will let the day of their visitation pass by unheeded? May God forbid; but rather may all be found ready, watching and waiting, that at the call of the Master they may be ready to enter in?

O. A. OLSEN.

The Day of Judgment.



THE consideration of this theme leads us to contemplate an event of unusual interest, and of the deepest significance,—one indeed which concerns the whole human family; for it is expressly declared that "we shall all stand at the judgment seat of Christ." Rom. xiv. 10.

No more imposing scene could be imagined than that which was so graphically pictured in the vision given to Daniel, the prophet of God:—

"I beheld till thrones were placed, and One that was ancient of days did sit; His raiment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool; His throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before Him; thousands of thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened." Dan. vii. 9, 10, R.V.

What an awe-inspiring spectacle is this, depicting the majesty of the God of heaven, set in the Great

Assize, to dispense the awards of justice! Amid such conditions heaven's seal is placed on earth's transactions, either to recognise them with approbation and reward, or to recompense them with condemnation and punishment.

While we speak of the judgment as being one work, yet it is presented to us in a two-fold phase, which may be termed respectively the "investigative," and the "executive;" the former relating to a case in the stage of inquiry, and the latter to the passing of the sentence.

For the purposes of investigation at this august tribunal, the most perfect system obtains. We notice there are records, witnesses, an Advocate, and statutes of judgment. "The books were opened." In heaven's book-keeping system there are at least two sets; the "book of remembrance," and the "book of life." Through the former "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccles. xii. 14. Its unerring records will "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts." 1 Cor. iv. 5.

Of the countless throng of angels assembled, each has a mission to perform, as representing those on earth whose attendants they were; and as the case of each one is called up for examination in the judgment, there is seen the application of the word: "my witness is in heaven, my record is on high." Job xvi. 19. It is thus, representatively, that all stand before the judgment in its investigative administration, while on the occasion of the executive pronouncement each will appear in person.

There, too, stands the "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," to plead the cause of those who seek His intercessory office. Our confession of sin enables Him to confess the sinner; and while there can be no palliation of sin, for it is inexcusable, yet faith in the blood of atonement removes the accusation of guilt, and the mediation of Christ on the sinner's behalf results in the registration of his name in the "book of life."

It is associated with the solemn events of the judgment that the inviolable character of the law of God is established. Amid the profoundest sense of reverence and awe, inspired by the presence of the holy God, will the great Judge weigh the lives of each in those incomparable

balances. The administration of these precepts assures the utmost impartiality. Every verdict passed will meet with universal acquiescence, and admit of no appeal.

In the apostolic age and afterwards, the announcement was made of a judgment to come. It was thus that Paul reasoned before Felix. Acts xxiv. 25. The records of conduct and character were then being laid up in the archives of heaven, held in reserve for the time when the proclamation should go forth: "The hour of His judgment is come." Rev. xiv. 6. No saint can enter upon his promised reward, nor sinner enter upon his threatened doom, ere the condition of each passes in review before the tribunal of heaven. The message which heralds the commencement of those



"THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES
AND ART FOUND WANTING."

momentous proceedings, closes with the announcement of the coming of the Lord. Rev. xiv. 14-16.

The Scriptures of truth which acquaint us with the facts of the judgment, are equally clear upon the time of it. The prophetic declaration, "Unto two thousand three hundred days [to be understood literally as years], then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (margin, justified) (Dan. viii. 14), undoubtedly points to the period when the divine trial would be instituted. With the year before us when the commandment went forth to restore and build Jerusalem, B.C. 457,—as the point of commencement for that period (Dan. ix. 25; Ezra vii.); it is a simple problem to find the close of the years, and it brings us to the autumn of A.D. 1844.

