

153

Living Water 153

(May – June 2019)

Recent Ministry

BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS Vittorio Casavecchia **1**
On the need for courage in our Christian walk
An address at Worthing, 29th September 2018

Poetry Selection

JESUS – KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS Charles Wesley **10**

Testimony Section

LET US NOT GROW WEARY IN WELL-DOING John Dunbar **10**

A Voice from the Past

A MAN GREATLY BELOVED F. S. Marsh **13**
A word given at the burial of George Cutting, April 1934

A word for today

THE VALUE OF THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST J. N. Darby **16**
Completing the series begun in issue No. 149

'Living Water' is published by the Stone Publishing Trust
(Registered Charity 1034689) 33 The Floats, Riverhead
SEVENOAKS TN13 2QT

If you know of any one who might be interested in receiving this magazine, please pass their name and address to the Stone Publishing Trust. Copies of the next few issues will be sent to them free of charge.

Quotations from the Bible in 'Living Water' are normally from the Darby translation or from the Authorised (King James) Version.

The permission of the Editor should be obtained before reproducing material contained in this magazine.

Cover Picture:

Helmken Falls, Wells Gray Provincial Park, BC, Canada - Tom Hawkins

Editor: Mark Lemon

Printed by Lakeside Printing,

Unit 4A, Munday Industrial Estate, Morley Rd, Tonbridge, TN9 1RA, UK

Recent Ministry

BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

Joshua 1:1-9

John 17:1-3; 14:15 & 21; 16:33

I would like to speak about courage in the Christian's pathway. I feel I do not have enough courage myself and I have prayed to the Lord about it. I have looked through the Scriptures to find some passages that could help me to live with courage as a believer in an unbelieving world. I found these passages we have read and I would like to take Joshua as an example of a man of godly courage and look at some applications in John's gospel taking up the teaching of Jesus Himself. We are here as believers, so we can all try to understand with the help of God's Spirit, what it means to live a courageous life as a believer in this world.

It has often struck me that God does not remove people from the earth when they are converted and the reason that He does not, is that God has a purpose for each of us when we are saved and my first point is that we need courage to pursue that purpose here.

Now I think Joshua provides us with a very fine example of a Christian today. We can see in Joshua's life things that we can relate to. If you look at his life as recorded for us in the Scriptures we see he was strong, he was courageous, he had faith in God but there were times when he struggled just as we do when faith may be challenged and things may seem not to go as we expect.

Now, God said to Joshua three times, where we read in Chapter 1, "Be courageous". I would like you to picture yourself as if God was speaking to you tonight and saying, "Be courageous". In these three exhortations God has three different thoughts that He brings to Joshua. And that is what I would like us to

look at together, seeing not only Joshua but some New Testament parallels as given in John's gospel. Now the first

<p>"Be strong and courageous, for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I have sworn unto their fathers to give them" (Joshua 1:6).</p>	<p><i>"These things Jesus spoke, and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee; as thou hast given him authority over all flesh, that as to all that thou hast given him, he should give them life eternal. And this is the eternal life, that they should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."</i> (John 17:1-3)</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

step is found in Joshua 1:6:

Joshua had a God-given purpose in his life and that was to bring the people of Israel into the land of Canaan. God had not promised Joshua the land of Canaan. The promise had been made many years earlier but Joshua was the one who was to lead this people into the land.

How does that speak to us today? Well, I think John 17 helps us about that. There is one specific purpose of God that is revealed through Jesus' precious prayer in John 17. Jesus says, "... glorify thy Son... that as to all that thou hast given to him, he should give them life eternal". So, we as believers are here and God's purpose for us is that we should have eternal life. If you look through John's gospel you will see constant reference by Jesus to eternal life as what He had come to do and to give. What He says to the woman at the well in John chapter 4 is one example and there are others. My concern is that we should have an understanding that Jesus desires to give us eternal life. Now, Scripture tells us what eternal life is all about. It says, "and this is the eternal life, that they should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent". So, if we are left down here it is not merely for the purpose of testimony or witness; it is to know God and to know Jesus,

the One whom God sent. As I go through the difficulties of life, the question is, 'Am I gaining knowledge of God, am I getting to know my Lord Jesus better through what I experience?'

Well, that was the first point. God said to Joshua, 'Be courageous'. You will take the people into the land of Canaan. That was the purpose. I am sure that Joshua was strong and energetic in the pursuit of this goal but it was a long and slow process and at times his faith and patience were severely tested.

Next, if we are to have courage in our walk as Christians we first have to look at what God's purpose is for us down here - for each of us is called for a purpose. God has a service for each one of us to fill out and all are to be useful in God's work here. When we read the book of Acts we see that God used a great variety of people. The work was not confined to Paul, Peter, John or the other apostles. We read of those who were scattered following the death of Stephen and who preached in the places to which they went. The Christian company in Antioch was formed as a result of such preaching. (see Acts 11:20). Then again we find that Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18) came from Rome to Corinth, and Paul, who had not even been to Rome at that time, lodged with them at Corinth. Such were prepared and ready for service and serviceable in the body of Christ down here. We are all useful in some way and God will reveal to us what we may be able to do for Him. May we each be available for service!

But what I specially wanted to pass on was that the main purpose of God's revelation in Christ is that we should have eternal life, which means that we should know God the Father, and the Son, Jesus Christ. Everything we do in life should work around that. Everything that we experience should in some way lead us back to that knowledge, so that the knowledge of Christ may increase in our life.

Now the second step is:

"Only be strong and very courageous, that thou mayest take heed to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded thee. Turn not from it to the right or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall nor depart from thy mouth; and thou shalt meditate upon it day and night, that thou mayest take heed to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt have good success in thy ways, and then shalt thou prosper" (Joshua 1:7-8).

