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“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and My Redeemer.”—Psa. 19:14.

How beautiful in the sight of right-thinking men is a well-balanced, self-possessed and disciplined character ! And in contrast with such, how unlovely are the undisciplined and ungoverned—the selfish, the unjust, the unkind, and the violent-tempered ! Naturally, the one awakens in us emotions of pleasure and admiration, and the other, of pain. And if such is the appreciation of virtue and the abhorrence of the lack of it among men who have lost much of the original image of God, with what a keen appreciation must they be observed by a pure and holy God !

Men of the world who have no personal acquaintance with God have no special thought as to how they appear in His sight, but with what carefulness should those who love Him and who value His approval study to conform their conduct to His pure and holy mind ! True, all who are “begotten again,” notwithstanding their imperfections and shortcomings through inherited weaknesses, are acceptable to God through Christ, whose robe of righteousness amply covers them; hut the measure of their acceptableness to God, even through Christ, is only to the extent that, while availing themselves of His imputed righteousness, they are earnestly striving to attain actually to the standard of perfection. By so doing they manifest their real appreciation of the Divine favour.

With what confusion and chagrin would one be covered who, in the midst of a fit of violent temper or an unjust or mean transaction, unworthy of his dignity or his profession, should be suddenly surprised by the appearance of a beloved friend of high and noble character ! And yet, the eye of such a One is ever upon us. And only to the extent that we dismiss this thought from our minds, or else that we undervalue the Lord’s opinion and approval, can we allow the evil propensities of the fallen nature to run- riot,

“WHEREWITHAL SHALL A YOUNG MAN CLEANSE HIS WAY?”

Realising the downward tendency of the old nature, how constantly should the above prayer of the Psalmist be in the minds of God’s consecrated children ! Hut how, one inquires, may the difficult task of subduing the inherent depravity be accomplished? It is hard .for one, particularly under exasperating circumstances, to control a hasty or violent temper, for another to bridle a gossiping tongue; and especially if the trials of life to Some extent put their coloured glasses on the eyes. And then what a host of inherent weaknesses there are, which every one of God’s true children realises and knows that he must strive against, if he would be acceptable with God ! .The thoughts of our hearts are not manifest to fellow-men until -we express them in words or actions; but even the very thoughts and intents ‘of the heart-are all open and manifest to God. What a comfort to the honest-hearted !

The Psalmist repeats this inquiry, saying, “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?” and then replies, “By taking heed thereto, according to Thy Word.” Then he frames for us this resolution: “I will meditate on Thy precepts and have respect unto Thy ways; I will delight myself in Thy statutes; I will not forget Thy Word.” (Psa. 119:9, 15,

16.) Here is the secret of a pure and noble life, acceptable to God. It is to be attained, not merely by prayers and righteous resolutions, hut, in addition to these, by careful, painstaking heed, by systematic and diligent effort at self-cultivation, by care and perseverance in weeding out evil thought, and by diligent and constant cultivation of pure, benevolent and noble thoughts, and by nipping in the bud the weeds of perversity before they bring forth their hasty harvest of sinful Words and deeds.

But observe, further, that this heed or care, is to be taken, but according to the imperfect standard of our own; judgment, but according, to God's Word. The standard by which we test our lives makes, a vast difference in our conclusions.

The psalmist further commends this standard to us, saying: "The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul, (That is, if we take heed to our ways according to God's Law, it will turn us completely from the path of sin to the path of righteousness.) The testimony (the instruction) of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple (the meek, teachable ones—clearly pointing 'out to them the ways of righteousness). The statutes (the decrees, ordinances and precepts) of the Lord are right (the infallible rules of righteousness), rejoicing the heart (of the obedient). The commandment of the

Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean (not a mental, servile fear, but a noble fear, 'begotten of love—a fear of falling short of His righteous approval), enduring forever. More to be desired are they (the Law and the 'testimony of the Lord)' than gold; yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

"KEEP BACK THY SERVANT FROM PRESUMPTUOUS SINS."

"Moreover, by them is thy servant warned (concerning the dangers of the way and the snares of the Adversary, and concerning everything which is calculated to discourage, or to hinder his growth in grace), and in keeping of them there is great reward. Who (in the use merely of his own fallible judgment and without the standard of God's Law) can understand his errors (can rightly judge himself)?"

But when, as we measure ourselves by this standard, we detect and deplore our shortcomings, let us remember the Psalmist's prayer: "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults"—thus supplementing our efforts by our prayers. —Psa. 19:7-12.