With the coming of the Lord is associated the resurrection of the righteous dead, and the translation of the righteous living; but upon the decisions of the judgment now in session will

depend who will be thus changed. The owner of every name written in the "book of life" will be mustered at Heaven's great roll call, and mingling with all the holy angels, be led by Christ in a triumphal entry into the city of God. But what of those placed on the left-hand in the separative decisions of infinite justice? The coming of Christ is to them the agent of death (2 Thess. i. 7-10), in which they lie for a thousand years. At the

expiration of this period the scene, depicted with such vivid realism in Rev. xx., is enacted. The second resurrection brings to life every sinner that ever lived, but only as a prelude to the "second death," into which they are shortly cast. The searching inquiry at Heaven's bar in its execution, exalts the believer in Christ to the condition of eternal life, but places upon the unbeliever the ban of eternal destruction. WM. KNIGHT.



"Ah! Little dream those simple men on Bethlehem's plain,
That wondrous eve,
That ere the morning dawn, they shall in lofty strain
Such news receive.
But now from earth the light is gone, the song has ceased,
A bitter cry
The heaven doth cleave, the earth doth rend. . . .

Ah! When shall we behold Thy face, when shall we hear
The wondrous song?
Is not the night far spent? Is not the morning near?
O Lord, how long?
When shall all grief and sighing cease, and weary night
Flee far away?
O rend the heavens, come down and bring the light
Of perfect day."

His Glorious Appearing.



CHRIST will surely come again. Of this fact the Scriptures give repeated assurance. Clothed in honour and majesty, attended by myriads of angels, He comes in the clouds of heaven to deliver His waiting people. The trumpet sounds, the graves open, while the righteous dead come forth, clad in glorious immortality, and are caught up to meet their Lord in the air. 1 Thess. iv. 15-17.

What wonder that a scene of such solemn grandeur should be lovingly dwelt upon by the inspired writers in all ages. Already Enoch, "the seventh from Adam," prophesied: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones to execute

shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people."

Our Saviour Himself gave very definite instruction to His disciples, both as regards the fact and the manner of His coming. "The Son of man," He declared, "shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then shall He reward every man according to his works." Matt. xvi. 27. "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. . . . Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. xxiv. 27, 30.

When the Saviour was taking leave of His disciples, just before the crucifixion, He reassured them by saying that the parting was not for all time; there would be a glorious re-union. "Let not your heart be troubled. . . . I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." John xiv. 1-3.

Not many days later, as the disciples stood reverently, with uplifted gaze, watching the cloud which had enveloped their ascending Lord, they were accosted by the heavenly messengers: "Ye

judgment upon all." The patriarch Job, misjudged and forsaken by his friends, and suffering the deepest affliction, comforted himself with this blessed hope. "I know," he said, "that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though . . . worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job xix. 25, 26.

Many and many a time did "the sweet psalmist of Israel" recur to this grand and solemn event. Note those beautiful verses in the fiftieth psalm: "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath

men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts i. 10, 11.

The attitude of those Galilean fishermen was that of the early Christian church. Its gaze was fixed heavenward, all its hopes centred in Him who had gone within the veil, and who would shortly return to take His own unto Himself. Indeed, the Saviour had expressly warned His disciples: "Watch ye, therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Similar admonitions were given through the Apostle Paul writing to the Thessalonians: "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. v. 2, 3.

Christians in those days were Adventists in the fullest sense of the word. To the Corinthians it was written: "So that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. i. 7, 8. The Thessalonians were reminded that they had "turned from idols to serve the living God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." 1 Thess. i. 9, 10. James, writing to all the churches, admonishes them: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord."

Why do Christian people of to-day have so little to say of the return of their Lord? The advent spirit is sadly wanting in the churches. The prophecies concerning our Lord's second coming are utterly neglected, and the whole subject is one upon which many, if not most, professing Christians are in total ignorance.

We fear the cause is to be found in a decline in spirituality, and a departure from the plain teaching of the inspired Word. If the Christian's heart is centred in Christ, if he is alive to the sin and suffering of which the world is so full, if he senses the present situation in all its terrible reality, surely he cannot help but feel an intense longing for the coming of Christ in the glory of His kingdom, and the ushering in of the reign of peace and righteousness. With fervent heart he must join in the prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

M. E. OLSEN.

"Be patient: keep thy lifework
Well in hand;
Be trustful where thou canst not
Understand;
Thy lot, whate'er it be, is
Wisely planned;
Whate'er its mysteries, God holds the key;
Thou well canst trust Him, and bide patiently."