"If ye love me keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

"He that has my commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves me; but he that loves me shall be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him." (John 14:21)

Think about these words: *"Only be strong and very courageous, that thou mayest take heed to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded thee. Turn not from it to the right or to the left".*

Now, having understood that the purpose of God is that we may have eternal life, I want to point out that the enjoyment of eternal life starts when we are down here. It is not something that we only look at for the future day. In the future day we shall actually be with Jesus. That hope is a certainty for every believer in Christ. But the enjoyment of the eternal life is the knowledge of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ and that starts now! So we can build on that, grow in that and have courage to do that as we walk down here. How do we get into the gain and enjoyment of it? Well, God gave Joshua a very precise instruction. He says, 'Do not depart from all the commandments that I have given to Moses'.

God called Moses to come up Mount Sinai. He stayed there and God wrote the law for him on two tables of stone. God had to do it

The enjoyment of eternal life starts when we are down here

twice because of the unbelief and the idolatry in the heart of the people. Probably God has to write more than once what He has in mind for us because we are stubborn, idolatrous, and thinking of ourselves rather than of Him. But God never leaves us or abandons us. He has a purpose and He has a way that we may get into the gain and the enjoyment of that purpose.

So I think the parallel passage to that is the two verses I read in John. If you reason with a logical mind you may think the two verses in some way contradict themselves. Let us read them again: it says, *"if ye love me, keep my commandments"*. So, logically I would say if I love Jesus then I will keep His commandments. Then it says in verse 21, *"He that has my commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves me"*. There it seems to say, if you keep my commandments then you love me. Which one is right?

Well, it is not a question of which verse is right: both verses are right! The point that the Lord is making here is that we are not to be religious but to have a living relationship with the Man Christ Jesus. The believer in Christ is not tied to a collection of religious laws but is linked to a living Person - the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

Jesus brings an entire new revelation compared to what was given to Joshua. Joshua was given a book. And it was said, this is the book, follow it exactly, do whatever it says. And if you do every word, if you keep every word of it then you shall prosper. We read, *"... that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest... then shalt thou have good success in thy ways"* (vv. 7, 8). When we come to the New Testament, Jesus says, *"if ye love me, keep my commandments"*. Jesus brings an entire new dimension and that dimension is love, a loving relationship with Him.

One of the great risks in the believer's pathway is to fall into patterns and mere routines of religious observance. I live in a country where people will give a Euro every day to certain

causes just so that they can say, 'I have done my good work for this day, that is my obligation met'. That is religiousness. That is not doing the commandments of the Lord because you love Him, or loving Him so you desire to do what pleases Him; that is mere religiousness and we have to be careful not to fall into it. I have to say for myself, that my instinct is to fall into religiousness. Perhaps we sleep over the alarm and when we wake there is no time to read the Bible before we have to dash off to work. A religious person worries that this will ruin his day but the Lord is not cross about such things. He loves us and wants us to love Him and rest in His love.

We read, *"if ye love me, keep my commandments"*. Never separate those two principles. The commandments of the Lord are commandments of love. If you look through the New Testament you will not find many commandments. Jesus wants us to have a living relationship with Him. That is the practicality of Joshua's teaching in New Testament terms. Joshua was able to get into the land and succeed in all that he was doing only if he kept to the word of God. We have to love the Lord Jesus and let that love govern us in all that we do and every decision that we make.

Now the Lord adds in verse 21 the words, *"but he that loves me shall be loved by my Father"*. That adds an entirely new level to our life. That links us to the Father, the One that the Lord Jesus came to reveal. 'If you love Me, you will be loved by My Father'! Imagine that. And that is a certainty that is sure for every believer. We have a relationship with the Father which is based on the relationship we have with the Lord Himself. We cannot have a relationship with the Father if we do not have a relationship with the Lord Jesus. That is very important. Never forget it!

When I was at university I got caught up in a conversation where I tried to prove the existence of God to some of my mates and I utterly failed. After that I was considering and praying and

crying, 'Why had I failed?' And God pointed out something to me and said, 'Did you ever mention Jesus in all your proof of the existence of God?' I was ashamed to say I had not. Our relationship with God is based on our relationship with the Lord Jesus Himself. Be sure to have a living relationship with Christ then the Father will love you and we will be conscious of His love. The verse continues, *"and I will love him and will manifest myself to him"*. Oh, here is a beautiful thought. Have we seen the Lord manifest Himself to us throughout our life? This verse would indicate that if we love the Lord Jesus and seek to follow Him He will manifest Himself to us; there is no question about it.

I did not read verses 16 – 20 but they are the key to this passage because the Holy Spirit is brought in to this. That is how we are able to enjoy the eternal life, by the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will help us to enter in to that living relationship with the Lord Jesus.

So, we understand the purpose that God has for us. We understand how we may enter into it. So we have nothing left but to go for it and enjoy it! It is all clear, it is presented in Scripture. Why not go and do it?

Joshua got started. When he gets to the Jordan there is an amazing miracle. He gets through it. Then he has the city of Jericho to face but God helps him and he destroys the city. Then he has another city (Ai, see Joshua 7). He rushes to overthrow it and realises that it was not the right thing to do. He moves further and further into the Land but his faith is tested and things get more difficult because the people get more stubborn and self willed.

As we move on in our Christian pathway I am afraid to say sometimes we get a little bit stubborn. We may set out full of courage but after a while we get distracted and slacken off and may get influenced by the world. This is the reality; it is not a new thing for we live in an unbelieving world, a wicked world and the devil is around. But the Lord does not forget us.

Now we come to the final message to Joshua about courage:

<p>“Have I not commanded thee: Be strong and courageous? Be not afraid, neither be dismayed; for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest” (Joshua 1:9).</p>	<p><i>These things I have spoken to you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye have tribulation; but be of good courage: I have overcome the world (John 16:33)</i></p>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

God knew Joshua would be afraid. God knew the things he would have to face.