But there is still another part of this prayer which the Lord thus puts into our mouths. It reads: "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression." Let us consider what kind of sins would be presumptuous sins. To presume signifies to take for granted without authority or proof. A presumptuous sin would, therefore, be taking for granted and asserting as truth something which God has not revealed, or the perversion of what He has revealed. To claim and hold tenaciously as a part of God's Plan any doctrine, merely on the ground of fallible human reason and without Divine authority, would therefore be a presumptuous sin.

Of this nature is the sin of those who malign the Divine character by boldly teaching the 'blasphemous doctrine of eternal torment without warrant from the Scriptures, and in direct contradiction of them. And there are many other sins of greater and less degree which partake of the same character. But the words here seem to refer directly to some particular error into which there is danger of drifting—"When shall I be innocent from the great transgression"—evidently, the sin unto death referred to by the Apostles also. (1 John 5:16; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-31.) Such a sin: would be that of presuming upon the love of God to bring us salvation, even though we should, wilfully refuse it through the channel, which He appointed—the precious of Christ, shed for our redemption.

'BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE DELIGHT: IS IN THE LAW OF THE LORD

Well, indeed, may we pray and strive to be kept back from presumptuous sins—sins of pride or of arrogant selfwill, which does not meekly submit to the will of God! Let us, beloved, beware of the slightest tendency toward pride and self-will, or the disposition to be wise above what is written, or to take for granted what God does not clearly promise. Then, indeed, if we watch and strive against the very beginning of that proud and haughty spirit which surely presages a fall, we shall be "innocent from the great transgression."

"Blessed is the man whose delight is in the Law of the Lord, and who doth meditate therein day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psa. 1:1-3.) If we make the Word of God the theme of our constant meditation, its principles will soon be assimilated and become part of our mental makeup, making our characters more beautiful and commendable both to God and to our fellowmen; and in harmony with this habit of the mind the acts of life will speak.

The purified fountain will send forth sweeter waters than formerly, bearing refreshment and good cheer to all who come in contact with it. It will make happier homes—better husbands, better wives and better children. It will sweeten the temper, soften the voice, dignify the language, cultivate the manners, ennoble the sentiments and lend its charming grace to every simple duty. It will bring in the principle of love and cast out the discordant elements of selfishness. Thus it will make the home the very garden-spot of earth, where every virtue and every grace will have ample room to

expand and grow.

It will not only thus favourably affect the individual and the home-life, but it will go out into the avenues of trade, and truth and fair-dealing will characterise all the business relations; and thus will God be honoured by those who bear His name and wear the impress of His blessed Spirit.

While the heights of perfection cannot be reached so long as we still have these imperfect bodies, there should be in every child of God very perceptible and continuous growth in grace, and each step gained should be considered but the stepping-stone to higher attainments. If there is no perceptible growth into the likeness of God, or if there is a backward tendency, or a listless standstill, there is cause for alarm.

Let us constantly keep before our eyes the model which the Lord Jesus set for our example—that model of the complete fulfilment of the will of God, in which the whole Law was kept blamelessly. Let us follow His steps of righteousness and self-sacrifice as nearly as a full measure of loving zeal and faithfulness and loyalty to God will enable us to do, and we shall have a blessed sense of the Divine approval now, and the glorious reward of Divine favour in due time.

PEOPLES PAPER.

Published by the Berean Biblical Institute,

Found Wanting

IF such a stage of unemployment is recurrent and inevitable, then I say that the whole social order under which we live not only will go but ought to go.” (Rabbi Stephen S. Wise.)

How evident it is that man is unable to devise means even of preserving the present inequitable social order.

“Men’s hearts are failing them for fear of what is coming on the earth.” They acknowledge that conditions are beyond recovery to even such a state as preceded the great war .and that was far from being what could be desired. ‘They acknowledge that under the present order of things there is no hope of ever being able to find work for’ the unemployed, and there is no one with a theory that can work out a new social order that will bring world-wide satisfaction, peace, joy and goodwill toward all.

The following from the Melbourne “Sun” of July 17 describes the same conditions:-

“Only 55 per cent. of the people who had been required to produce the quantity of commodities turned out in American works in 1929 would be employed if production were to reach that volume again, said Mr. Fenton, M.H.R., yesterday afternoon at Northcote.