The Resurrection of the Dead.



NOW there appears in the east a small black cloud the size of a man's hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour, and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence they gaze upon it as it draws nearer the earth, becoming lighter and more glorious, until it is a great white cloud, its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it the rainbow of the covenant. Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a "man of sorrows," to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe; He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. "Faithful and True," "in righteousness He doth judge and make war." And "the armies in heaven follow Him." Rev. xix. 11, 14.

With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms,—"ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." No human pen can portray the scene, no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendour. "His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light." Hab. iii. 3, 4. As the living cloud comes still nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life. No crown of thorns now mars that sacred head, but a diadem of glory rests on His holy brow. His countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noonday sun.

"And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." Rev. xix. 16.

Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. He looks upon the graves of the righteous, then, raising His hands to heaven He cries, "Awake, awake, awake, ye that sleep in the dust, and arise!" Throughout the length and breadth of the earth, the dead shall hear that voice; and they that hear shall live.

And the whole earth shall ring with the tread of the exceeding great army of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. From the prison-house of death they come, clothed with immortal glory, crying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Cor. xv. 55. And the living righteous and the risen saints unite their voices in a long, glad shout of victory.

All arise with the freshness and vigour of eternal youth. In the beginning, man was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature. Sin defaced and almost obliterated the divine image; but Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto His glorious body. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave. Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will "grow up" (Mal. iv. 2), to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ's faithful ones will appear "in the beauty of the Lord our God," in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord. Oh, wonderful redemption! long talked of, long hoped for, contemplated with eager anticipation, but never fully understood.

The living righteous are changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." At the voice of God they were glorified; now they are made immortal, and with the risen saints are caught up to meet their Lord in the air. Angels "gather together the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Little children are borne by holy angels to their mothers' arms. Friends long separated by death are united, nevermore to part, and with songs of gladness ascend together to the city of God.

Now is fulfilled the Saviour's prayer for His disciples: "I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am." "Faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24), Christ presents to the Father the purchase of His blood, declaring, "Here am I, and the children whom Thou hast given Me." "Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept." Oh, the wonders of redeeming love! the rapture of that hour when the infinite Father, looking upon the ransomed, shall behold His image, sin's discord banished, its blight removed, and the human once more in harmony with the divine!

With unutterable love, Jesus welcomes His faithful ones to the "joy of their Lord." The Saviour's joy is in seeing, in the kingdom of glory, the souls that have been saved by His agony and

humiliation. And the redeemed will be sharers in this joy, as they behold, among the blessed, those who have been won to Christ through their prayers, their labours, and loving sacrifice. As they gather about the great white throne, gladness unspeakable will fill their hearts, when they behold those whom they have won for Christ, and see that one has gained others, and these still others, all brought into the haven of rest, there to lay their crowns at Jesus' feet, and praise Him through the endless cycles of eternity.

At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. He is accompanied by the host of the redeemed, and attended by a retinue of angels. As He descends in terrific majesty, He bids the wicked dead arise to receive their doom. They come forth, a mighty host, numberless as the sands of the sea. What a contrast to those who were raised at the first resurrection! The righteous were clothed with immortal youth and beauty. The wicked still bear the traces of disease and death.

Every eye in that vast multitude is turned to behold the glory of the Son of God. With one voice the wicked hosts exclaim, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" It is not love to Jesus that inspires this utterance. The force of truth urges the words from unwilling lips. As the wicked went into their graves, so they come forth, with the same enmity to Christ, and the same spirit of rebellion. They are to have no new probation, in which to remedy the defects of their past lives. Nothing would be gained by this. A lifetime of transgression has not softened their hearts. A second probation, were it given them, would be occupied as was the first, in evading the requirements of God and exciting rebellion against Him.—*Mrs. E. G. White, in "The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan."*

"I Am."