In the verse we read in John 16, I think that is the application in our lives. First of all, if you read that verse carefully, it says, *“These things have I spoken unto you”*. Remember, ‘if ye have my commandments and keep my commandments’... *“These things have I spoken unto you”*. This verse is for believers. This verse is for those who have heard the voice of the Lord and have had conviction about what the Lord has been telling them. The Lord says *“that in me ye might have peace”*. Now, this is another point I would like to share with you. The peace that the believer enjoys is strictly and uniquely in Christ. I have had to learn that several times. This does not mean we have a peaceful life, a relaxed life and that we sail through the world. The Lord is very clear in what He says, *“these things have I spoken ... that in me ye might have peace”*. Peace, dear believer, is found uniquely in Christ. If we are struggling through life, if we are fighting in our souls, our minds, let us turn to Christ. That is where peace comes from. The source of peace is Christ Himself. Well, the Lord goes on to say, *“In the world ye have tribulation”*. You see, Jesus knows it. It is nothing new for Him. Why do we complain? Our conversations are often filled with consideration of this world and how difficult everything is. Jesus says, ‘You will have tribulations in this world’. Then He adds, *“be of good courage: I have overcome the world”*. I do not think any believer

likes the world they live in. But Jesus has overcome the world we live in. Is that not a glorious thought? Jesus has overcome all the wickedness that is in this world. And that wickedness, we should never forget, was in our heart before we were saved. That is where we all come from. Jesus has overcome the world. Where do we find courage to walk down here? The simple and straight answer is, in Christ Jesus alone.

He has revealed to us the purpose. He says, 'that I may give to them eternal life'. So that Jesus shows us and tells us about God so that we may know Him. Then He says, *"if ye love me, keep my commandments"*. He wants a relationship. He wants us to live of Him and to draw all from Him. That is what we are to feed on and that is where we take courage to live down here. The opposition of the world is relentless but in Jesus we have peace. He says, *"be of good courage: I have overcome the world"*.

I trust we might understand a little bit more about the courage that the believer can have in life down here. The source is divine, it is Christ Himself. The application is divine, it is Christ Himself. We should not be or act like the world. When people do not understand us it should be no surprise. The believer has a different spirit from the world. The believer is to be characterised by the Holy Spirit whom the world *"cannot receive, because it does not see him, or know him (John 14:17)"*. There is nothing unusual about being misunderstood in this world, as being a believer in Christ.

But let us be of good courage. The word to Joshua was, *"Be strong and courageous"* and it is repeated three times. When things are repeated more than once in Scripture they are to be thoroughly meditated upon, taken to heart and thought about. May we be encouraged for His Name's sake.

Vittorio Casavecchia,

An address at Worthing, 29th September 2018

Poetry Selection

JESUS – KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

On this glad day the glorious Sun Of righteousness arose, On my benighted soul He shone, And filled it with repose.	My gracious Master and my God, Assist me to proclaim, To spread through all the world abroad The honours of Thy name.
Then with my heart I first believed, Believed with faith divine; Power with the Holy Ghost received To call the Saviour mine.	Jesus! the name that charms our fears, That bids our sorrows cease; 'Tis music in the sinner's ears, 'Tis life, and health, and peace.
I felt my Lord's atoning blood Close to my soul applied; Me, me He loved – the Son of God For me, for me He died!	He breaks the power of cancell'd sin, He sets the prisoner free; His blood can make the foulest clean, His blood avail'd for <i>me</i> .
I found and owned His promise true, Was certain of my part, My pardon passed in heaven I know, When written on my heart.	See all your sins on Jesus laid; The Lamb of God was slain; His soul was once an offering made For every soul of man.
O For a thousand tongues to sing My dear Redeemer's praise! The glories of my God and King, The triumphs of His grace!	Awake from guilty nature's sleep, And Christ shall give you light, Cast all your sins into the deep, And wash the sinner white.

Charles Wesley

(Written in May 1739 to commemorate his conversion on May 21 1738.) The original poem has a further eight verses

Testimony Section

LET US NOT BE WEARY IN WELL-DOING

I was brought up in a non-Christian home by parents who were very loving and kind but had the idea that Christianity was for children and as you grew up you would grow out of this childish fad. The first signs of God leading me was when my friends said

that they were joining the Life Boys at the Mission round the corner from where we lived.

At eight years of age I begged my mother to let me go with them. I came to love the Christian folk at the Shaftesbury Mission and could sense that they loved and prayed for me. We had to go to Sunday School and I began to be grounded in the word of God. On being promoted to the Boys Brigade at twelve years of age I found myself exposed to a weekly Bible Class. Our leader was a very godly man, whose face shone like Moses' face, when he had been with God. As a member, I was invited to a special service. The gospel was preached by a man from Tonypany in Wales. I was now eighteen years old and for the first time in my life I began to feel guilty of sin. I went to the preacher. He pointed me to the Lord Jesus Christ and we knelt down and I confessed my sin.

Within a few days I was called up for national Service to Catterick Camp. I had never been away from home before and was very shy. One thing that the preacher had taught me was that I must confess the Lord Jesus Christ before others. I had thought about this and decided that I would pray in the Nissen Hut despite the fact that there were thirty soldiers with me. I waited until nearly lights out and plucked up courage. The room went very quiet. Then I heard someone say, 'If he wants to pray it is no skin off our nose'. Then a pair of boots was thrown at me and landed just by my side, but it was just high spirits. It was not long before a young man in that group came to know Jesus as his Saviour. I had the joy of praying with him over a Table Tennis game. He was genuine.

The following Sunday I had my first meeting with a Scripture Reader,¹ Victor Leinester. His wife fed us well and we were taken to the United Board Church. We had a lively home fellowship with testimonies, good singing and a study of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. This was the most interesting

1. Scripture readers are members of the armed forces appointed by The Soldiers' & Airmen's Scripture Readers Association (SASRA)

study I had ever had. Victor had a model of the tabernacle and pointed out that there was so much teaching involved. I was impressed by the knowledge this Reader had and felt that I would never be able to know my Bible like that.