“This was because of the increase of efficiency in machinery in the past three or four years. It meant that of the 13,000,000 unemployed in the United State;; at least 4,500;000 could never be re-employed because they had been displaced by machinery. The same position ruled in Australia.

“It was no’ use relying on conferences of nations, said Mr. Fenton. The people would have to do as King Hezekiah had .done—pray humbly to God, Who would lead them out of the shadows and grant them the light of intelligence in His own good time.”

Surely, as Mr. Fenton says, the only hope for mankind is to look to God, and yet how few professed Christians of today have studied their Bibles sufficiently and sought the Lord’s guidance to know of .the wondrous provision He has made for the redemption of themselves and all mankind through the sacrifice of His dear Son.

Only the Bible offers the solution of present distress, and that is a new social order, or as the Bible states it, “a new heavens and a new earth.” The present social order will break down and there Will be—the great time of trouble such as never Was—since” there was nation—Dan. 12:1. ‘ The’ earth ‘ (social order. Will ‘be’ destroyed in ‘a fiery. time ‘of trouble ‘(‘2 ‘Pet.” 3’); there will then be a new earth and new heavens. The’ heavens or spiritual controlling ‘powers ‘Will -also’. pass away—that is, Satan will be bound.’ He’ has been ‘;the prince of the power of the air—the prince of ‘this_ world —and when restrained along With his hosts,’ all ‘false religions will pass away. Then the new heavens—Christ and the Church glorified—(unseen by men) will control earth’s affairs. The new earth will’ have its capital at Jerusalem. Israel is being restored to the ancient home in preparation and then “the Law shall go forth out of Zion (Christ and the Church) and the Word of the Lord (the enforcing of it)’, will go forth from Jerusalem.”Zeph. 3:8, 9; Mic. 4:1-4.

WHERE THE BIBLE AND JESUS ARE SILENT.

“Perhaps you wonder sometimes why the Bible and the sayings of Jesus are so often silent on so man? questions which perplex you,” writes Adolf von Harnack in “A Scholar’s Testament.” “Why is it, you wonder, that so many things you would have liked to see stated in black and white are simply not mentioned at all? Perhaps you discover that for the special doubt of your soul there is no direct word, and you can find no completely satisfying answer to the special needs of your life. But would it have been possible to’ have given detailed and minute instructions and advice so far ahead that it would have covered all the variety of individual need, and all stages of human development? And even if this had been possible, would it have been salutary? Would it have been good for us to live by a huge book of spiritual recipes, or by a great code of ethics, which would supply chapter and verse for every emergency? How many of us could stand that, and where would be our spiritual freedom?”

“Think of what you possess as a child of God; think of what you see in your hours of vision, even if you cannot always express it articulately, think of that which gives you shelter in the assaults and storms of life, and light in the’ doubts of your soul! It is not this or that particular word or saying, it is not any special command, but it is the deliberate turning of your spirit towards God: the sense of truth, the spirit of reverence for all that is holy, and an ever renewed apiration—even though it may often be hindered—of desire after a life whose power is not of this world. This is the Spirit of God, which you have received, and it will lead you far more clearly into the truth, that is, into the reality of a higher life, than a single word or command could ever do, because as the brook issues from the mountain spring; so the Spirit issues from God. From this Spirit, in increasing measure, you yourself will be able to decide what is true for you,

and what you ought to do in your necessities and ‘difficulties and doubts. And it is precisely this feeling of freedom which will give you strength.’—”Christian World.”

Christian Obligations

(Rom. 13:7, 8, 10-14.)

WE might consider it a remarkable thing that every feature of Christian life, duty and character is set forth somewhere in the Apostolic writings, did we not remember- that the Apostles, as the stars or bright ones of the Church, were specially held in the hand of the Lord; specially guided in their utterances, enabling them to set forth the whole counsel of God, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work.

There is a vast difference between the governmental conditions of the present time and those which prevailed at about the time of the writing of this epistle to the Roman Christians. Monarchs now are no longer absolute, and it is difficult for us to conceive of the condition of things in those early days when an emperor had authority not only to set apart culprits as victims for death in public, but to instruct his servants to select further victims from amongst- the audience. It is when we get before our minds this view of atrocious governments which prevailed in the Apostle’s day, that we get the full grip of his injunction—”Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for the powers that be are ordained of God.”