"I AM." He doth not say, I AM their light, their guide, their strengthening tower, but only I AM. He sets, as it were, His hand to blank, that His people may write under it what they please that is good for them. As if He said, Are they weak? I AM strength. Are they poor? I AM riches. Are they in trouble? I AM comfort. Are they sick? I AM health. Are they dying? I AM life. Have they nothing? I AM all things. I AM wisdom and power; I AM glory, beauty, holiness, eminency, super-eminency, perfection, all-sufficiency, eternity! JEHOVAH, I AM! Whatsoever is amiable in itself and desirable to them, that I AM. Whatsoever is pure and holy, whatsoever is good, and needful to make men happy, that I AM.—*Bishop Beveridge.*

Christ's Dominion.

FROM sea to sea
 Shall His dominion be,
 According to the promise written;
 And He in scorn and insult smitten
 Shall hear the wondrous salutations
 Of long oppressed and weary nations;
 And He shall rule
 Star-crowned and beautiful.

And He shall live;
 And men to Him shall give
 Their treasures as they tell the story
 Of His renown and rising glory.
 And it shall be a rich oblation,
 To Him the Lord of our salvation,
 Who from His pain
 Went up henceforth to reign.
 —Dwight Williams.

The World to Come.

HARK! The "Morning Stars" are singing: the heavenly anthem, voiced by the "sons of God," rings joyously through the vaults of glory! Job xxxviii. Fresh and bright, glowing with beauty ineffable, a new world has come forth from the Father's hand, and all things are "very good."

Man, God's masterpiece, in the image of the Eternal; empowered with might, with authority, with dominion, rules over all earth's glory, the representative of the King of kings, a sub-ruler under the Almighty. Ps. viii. 5-9.

To develop into the Life Divine; to manifest His character; to fill the earth with God's own love, is held as the goal before man, to grow up indeed into Him, the Head. Eph. iv. 15.

But now the scene is changed. Instead of joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning reign desolate. At Eden's gate the cherub stands—the bright flashes of his living sword a fearful reminder, a potent token, that man is cast out, is barred access to the tree of life, and that the tyrant death is given dominion over all.

Gen. iii. 22; Rom. v. 12.

Sin and death and woe! A pall drawn over earth's fair face! The angels weep! All heaven mourns! A blot upon a universe of peace and love!

But through the blackening clouds that sin has made, a light shines clear and strong. The promise of a Saviour is given—a proffered sacrifice to make a full atonement. Gen. iii. 15; Rev. xiii. 8.

God's plan shall still prevail—the Eternal purpose still shall triumph, and He who came "to seek and save that which was lost" shall indeed restore to man, through His boundless gift of love, all that man, through sin, has lost—his life, his character, his home, the first dominion.

Eph. iii. 11; Luke x. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 22; Rom. v. 17; Micah iv. 8.

This has ever been the hope of the children of faith, and the promise made to Abraham and to all his seed pointed him forward, not to mere temporal possessions, but to the glorious promise of an earth restored.

Heb. xi. 13; Gen. xiii. 15; Gal. iii. 29; Rom. iv. 13.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," even the place first prepared for man's habitation, restored from sin and Satan's rule, to be the home of the saved. This was our Saviour's promise: on this we can rely.

Matt. v. 5; Mark xiii. 31.

Not an earth all filled with pain; where wrinkles

mark the course of many a sorrow. Not an earth all cursed and blackened and marred; where thistles grow and thorns remind us ever of the lost estate; where violence and sin, from Cain's first fatal blow, continually bring fear and dread and torment.

Isa. xxxv. 3-10.

All this shall pass. No thought of all the past shall mar the keen delights of that Eternal home.

Isa. lxxv. 17.

God's promise still is sure, and though by His long-suffering it is delayed, the Word is sure, and sure it will stand. 2 Peter iii. 9-14.

"The elements shall melt with fervent heat," and all the works of sin shall be destroyed. The dross shall be consumed and all of sin and death and hell shall pass away. And yet His promise sure we trust. Behold! He gives to all His conquering children a heaven and an earth made new, wherein the righteous dwell. Oh, happy thought! Ah, blessed hope!

The pain for ever gone; the tears all wiped away. And God shall dwell with men, and ever through eternal years reveal the glories of His grace. Rev. xxi. 1-7.