Later I was posted to Germany. A small group of three started a SASRA fellowship in the YMCA. We visited the Royal Fusiliers, the 14th Field Ambulance, and my own Regiment. God blessed this and we had fifteen soldiers come to the



fellowship and two officers from the Fusiliers. When I was demobbed I went back to the Mission and worked as a councillor at the Billy Graham Crusade. I met and married Doreen, the best lady in Britain, had a large family and supported SASRA by prayer, gift and attendance at special conferences.

One day I received a standard letter from SASRA pointing out the number of Camps that were not being visited for lack of workers. Because of this the Council were considering appointing part time Scripture Readers. My daily Bible reading that day contained 2 Corinthians 4:4-5:

"...in whom the god of this world has blinded the thoughts of the unbelieving, so the radiancy of the glad tidings of the glory of the Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine forth for them. For we do not preach ourselves,

but Christ Jesus Lord, and ourselves your bondmen for Jesus' sake."

I knew I had received a call from God. An interview was arranged at headquarters but I was not selected. Being convinced of my call, I reapplied six months later and was accepted. My desire was to work at RAF Northolt but I was appointed to Mill Hill. That is how it all began. *"Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not"* (Galatians 6:9). Praise God.

John Dunbar

This account is taken from "Candles in the Darkness" Published by Christian Focus Publications 2000 and 2006 and used with permission.

A Voice from the Past

A MAN GREATLY BELOVED

The words *"A man greatly beloved"* (Daniel 10:11) were read

It is suitable that we should consider these four words as applicable to our departed brother, at the time of his homegoing, for we can sincerely say that he was *"greatly beloved"*. He was in early life brought to know that he was loved of God. This gave him spiritual energy, and it produced a desire to make it known to others. We can now rejoice with thanksgiving that our God was able to use him to present His love to many needy souls all over the world, both by his words and by his pen. We thank God for it, and trace it all to the heart of God Himself. Our brother would have been the first to ascribe to the Lord all the glory, and to our God all the praise. At the same time, we can recognise the principle that *"them that honour Me I will honour"*. He honoured God, and God honoured him. We acknowledge the goodness of God, not only in supporting and blessing him, but in giving him to see much fruit from his labours. We feel the privilege that is ours in sharing in this last service of love to our dear aged brother in committing his precious body to the Lord in view of the resurrection day.

It is recorded that they that turn many to righteousness shall shine *“as the stars for ever and ever”*. The Lord will not forget the labour of love that our beloved brother has rendered to Him, in turning many to Himself.

The place that he will have in the Father’s House, as for ever in the enjoyment of the Father’s love, to stand before Him in dignity and joy as one of the sons of God, will be the fruit of the sovereign love of God, of the redemption work of Christ, and of the gift of the Holy Spirit, for to God must be all the glory!

But he will also have his place in the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, where the Lord will be pleased to seal his faithfulness by the expression of His own approval, saying to him, *“Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!”* We do not claim perfection for him, for he would have repudiated any suggestion of absence of failure, but we can look back upon his life and say that he has given the Lord pleasure, for he devoted his life to Him, and already his service has been crowned by definite and known results.

We are assured that one of his cherished desires was that there should be a testimony at his burial to his Lord, to Whom he so delighted to bear witness. Perhaps this could not be better expressed than in the words of the last poem that he wrote. Filled with a sense of the love of Christ, he could say:-

Love, proved on the cross of shame,
Love, Worthy of God’s great Name,
Love, eternally the same,
Wins a heart like mine.

Impressed, too, with the necessity for the death of Christ as the only basis of salvation, for *“by grace ye are saved,”* he continued:-

Grace, knowing my every sin,
Grace, dying to make me clean,

Grace, that ran to bring me in,
Suits a heart like mine.

Then he enjoyed peace with God, and in this respect very few have carried, both in the heart and in the countenance, such abundant evidence of 'the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.' Even as we looked upon him in death, we were moved as we observed the calm peace that still rested upon his face. No wonder that he sang:-

Peace, still as the "Sea of glass",
Peace, knowing the judgement's past,
Peace, that will for ever last,
Calms a heart like mine.

Again, as to the joy that filled him (for despite all his trials, he was full of joy), he tells us the secret of it in his song:-

Joy, fruit of a Father's kiss,
Joy, foretaste of heavenly bliss,
Joy, that springs from love like this,
Fills a heart like mine.

And ere he finished writing this poem, he anticipated the few days then still left to him on earth, and in his desire to learn more of the love of Jesus he added:-

Lord, while in this world below,
Still more of Thy love I'd know,
So shall sweeter praises flow
From a heart like mine.

Conscious that his spirit is in the keeping of the Lord Jesus, and looking forward to that day when, with all the redeemed, he will be like Him, we leave his body in the Lord's care until the resurrection day.

May we be stimulated to follow in the same path, "*stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*".

F S Marsh

Word at the burial of George Cutting, 24 April 1934

A Word for Today

THE VALUE OF THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

“For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blooded calves and goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people. Saying, This is the blood of the testament [covenant] which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood: and without the shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of the things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth in to the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. Hebrews 9:19-28.

There are two distinct parts in this passage as to the value of the sacrifice of Christ. One is its aspect towards God, and the other is its aspect towards us as sinners:

- There is the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and then,
- He hath borne the sins of many.

These two aspects run all through Scripture. In the Old Testament, on the Day of Atonement (see Leviticus 16:11-12), there were two goats. One goat was sacrificed and the blood was carried into the Holy of Holies and put on the mercy-seat. The sins of the people were confessed on the head of the second goat, the scapegoat, by the high priest and afterwards these sins were carried away into a land not inhabited. This scapegoat

dealt with actual sins and transgressions; but the goat that was sacrificed on the altar, had its direct aspect towards God.