It is comparatively easy to be subject to the higher powers in civilised lands to-day, for although justice may not be meted out in every instance, there is at least an endeavour to render a show of justice. We should be very thankful that our lot has been favourably cast in this respect. In declaring that “the powers that be are ordained of God,” we are not to understand the Apostle to mean that they are endorsed by God; nor that their decisions, rules, etc., are approved by Him, or are in harmony with His rules and laws. The Apostle’s intimation means simply that in Divine providence things are as they are, and God, who knows all the circumstances and conditions, permits them to be so, though He could overthrow them and substitute His own kingdom of righteousness. Nevertheless this is not His plan just yet; for the time being He permits the kingdoms of this world (whose rulers are largely blinded by the deceptions of the prince of this world) to run their course subject to certain limitations. God hinders Satan and his misguided dupes from doing unprofitable injury to the interests of His people, and the Divine Plan as a whole. . God’s power overrules the wrath of man and makes it to praise Him, and that which will not accomplish any good He restrains.

We are to render to all men as well as rulers their dues. This does not mean to become entangled with the affairs of this life. A big mistake is no doubt being made by professed Christians along this line. Some think that Christian citizenship implies engaging in political affairs, endeavouring to determine who shall be rulers, and striving to better the laws and have them obeyed. It will be noticed that the Apostle gives no such advice. He tells us, in Phil. 3:20 (R.V.): “Your citizenship is in heaven.” We are strangers and pilgrims in the kingdoms of this world. It is our business to render obedience to the laws, customs, usages of this world in so far as they do not infringe upon our conscientious obligations to the Lord and the truth; but this does not mean that ‘a Christian should engage in political strifes and contentions among men. Let the world elect its own rulers in whatever way it thinks best; we should put up with whatever it provides with gratitude to God, realising that He will guide and care for us under all circumstances and that in a way to conserve our highest interests.

“The Apostle says, “Render fear to whom fear is due.” Fear or reverence is differentiated from honour and respect. The fear that is to be rendered is in the sense of obedience, as we read elsewhere, “Fear the judge:” The commands of the judge or court are to be obeyed, whatever others may- be disposed to do. Christians are never to be found in contempt of court, but are to obey its rules to the very letter whether they consider them, just or unjust, because the judge is the representative of the law and God permits the law and the judge to have control for the present. If, therefore, as our Lord explained, someone shall sue us at the law and take away our coat, or if it include our cloak also, we are not to resist; we need to be obedient to the powers that be. This would not mean that we -shall willingly Submit to our articles being taken from us illegally or unjustly without process of law.

Having thus seen the Christian’s obligations to the government of a country, we next pass to the consideration of his obligations to his neighbour. The Apostle says, “Owe no man anything.” This would not actually mean that a .Christian should not under any circumstances borrow, but that if he borrows with a specific understanding respecting the time of re-turn, he shall be prompt to meet the obligation. If one is not very sure of -his ability to meet the obligation or do something that would be satisfactory between the two, it would be advisable and more to the mark not to borrow. There-is, then, the standing advice of the Word of God that the children of the -great King should-be lenders and not borrowers. “Do good and^ lend.” As one has said—”We believe it would be to the advantage of every child of God, if he would put into practice the Apostle’s words on, this matter in the most absolute sense, and never borrow anything; never owe anything, paying for what he needs at the time of purchase or waiting for it until able.

The Lord knows what is for the best and will provide what is necessary if we since-rely co-operate with Him and work to that end. We realise this in both temporal and spiritual things. It brings to mind the old saying, "Where there is a will there is a way."

There is one thing in particular the Apostle implies we are continually owing to our fellow creatures, not only to the brethren; the members of, our own families and our own neighbourhood, but to all men, and that is love. We, owe them this under the Divine law, and it is part of a Christian's duty to discharge this. obligation daily. Each should strive to see to it that his influence in his neighbourhood, amongst his friends and acquaintances, shall be for good and • not for evil, for peace and not for strife. The Apostle calls attention to the comprehensive statement of the Law set forth by our Lord, that love is the fulfilling of the law. Therefore love for those with whom we come in contact signifies that the law of God is fulfilled toward our neighbour. It will be remembered that the law of love is divided into two parts; first, love to God; second, love to our fellows, and so the loving of our neighbour would therefore be only a part of the fulfilling of the entire love to God.

Having considered these two points—duty to rulers, and duty to neighbours—the Apostle next takes up the Christian's duty toward himself, as he declares, "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep."