To this glad time our Saviour turned the hearts of His disciples. "I go to prepare a place for you;" mansions of glory, resplendent and stately, soon to come down to form the capital of the earth made new. John xiv. 1-3; Rev. xxi. 1.



Eternity! eternity! Saved by His grace! His matchless love has conquered. The sacrifice of dark Golgotha's brow has won the fight. The great controversy between Christ and Satan is ended, and a long infinity of time will witness to His saving power. Eph. ii. 8.

All marks of sin's oppressing rule are purged away. The ransomed throng grow up to man's first beauteous state, and without the possibility of sad calamity, they build houses and inhabit them; they plant vineyards and eat the fruits thereof. Mal. iv. 2.

All nature is subdued by love. The lion eats straw like the bullock, and the wolf and the lamb lie down together. Nothing hurts or defiles in all the Eden restored. Isa. lxv. 25.

But amid the joy and happiness is ever borne in mind the Saviour's love. From Sabbath to Sabbath and from moon to moon the ransomed host comes up to worship. Isa. lxvi. 23.

The glorious river of life is there, and there the tree of life which bears her varied fruit and yields each month. Rev. xxii. 1, 2.

And now again creation sings! A cadence sweet is heard. The song of Moses and the Lamb breaks forth from myriad voices tuned to an immortal pitch. Not now *alone* the glory of Creation's power, but *recreation* joins in glad redemption's song. Rev. xiv. 1-3.

"All glory to the Lamb!" and through the universe rolls on the glad refrain; for all is now at rest—complete in Him. Col. ii. 10.

W. A. WESTWORTH.

Real Confession.

MARK GUY PEARCE tells the following story illustrative of true and false confession of sins:—

"A member of the church once got drunk. He sought to go back to God and get his peace restored. He could not find the Saviour, so he sought again. His minister called upon him. The minister said, 'You pray again.' They knelt down together.

"O God, Thou knowest Thy servant in a moment of unwatchfulness was overtaken by a sin!"

"Nonsense!" said the minister, 'tell the Lord you got drunk.'

"That was another matter; he could not bring that up. He began again: 'O Lord, Thou knowest Thy servant in his weakness and frailty was overtaken by a besetment!'

"Nonsense! tell the Lord you got drunk."

"At last the poor fellow said, 'O God, have mercy upon me, I got drunk.'

"Then very speedily that man was at peace with God again."

W. A. COLCORD.

WE seek the world for truth; we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
From all old flower-fields of the soul;
And weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from our quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book our mothers read. —Whittier.

JOSEPHINE BUTLER, a minister's wife in England, was dying with consumption. The physicians said one lung was entirely gone and half of the other wasted. But she gave herself to God for the warfare against legalised lust, and she has preached social purity in a world-encircling campaign for years, achieving glorious victories. There is omnipotent power in the inspiration of a high and holy purpose, that expels disease and drives back death.

When Jesus Comes.

SOME people seem surprised at the eagerness which is displayed by some Christians for the return of the Lord Jesus to this earth again. But why should they not be eager for His return, when that return means reunion for the parted, immortality for the mortal, health for the sick, life for the dead, land for the landless, plenty for the destitute, bread for the hungry, water for the thirsty, sight for the blind, hearing for the deaf, speech for the dumb, strength for the weak, youth for the aged, liberty for the captives, riches for the poor, "beauty for ashes," a "garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," "the oil of joy for mourning," peace for the troubled, rest for the weary, gladness for the sorrowing, songs for the sighing, society for the friendless, perfect bodies for the afflicted, mansions for huts, crowns for crosses, light for darkness, wisdom for ignorance, strength for weakness, harmony for discord, with an eternal inheritance in the kingdom of God for all His ransomed people.—*Selected.*

O GOD, make us what Thou wilt;
Guide Thou the labour of our hand;
Let all our work be surely built
As Thou, the Architect, hast planned;
But whatsoever Thy power shall make
Of these frail lives, do not forsake
Thy dwelling. Let Thy presence rest
For ever in the temple of our breast.

—Henry Van Dyke.

"THAT household is nearest the Christian ideal where are studied most minutely those delicate offices and interchanges of kindness, which, like golden threads, run through the warp and woof of every-day life."