There are other important points in our scripture:

- Christ Himself has gone in, and is constantly “*in the presence of God for us*” (v.24). Not only has He done one work with regard to our standing before God, but He appears before God for us.
- Then there is the “*blood of the covenant*” (v. 20). Not that there is any covenant made with us, but, as respects our relationship with God, it gives the fullest contrast between the first and second covenants.
- The great truth is that we are in a state of sin before God. Everything is defiled where the creature has reached, everything, even heaven. I do not mean where God dwells in unapproachable light; but the created heavens, regarded as part of the whole creation are defiled; and therefore Christ has gone up “*far above all heavens*” (*Ephesians 4:10*). If we look at God as dwelling in His creation, He sees the whole of it defiled and that does not do for God, for “*Holiness becometh thy house, O LORD, for ever*” (*Psalms 93:5*).

It is in respect of this, that the great truth of the putting away of sin out of God’s sight is made known to us; and then comes another thing: we are guilty, and our sins must also be put away. We have sinned. This is our place and condition, in the midst of the defiled creation. The whole evil must, therefore, be put out of God’s sight, and this has taken place by the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am not speaking now of believers who stand in grace, nor of God’s righteousness which has come in; but I am looking at the ways and dealings of God, in judgment or in mercy, in atonement or in condemnation; all is in view of sin, because sin is here. We have surely thousands of mercies in regard to temporal things, but we have to look at things as men in the presence of God. In God’s moral dealings with men, He must deal with respect to sin, because sin is here, or the dealings would not be true. It is of all importance that our hearts should get into the consciousness of this. We must either say that the world is fit, or else

that it is unfit, for God.

If this world is fit for God, what kind of God have we got? With corruption, murder, violence, oppression, horrible wickedness, wretchedness all around us, can we say that the world is fit for

**If this world is fit
for God, what
kind of God have
we got?**

God? No person with a conscience, but will own it is not fit for God. He might blame God for the condition of the world, or reject that he should be punished for it, but he will never say that the world is fit for God as it is. Then again, our hearts are not fit for God; that is a serious thing.

We find, then, these two things: the state of the world before God, everything suffering from it and groaning together; and, in speaking of direct application to the conscience, our hearts also are away from God, and we can never be in the truth with God until we own that. We may have many beautiful ideas in our heads, but to be with God, we must first take our place as sinners, because we are such. There is not one of us, who has not done things that his conscience condemns and *“if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things” (1 John 3:20)*. Of course a holy God must condemn us. That is where we find ourselves (I am not now speaking of the believer’s place in Christ), and the word of God fully unfolds all this, and presses it upon us. Nor shall we mend our position by deceiving ourselves, or by hiding ourselves from God, as Adam did in the garden, or by hiding God from ourselves. We cannot hide absolutely, for God will break in upon us sometimes. A terrible disease rouses man to a consciousness of his position, and his conscience then sets to work at once. Bring cholera into the place, and at once you will have people religious. It expresses the sense that men have to do with God.

One there was who could say about a certain sin, that *“the man that hath done this thing shall surely die”(2 Samuel 12:5)*; and he gets answer from the prophet, *“Thou art the man”*, though he had not the least conscience of it. There is no truth for us

till we get before God in the consciousness of our state of sin, and also, that we have sinned, i.e., that the tree has borne its fruit. It is not merely a generality, but it is intensely individual; I have to do with God, and I must be before Him according to all I have said and done.

I may seek to excuse myself; Adam said: *"The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat"* (Genesis 3:12). *"Thou knowest the people that they are set on mischief"* (Exodus 32:22), so said Aaron; but that was no good reason for his giving way to them, and making a golden calf. God must deal with us as sinners, for the simplest of reasons, namely, that we are sinners. But how? That is another question.

Let us not deceive ourselves by fancying that the thought of right and wrong remained with man from the time when he was innocent. He did then know that he had to say to God, that is true; but he obtained the knowledge of good and evil by eating the forbidden fruit. In a certain sense, it is a mercy he did, if he ate at all. But a bad conscience is a terrible companion; and, if not purged, it is an everlasting bad companion. It says, *"The man is become as one of us"* (Genesis 3:22), not, that man has retained this from his former state after his fall. Conscience is there, then, but it is when man is under sin, and though it is a mercy now to have conscience, yet it is a terrible thing, too, because it is either hardened by depravity, or else it is present to distress. Better to have a bad conscience than a hard one, but one or the other we must have. Now having a conscience, there is a sense in man, when not reckless in sin, that he ought to be righteous; and so he sets about to get righteousness.

Quite right is he in thinking he ought to have it, though he will fail to get it. He may take the law for his guide; but what God did in the law of Moses was, to give not the image of heavenly things actually, but only the shadow of them. Looked at apart from its ceremonials, the law, as a moral law, was marked by two things; it came to man fallen from God, i.e., after the

promise and when God was testing man in this way, to give a perfect rule of righteousness to man as he was, if he was to have human righteousness. He was not to covet, not to lust, not to lie, etc. Besides containing a complete epitome of national rules for Israel, the law told man first, what he ought not to do, and second, how he ought to feel towards God and towards his neighbour. Now man takes the outside of the law, not the real kernel of it; and so he tries to make out righteousness which, says he, 'I must have, or else, in the day of judgment, I shall fail.' He is so far right in taking the law as a rule, though he will not succeed.

Along with that, there is in man the constant tendency to make out a righteousness for himself, for he knows he needs it. If you will try to make out righteousness for yourself, well, here is the rule: *"This do, and thou shalt live"* (Luke 10:28). Man—Israel—had thus the law; but with it, God gave that which was the pattern of things in the heavens; not the very image, but the shadow of them. Then we have the whole system of the tabernacle, and of the ordinances which referred to sin, etc. It is true that the giving of the law was followed by the immediate breaking of it; but, to begin with, we have a moral rule, and then, in the tabernacle, the development of God's ways and purposes towards the sinner.