The Christian is to realise that he and the whole world in general has been asleep, in a sort of stupor in respect of the highest, the best and the noblest things. Now, having gotten the eyes of his understanding opened, and being awake to righteousness, he begins to weigh and measure matters quite differently from his previous course. He begins to estimate rightly the things of this present life as not worthy to be compared with the glorious things which belong to the eternal life. As he realises this, he should feel disposed to arise still more and shake himself thoroughly from the dust of superstition, blindness and sordidness, and to live in harmony with the glorious hopes he now entertains— living for the new dispensation, which he sees is approaching, realising that day by day since he first believed his salvation is drawing nearer. Instructed by the Word of God, he will not expect his salvation except in connection with the second presence of our Lord Jesus and the establishment of His Kingdom, as the Apostle Peter declares: "The grace that is to be brought" unto you at the revelation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The thought of the second coming of the Lord was continually before the Apostles, and our Lord evidently designed that it should be constantly an incentive to all the members of His Church throughout the age. This no doubt was the reason why He did not particularly explain the length of time that would intervene. It would be a short time from ,God's standpoint, and even iron, the human viewpoint it would be a short time to each individual who would have only the few remaining years of life wherein to make ready for the glorious things of the future, "for in death there is no remembrance of Thee: in the grave who can give Thee thanks." Psa. 6:5. Looking back and perceiving that over 4000 years had, already passed with sin and gross darkness Upon the world, the Apostle realised that "the night" was surely far spent - and "the day" not far distant. What is the force of the Apostle's. argument to those who see as he did the approaching kingdom of light that shall banish all the darkness of sin, ignorance and superstition? It is expressed. in his words: "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of light." As expressed in one of the "Manna" comments: "The works of darkness would be any works whatsoever that would not stand the fullest investigation; that would not stand approval; in the light of the new dispensation if it were already ushered in. Let us remember that we belong to the new 'dispensation and not to the old, and should, therefore, live in accordance with our citizenship and our responsibility toward the Prince of Light and in opposition to the prince of darkness, his works and his ways."

We have been admonished to put on the armour of light, and the necessity for such is because the particular period of time in which the change from the dominion of the prince of this world to the kingdom of the Son of God will be a specially evil day, a period in which all the children of light will be crucially tested; such a day as will try every man's work and faith, what they are; a day of fiery trial through which only the gold, silver and precious stones will pass unscathed, and in which all the hay, wood and stubble of error and sin, human traditions and falsehood will be entirely destroyed. No wonder, then, that the Apostle repeatedly urges the Lord's people to put on the armour of light for the trials of this particular time which we perceive is gradually drawing on. We are already in the time when the wood, hay and stubble is being consumed, when Higher Criticism, Evolution, Christian Science, etc., are devouring as a flame all that are not fully devoted to the Lord and are therefore not specially kept by His power through His Word and providence.

Let us walk honestly as in the day. We are not yet fully in the day, but we belong to the new era, and are therefore to live as nearly as possible up to the perfect standard of the future. To live so will signify self-denial; we will be misunderstood by the world and thought foolish. Further, we will be considered enemies, not only by those who are in gross darkness, but particularly by those who profess to; be the Lord's people but who really prefer darkness and error rather than light and truth.

We would be inclined to lay special stress on this word “honestly” and to believe that the Apostle used it advisedly and in a particular sense. As we look all about us we find dishonesty is very prevalent, not merely in the world where we expect a certain amount of duplicity and misrepresentation and deception by people passing for what they are not, but we find this kind of dishonesty very prevalent amongst professing Christians. One writer says that some preachers have been known to boast of their dishonesty, declaring that they never did believe the creeds which they had professed to believe and vowed they would teach to others. Intelligently supposed teachers are to-day preaching in denominations what they do not believe, standing: for creeds and theories which misrepresent their true sentiments. This is acting dishonestly, and many are thus searing their conscience, and putting themselves into a condition where they cannot make progress in the light of the truth. God will certainly not have dishonest people in His elect Church, and so unless such become honest they will have their portion with the hypocrites.. Every true Christian must surely walk honestly; as We have it expressed again: “Everyone should ‘see to it that, he is honest, not only in financial matters, ‘but -honest in his’ treatment of his neighbour, it his treatment of the brethren in the Church, and, above all, honest in his confessions respecting his God and his faith.” One of our tests is along this line, and those who love the favour of men more than the favour of God, and who dishonestly are willing to confess and profess a lie, will be given up to their lie, will be permitted to blight their eternal interests, and thus prove themselves unfit for the kingdom. This is the very essence of the Apostle’s declaration in his letter to the Thessalonians, when speaking of this evil day and the great trial that would come upon the Church. He declares, “God will send them strong delusions that they might believe a lie,” because they were not honest, obeyed net the truth in the love of it. (2 Thess. 2:11, 12.)