Although it was but a figure, a shadow, it contained another element which comes out in Hebrews, and that is, that until the work of redemption was wrought by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, there must be a separation between God and man. Under the law, there were hopes seen afar off by men of faith, and, of course, such were saved, but as to their then present condition, they *"sought. what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you"* (1 Peter 1:11). These things had not then come, but

though they had believed on them as coming, there was no present access to God. When a man failed and sinned through ignorance, there was a provision made, a figure of Christ's sacrifice, which restored him to present communion with God by providing a relative purifying before God. This kept up the concept that sin must be put away, and it maintained intercourse with God, so far as God had revealed Himself; but along with that, there was this testimony, that man cannot draw near to God. There was always the holding out the hope of the brighter and better things that were to come; but the veil was still there. The more we read the Old and New Testaments, the more we shall see that of old there was on the part of God the gracious condescension of communication with man, but always with this, *"The Holy Ghost this signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest"*(Hebrews 9:8) i.e., that man could not draw near to God. The more we take notice of the difference between then, and now, the more striking does it appear.

There are two passages often quoted, as applicable to us, which bring out this difference. *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him"* and there the quotation is stopped, as if the things were so glorious and so great, that our hearts could not know about them; but the Apostle adds, *"God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit"* (1 Corinthians 2:9-10 [Isaiah 64:4]), This shows that we can know them now.

Then again, in the same chapter, we read, *"Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?"* Nobody, of course. But the former part is used to show that we cannot now know God's mind; whereas it continues, *"But we have the mind of Christ"* (1 Corinthians 2:16 [Isaiah 40:13-14]). Both of these are quotations from Isaiah, but with distinct additions, showing the exact contrast between the condition into which we are

brought by grace and the condition in which those under law were.

There were wonderful thoughts in the Psalms, and gleaming through the prophets, but with it all there was still the testimony that man could not draw near to God. It was to us, Christians, that they ministered these things. We are not yet in the glory. We are still in this poor world which is under the bondage of corruption, though the work has been accomplished by which the veil has been rent and the foundation of the glory laid. And whilst waiting for the redemption of the body, we have distinct entrance into the holiest, boldness by the blood of Jesus. The veil is rent from top to bottom, i.e., the introduction of an entirely different thing.

When we have to do with responsibility, whether without law as Gentiles, or under law as Jews and when we do not know grace, then we go to the law, which is very useful to convict us of sin; but then, that which answers to the law, in the heart that has failed to keep it, is the day of judgment to come. The day of judgment takes up man on his responsibility and deals with him according to the light he has had. All have failed, and the day of judgment is, therefore, not a question of mercy nor a time of discrimination between those who are saved and those who are not (it shows that out publicly, of course); but it is now that discrimination takes place; it is now that *"he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"* (John 3:16), and that *"he that believeth not is condemned already"* (John 3:36). So, the very moment the conscience is reached, it cries out, *"Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified"* (Psalm 143:2). And directly we have the testimony of the law, as in Romans 3: *"There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God"*.

Their very understanding is darkened morally and their will is all wrong; *"they are all gone out of the way"* (Romans 3:10-11). In a terrible way, all are thrown together and none is profitable;

that is what the apostle has to say of men in their responsibility. That is where conscience sets each of us when the light of God enters. That is also where God sees each of us to be. The testimony takes up the thoughts and intents of each heart, whether as a heathen, or as having heard of Christ from my youth up, and so it puts me, in my conscience, where God sees me in the light.

I am under obligation to meet God's requirements. I do not say I shall succeed, but the position is true, and the day of judgment meets it; as long as there is a trace of that in men's minds they never can get peace, for they are thinking of that day, and the testimony is perfectly clear: *"There is none righteous, no, not one"* (Romans 3:10-11).

Nor has God left us in the dark as to what is the result of the judgment. If He were sitting upon the great white throne, He could not say it plainer than He does now. If a person says, 'I am not afraid to come before God', it would only be a proof that he has not seen God at all. It may be such a one has been preserved from outward violence, open immorality, and the like; but Christ has had no place in his thoughts and heart. Paul could say, *"touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless"* (Philippians 3:6); but the moment the law said, *"thou shalt not lust"*, he was killed at once; *"sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me"* (Romans 7:8 & 11).

Is God to allow lusts? Suppose we had lusts in heaven; what kind of heaven would that be? Lusts take us after things contrary to God. And if we have not God above to delight in, we must go and satisfy ourselves by living on what is below us. The fact is, that we have got away from God; and directly I am away from Him, I must find my pleasures and satisfactions on the earth. I may seek to keep up merriment and the like, but my pleasure will be in man. It was so from the outset. Cain built a city, and called it by his son's name, Enoch; this was the expression of his own personal importance, just as men do now

with their properties; and then we find experts in brass and iron, musical instruments, and so on, in order to make everything pleasant here for man without God. Not that there is harm in sounds, but there is in the use made of them. And so with everything else.

When Adam hid himself behind the trees of the garden, that did not make the trees wrong. If I give a man a blow and kill him, there is no harm in the strength itself which God has given me; it is in the use I make of my strength. It is in the heart of every man that has not got God to make use of these things so as to do without God; that is the evil. And in another way, when the conscience of a man is awakened, he may take up with outward things, and try to make a righteousness with them.

There are both Sadducees and Pharisees in the world wherever there is profession. On the one hand, Sadducees, going right on into open infidelity; and, on the other hand, people tithing mint, and anise, and cummin, but all the while they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. The Lord tore open their sepulchres and laid them bare; that is what He must do. He will acknowledge, in its proper place, everything that is gracious and amiable in the natural character as such; just as in the case of the young man in Mark 10: *"Jesus beholding him loved him."*

Running to Christ, he said, *"Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"* But Christ stops him, saying, *"There is none good but One.."* You are altogether out of the way; but, *"if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments,"* Matthew 19. Well, he says, I have kept them. Jesus said unto him, *"One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor"* (Mark 10:17-22 & Matthew 19:20-21). And then he went away sorrowful.

The Lord loved him, for he was a lovely character; but his heart was as much away from God, as anyone else. The Lord did not deny what his character was, but He probed his heart to the bottom, and out came just what the heart always is.

So, this has to be met in both respects; that is to say, God's glory has been dishonoured, defiled, trampled upon; and then there is the positive guilt of the sinner.

Now the gospel meets both these things. It owns them most fully; and it establishes also the authority of the law, the curse of which Christ bore. At the same time the gospel takes up man on entirely new ground. It admits to be all quite true what we have just been saying, but then, in view of that, man is lost. If we have to meet God on our own responsibility, then we are lost. If we have to answer for ourselves, we must bear the consequences; and when the law gets into our souls, we find this out. Then we see we have sinned; and of what good is a judge, if he does not condemn the guilty? The moment I take up my responsibility, I see I am condemned already, or else I weaken the holiness of God.

It is no longer a question as to how a man may grow better, so as to be able to meet God at some future time. Do you think you are going to get better to meet Him? Then it is clear that you have never met Him yet—you are without God.

When the word of God meets the soul, it brings the soul into God's presence at that very moment; it is not a question as to whether I am going to get better tomorrow, but what am I to-day? Nor can there be peace in my soul till I come to that point. I never find peace till I come in my rags to God, like the prodigal who came to his father, just as he came out of the far country. The prodigal was not fit for his father's home: his state did not suit the master of the house (that is, God); and, what is more, he was really guilty, for he had been committing sin.

Now, in Hebrews 9, both these things are completely met. We are sinners, and if we answer for ourselves, we are condemned; but God has set about to work for Himself. For some thousands of years He left man under responsibility, without law and then under law; and this had brought out distinctly that the *"carnal mind is enmity against God"* (Romans 8:7). Now when that is practically brought home to us, then God takes up, not what

man has done, but what He Himself has done. So God saves us, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His own work; and that makes all the difference. God has come in, in grace, not by our works, else grace is no more grace. Either I am, as to my acceptance, going to God on the ground of what I have done, or, I am going on the ground of what God has done for me - judgment answers to the one; glory and salvation answers to the other.

And that which is of great moral importance to note, and which comes before the question of our sins and guilt, is, that God's glory had been cast away. First, angels fell, then Satan triumphed and man casts off God. Violence, corruption, death came in. Satan is both the "*prince*" and the "*god*" of this world, so that when the Son of God came into it, Satan could bring the whole world against Him. God had been utterly dishonoured. Christ comes and puts Himself into this place. Sin is under God's eye, and Christ is "*made sin*" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Christ, the second Man, came, and while perfect in all His ways as a living Man, yet the condition of men as such was that of sin; if, therefore, He were to save man, He must put Himself in that place before God.

And this Christ did. He was "*made sin*". He stood there as a sin-offering for the glory of God; and that is the basis of all. The blood has been carried inside and presented to God. This blessed truth is of the first importance, viz., that the whole value of the sacrifice has been presented to God Himself.

Man failed, and fell under Satan. Christ was also tempted by Satan; but He met the entire opposition, and everything else, and that, too, when accompanied by God's wrath; He has passed through all in divine perfectness, and He has ended it all for ever.

Now this was, morally, the "*end of the world*" (v. 26), as the Lord had said, "*Now is the judgment of this world*" (John 12:31) Man had been tried in every possible way; first, he had been set

up in innocence and had sinned, so that he could no longer be with God in an earthly paradise; afterwards came judgment, such as the flood; then came law and prophets, and repeated warnings; and lastly, Christ came, for nothing more could be done; it was the end of the world. And now, if a man try to make out all he can for himself, he will find himself at the end where he began, or worse; he has but proven to himself that he is a sinner. Then must he not come into judgment, and be judged? What, then, is to be done with him?

Now see, the end of the world was morally accomplished on Calvary at the cross. Death passed upon the blessed Son of God, when He, as Man, and for us, put Himself under the judgment of God. Man had been already tried under every variety of condition in the ways of God, and it had resulted in total failure on his part; then Christ comes and puts Himself there where man was; and He did this on man's behalf and for the glory of God. The second Man, in circumstances far more trying than those in which we had been overcome, first of all with every inducement that Satan could offer to Him and by which he had deceived men, and afterwards with all the terribleness by which he would hinder Christ from carrying through the work of obedience, the second Man, I say, goes through all perfectly and successfully, and then, *through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God (Hebrews 9:14).*

There was perfect obedience, and perfect love to His Father; He was made sin, and God dealt with Him in righteousness. We see in a Man – Christ - perfect devotedness to God, perfect devotedness to His Father; and then He goes and stands before God perfect in Himself. So that, whilst drinking the cup of wrath more deeply than we could ever drink it, He could ask, *"Why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46 [Psalm 22:1])*

He was there, so that God might be glorified in righteousness, in majesty, in truth, and in love, by Christ putting Himself in the place of sin, Himself sinless, and by His being tested and proved all His life through; He is *"the Lamb of God which taketh away*

where Christ was “made sin,” there God has been glorified *the sin of the world” (John 1:39). Not the sins, as it is too often wrongly quoted, but “the sin”; if He had taken away the sins, what would there be left to judge man for? But with respect to all, God says, I am glorified. Christ hath appeared “once in the end of the world ... to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (v.26). He annulled sin completely, in the sight of God, by perfect obedience in His own Person, taking the whole thing upon Himself, and dying as “made sin” for us, so that God has not one word more to say.*

Christ’s work must ever be God’s delight, because through that work God has been perfectly glorified in all that He is. And the point is, that where Christ was “made sin,” there God has been glorified:-

- Where was obedience proved? In the place where Christ was “made sin.”
- Where was love proved? In that place where Christ was “made sin.”
- Where was righteousness proved, and holiness, too? There where Christ was “made sin”.

If, then, all is done, I can say to any sinner in the world: ‘The blood is on the mercy seat, Come’. God has been glorified in Christ, as He Himself said, *“Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him” (John 15:31)*. Will you come?

Inasmuch as God has been perfectly glorified, the testimony of the blood of Christ goes out now to the sinner, and says, ‘Grace is free, *“grace reigns through righteousness”*’ *Romans 5:21*; while as to the full result of it, this will include *“new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13)*.