Again in this chapter the Apostle admonishes the saints that they should not engage in worldly revelries and timekilling pleasures, harmless though they may be, as such a desire would indicate intoxication with the spirit of the world. The Lord’s people who have had their understanding opened and are awake should be absorbed in the things pertaining to godliness, and treat all else as secondary affairs. We must not set our hearts on wrong things, but those which will help us to make straight paths for our feet and assist one another to be more pleasing to the Lord. The saints must seek more and -more to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, taking to themselves His characteristics of meekness, patience, gentleness, forbearance and love, and- recognising His willingness to be servant of all in His complete devotion to the Father at all times.

The Apostle advises the saints (Rom. 12:17) “to provide things honest in the sight of all men,” hut he says, “make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.” The flesh will be continually pressing itself forward and the Lord’s people are to ignore it to the necessary extent and not to excuse it. We are to do this so thoroughly that we will provide for the doing of the Lord’s will in all things, whether that will is pleasant or unpleasant, agreeable or disagreeable to the flesh. Therefore the greater measure of the spirit we possess, the greater will be- our ability to discern how we may be most pleasing unto God. Let us therefore examine ourselves and take heed to do all things to the honour and glory, of His cause and His name.

What is the Cross.

What is the Cross? I questioned.

‘Tis bearing every day

The triads which the Father

Permits along the way;

‘Tis sharing the reproaches

Your Master meekly bore

While those who claim to love Him

Revile you more and more.,

Correspondence,

New South Wales, 14th July, 1933.- Dear Brother,—

My subscription is due, so I will enclose postal note for same with a little added for Tract Fund. I have pleasure in assisting a little in this way to 'bring the truth to those who desire it.

God has given increased light suitable for our day, and those who walk in it are out of step with the world. Sometimes it is said: "Poor fellow, too narrow, he does not know what he is missing," but the Bible says: "They shall be mine saith the Lord in that day when I make up My jewels." It is nice to know that there are some whose light is- a reproof in that they will not link up with the world. I rejoice that it is possible for each to endure to the end. Yours in the faith of
•Christ, T.C.

Dear Brother,— 16th July, 1933. Your ever welcome letter of the 10th to hand, and contents noted and

appreciated. Always pleased to receive word and encouragement from those of like precious faith who are striving to make their calling and election sure.

It is sustaining to our faith and encouraging to our confidence to find others who are evincing an interest in spiritual things in these times of materialism, when almost all people are neglecting the things that pertain to their everlasting welfare. We are reminded by these happenings of Bunyan's man with the muck rake seeking the straws and not observing the crown above him.

How thankful we are to our God for opening our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of His Law. I was very much impressed the other morning when reading the last few verses of Psa. 119, where the Psalmist in closing his wonderful thanksgiving and petition says: "Give me understanding according to Thy Word," "Let my lips utter praise," "Let my tongue sing of Thy Word," and then finishes with the acknowledgment that, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I have not forgotten Thy commandments." How the above very often fits our experiences; we do not make the sanctified use of all the understanding our heavenly Father has given us and neglect to "let our lips utter praise," forgetting that "who so offereth praise glorifieth God." With the understanding •God has given us through His servants of His Divine Plan we should be ever praising such boundless love, and as this Psalm puts it:

"Let our tongue ever sing of Thy Word."

I am glad that you sent the books along to —, and pray that God's rich blessing of understanding and strength may be hers to her own enlightenment. If you have another set of volumes the same, please send them to the address enclosed. Now with all Christian love to all those who love our Lord Jesus,

Yours in Him, M.J.

P.S.—Herewith please find payment for 6 vols. "Scripture Studies."

New- South Wales,

10th July, 1933. Dear Brother,

Thank you for your kind letter of explanation of the 22nd June; also the book "Desolations of the Sanctuary," for, the loan of which I am very pleased. I can see the error I could have fallen into had I continued reading those books.. Next time they call I will explain as far as I have the ability to do so with the Lord's, help the error they have fallen into.

I would like a book of "Desolations of the Sanctuary" for myself, if you have one to spare, and please tell me the price. I have not finished reading it yet. Hope you had a good time with the friends in Tasmania.

With kind regards,

Your Sister in Christ, E.A.B.

Greatest in the Kingdom

“In Heaven, their angels do always behold the face of My Father.”—Matt. 18:10.

PERHAPS, it was the fact that Peter, James and John had been favoured more than the others on several occasions that led to the query connected with our text: “Who, then, is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?” They knew, of course, as St. Paul declares, that the Heavenly Father is above all, and that next to Him is our Lord Jesus Christ. “To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.” What the disciples wished to know was, which of them would be greatest, most influential, in

Messiah’s Kingdom, next to Himself. •

Jesus, calling to Him a little child, set him in the midst of them and said, “Verily I say unto you, except ye turn (from, this spirit of self-seeking which your question implies) and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven”—you will have no part in it, you will not be fit. Whoever would be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven should therefore become as humble as this little child.

A little child, unsophisticated, is ready to acknowledge its lack of wisdom. It asks questions, a thousand a day, perhaps as many as that in an hour; it seeks instruction; it does not profess and boast wisdom: or knowledge—it is candid, it is truthful. It is in later years that it learns from its parents and others, untruthfulness, pride, bombast and various qualities which it did not possess at first. It may have possessed the disposition to pride and arrogance and haughtiness, etc., by heredity, but at first it was guileless, and “as a little child.”

The Master’s lesson is that whoever would become a child of God and be taught of God, and be eventually developed as a child of God, for the glorious position in the Kingdom to which we were called, must become childlike—must turn away from all pride, from selfish ambitions and hypocrisies and pretensions. They must confess their littleness and ignorance, and go humbly to the Lord for the necessary instruction.

Any who refuse to adopt this proper, childlike spirit will thus be refused the opportunities of the Kingdom, for God will have none others—none others can be taught of God, they will not learn the lessons necessary, under the arrangements of this present time. Here then is the standard of simplicity and artlessness which the Lord’s people should adopt and should continue to allow to control them, regardless of their years and experiences. “Now we know in part”; we are dependent upon our Father and His instructions. We have entered the School of Christ, our Elder Brother; He is our Instructor; we must learn of Him, and to learn we must be in this proper, childlike attitude of mind.

“ONE SUCH LITTLE CHILD.”

We are not to understand that little children, however guileless, are members of Christ’s Kingdom class, nor that the dear little ones dying in infancy will be members thereof. “The hard. is seeking for mature men and women, who have a childlikeness, of mind, readiness to receive the Heavenly Father’s Message, ”

If some one were thus drowned in the sea, it would indeed terminate his present life, but it would not at all endanger or influence his future life. A future life, by a Restitution awakening, is assured to Adam and every member of his race. Neither drowning nor any other form of death could possibly interfere with it. But he who would injure one of the Lord’s little ones would thereby come under such a measure of Divine displeasure that it would affect his future interests beyond the grave, beyond his awakening. He would be held responsible for his deeds, even in the next life, in proportion as he realised what he was doing when he injured the Lord’s saints.

The Lord declares that His faithful ones are as precious to Him as the apple of His eye, and that all their interests are subject to Divine supervision. He will allow nothing to happen to these; troubles permitted to come upon them will be only such as the Lord has foreseen and is able to make work out some blessing in connection with their preparation for the Kingdom.. But even this fact will not excuse wilfulness on the part of those who do evil to the members of the Body of Jesus.

We remember the persecution of the saints by Saul of Tarsus. We remember Jesus said to him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” He answered, “Who art Thou, Lord?” And Jesus replied, “I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.” In persecuting the saints Saul of Tarsus had been persecuting Jesus, but because he did it ignorantly, God had mercy upon him. Doubtless many saints from Jesus’ day down have been persecuted ignorantly, and the Lord will have mercy upon those persecutors; but some of the persecutors have had such light, such knowledge, as to make them responsible; and it is of this class that our lesson speaks. Our Lord added a warning: “Woe unto the world because of offences! It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.”

CUT OFF HAND OR FOOT.

Here- the Master brought in a saying which has perplexed many. "If thy foot cause thee to stumble, eat it off, and cast it from thee; it is better to enter life maimed, or halt, than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; it is better to enter into life with one eye, than that having two eyes thou be cast into Gehenna fire."

Those who fail to remember that Jesus spake to the people in parables, and never without a parable, will be liable to stumble over these words of His. His teaching is this: If you have anything in your make-up dear to you as a right hand or a foot or an eye, that is likely to cause you to stumble and fail to enter the Kingdom, you would better cut off that tendency, no matter what it costs, no matter how precious, no matter how great a hold it may have upon the very tendrils of your life. Would it not be better to enter into life- than to go into- Gehenna fire, that -is, destruction, the Second Death? Surely this is true. Having put our hands to the plough, having even become followers of Jesus, we must either go on and be accepted as conquerors, or must perish.

There will, of course, be none in the Kingdom with but one eye, but the illustration is the same. If it should cost us the cutting off of some of our members, it would surely pay us to gain the eternal life in glory, even thus maimed, rather than to take the consequences of the Second Death, utter extinction. The lesson is that having begun as followers of Christ, and entered upon the contract and received, a part of the reward, the Holy Spirit, the Divine favour, we cannot back out of the contract; we must go on to everlasting life or to everlasting death.

How careful the Lord's people should tie not to stumble one another, even one of the least of the little ones who has accepted of Jesus and become His follower! --is the lesson. To illustrate it, Jesus suggested that any shepherd losing one of his sheep would leave all the others to go and seek that one; and he rejoices specially at its recovery. So- we, the followers of Jesus, should be careful not to stumble each other, but rather to remember that we are all sheep- under the great Shepherd, our Heavenly Father, and the great Under Shepherd, our Heavenly Lord, and that 'He has the spirit of loving interest and care which would go after the straying sheep, and that we should have this same spirit; and possessing this spirit, we would be very careful indeed not to stumble or hinder even the least of the Lord's followers.

All the Lord's true followers are God's "little ones," and are subject to special Divine supervision, represented in our text as angel care. The messengers who have guarded over the lives of God's saintly few always have access to the Heavenly Father's presence, to make known the necessities of those whom they represent, for Divine Power is ever on the alert for the protection of these. Oh, how blessed the privilege of being children of God. Oh, how wise to continue so little, so humble, so childlike, as to abide in His love, -and to be enabled to learn the necessary lessons, and be ultimately received with Messiah in His Kingdom, honour and glory!

PALESTINE IN CONVALESCENCE.

The following is cut from an address by Mr. Hugh Martin, telling of his visit to the Holy Land to celebrate with others the achievement of Methodist Unity in Great Britain must not be tempted to write of -Galilee, or the Dead Sea, or Capernaum, or many other fascinating spots. But one other impression must be recorded. .

Palestine is not only a land with a past. It has a future. It strikes one as being like a convalescent after a long illness. The traces of the ravages of the past are still visible, but even more noticeable are the signs of returning health. We have no right to pass a final -verdict on Zionism; perhaps no man can yet do that: But I was much impressed by the vitality of the numerous Jewish settlements, and the vigour of their attack on the land in modern farming and afforestation and the like."

DIVIDENDS OF DEPRESSION.

"The depression," says "The Baptist" (Chicago) "has declared some dividends for which we cannot be too grateful. The uses of adversity are not all sour. Some things the depression has produced, and some it has revealed, that will permanently contribute to the wealth of . the world's experience. It has caused multitudes to pause for thought. They had been so busy and so well satisfied that they had little time or occasion for thinking things over."

"Many are achieving a simpler, more wholesome way of life. To the surprise of the experts, who supposed that unemployment and reduced incomes must have resulted in a marked increase in the mortality rates, it is revealed that public health has improved during the depression and that, in particular, deaths from tuberculosis have decreased eight per cent. There have been moral gains, also. Now they have come to themselves. again they are discovering that some of the things they wanted so much a few years ago. are not really necessary to their happiness."

Aside with Jesus! Is it hard to be,
O Blessed Master, thus alone with Thee ?
Aside with Jesus! basking in His smile;
Brought to the “desert place” to rest awhile.

—CAB.

When the soul finds that all its obedience and endeavour to keep the commands of Jesus, Christ do flow from love,
then it is true and sincere.

—Leighton.

The presence of God calms the soul, and gives, it quiet and repose even during the day, and in the midst of
occupation—but we must be given up to God without reserve. -- Fenelon.

“My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me.”

O tenderness divine!
O glorious love of Thine!
That bids us come to Thee!
Thy sheep.

Those wondrous tones we hear—
And banished is our fear,
Our Guide will never leave His sheep.
Each one Thou call'st by name,

And each Thou lov'st the same;;
Thou gav'st Thy life for all Thy sheep.
Can earthly power withstand The might of His strong hand!
Nay! we are safe for aye!
His sheep.

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