As regards ourselves, we know the work is done, and that, consequently, Man sits at the right hand of God. We have also the testimony of the Holy Ghost that so completely and so perfectly has this work of God been done by Christ on the cross,

that man in Him has been already glorified by God. Not, of course, that we are there yet, but our "Forerunner" is entered. For His own work's sake, Christ is now glorified in answer to His words in John 17, *"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me."* Now He sits at the right hand of God in glory. But He will come again to judge His enemies, as it is written, *"Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool"* (Hebrews 10:13).

In the application of all this, I see that not merely God has been glorified, but also that my case has been met as a sinner. At the close of this chapter, we read, *"As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many"* (vv.27-28). Sin has brought in both death and judgment. Death has actually come in, and judgment is before man. So that, in this passage, I see that not merely the great general basis and foundation has been laid in God's work on the cross (not on man's responsibility, for the eternal glory rests upon the finished work of the *"second Man,"* and it can therefore never fail), but also that conscience has been dealt with. *"As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"*—that is where we are as sinners — *"so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."* Death came in by sin, and judgment also comes by sin. Judgment applies to my works. But I find here that God having come in, not only has Christ glorified God, but He has also confessed, as it were, my sins, my evil works, upon the head of the scapegoat, and thus they are gone for ever. So the whole question of sin has been completely met.

On the day of atonement, the Jewish high priest, as one of the people, and for them, confessed their sins; this took place every year. Was that a sign of their sins being put away? Surely not. Why was it done? Because their sins were there! Instead of indicating the removal of their sins, the repeated confession was rather the memorial of them. But now, my sins are all gone, for

Christ has sat down, and in respect of the removal of sins, He has nothing more to do whatever. Having finished that work, He has sat down in the glory.

I see that He has confessed all my sins upon His own head. I am not excusing anything, not one single sin; if I sin after I am converted that, of course, is a great deal worse, but as regards the work of Christ, there is no question in that about my conversion, or of the sins I committed before or after conversion. To introduce that question would be to confound the time of the efficacy of the work in me with the actual value of the work itself. In that sense, there is no time with God. God knew all my sins from the beginning. And what is so blessed is, that if I look up to God in all His holiness, righteousness, majesty, glory, and love too, but specially righteousness, I see now that He has been perfectly glorified in every respect and detail that concerns me.

The work of Christ has met God's glory, and what is more, it has enhanced it. He could say, *"Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him" (John 15:31)*. All is perfectly done, so that my soul can say, 'As regards the sin of man, and the glory of God in reference to it, I see that by what a Man has done on the cross, God has been glorified.' I do not forget that there, God's own love has been most wonderfully displayed. But in respect of the very thing wherein such gross dishonour was done to God, Christ has met every claim of God, and has honoured Him perfectly.

And in that same scene, Satan was bringing every terror to bear upon Christ, and yet Christ only showed out perfect love and obedience to God; all the perfectness was brought out in His being made sin, and in His drinking the cup. All is now finished, and Man is sitting at the right hand of God. Then what has become of my sins? He has borne them all.

If in my heart I have been brought to own myself a sinner, I see that Jesus *"was once offered to bear the sins of many" (v28)*;

all is finished, settled, perfectly and for ever; there is no longer any possible question between my conscience and God. I do not now rest upon my works, for they brought me nothing but condemnation. This must ever be so in view of God's glory and of my guilt; but in sovereign grace Christ has stepped in, and He has glorified God in the place I had got into, and He has borne all my personal sins—every one of them. The whole thing was settled before ever I knew of it or had been told of it, indeed before ever I was born.

And who was engaged in doing this work?

No one but Christ with God; that is the reason the work is an absolutely perfect one. It was wrought out totally and absolutely between the Son of God, offering Himself spotless, and God dealing with Him as a Victim. When therefore the Lord gave expression to what He was going through (His perfectness in submitting to it came first), we hear Him saying, *"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"* There was no wavering in the perfectness that owned God as His God, and yet He asks, *"Why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)*, He was the One who knew God infinitely and also what it was to be infinitely forsaken. In the perfectness of that work, there and thus accomplished, we had nothing to do.

This puts us in our true place. It makes the testimony to be that of sovereign grace in righteousness, so that the grace itself reigns through righteousness.

And what is the consequence? Why, that now it says, *"Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation"(v.28)*. Every Christian looks for this in some shape or other.

As regards those who are looking, what do they look for? Is it to be judged? It cannot be so, because the first time He came, He put away all their sins; when, therefore, He comes again, it must be apart from the question of sin. Always without sin as

to His own Person, He will appear "*without sin,*" because the first time He came, He put it all away. It was then that He stood in the place of sin before God, for God's glory and for our salvation. All is totally finished.

If men now reject Him, they will have, of course, that additional guilt, whilst their sins are not gone. But suppose I am brought to repentance, and that I am broken-hearted about my sins, then it is that I see Christ bearing them upon the cross, and I learn that all is settled; I can only then say, what a wretch I was to make the Saviour suffer so! But I look up to Christ, and I say, 'The first time He came, it was in love and to give His life a ransom for many.' He was the only One who could do it, and He has done it; all is now finished for God's glory, so that the new heavens can rest upon such a basis.

As regards my sins, all has been done also.

God's glory rests upon this finished work. So much so, that when Christ comes again, it will be "*without sin.*" He has nothing more to do about sin (I am speaking now as to believers, but not in respect of their needing correction in their pathway here), for "*by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*"; and therefore it is, "*unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation*" (v27-28).

Am I, then, resting upon the absolute, complete, eternal efficacy of His sacrifice?

That sacrifice brings us to God in the light, as God is in the light (see 1 John 1 John 1:7); this is its effect. Nor does it leave us there as we are, for the gospel tells us that we have died, and the question is asked, "*How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*" (Romans 6:2). I do not now enter into details, but I take up the broad ground of the gospel.

The veil has been rent, and we have not only boldness to enter in, but sin has been judged in the light of God, and so we judge it, too. God sees no longer any obstacle in the way. Towards

the end of the wilderness journey, when the Israelites had to hear Moses' own witness about them: *'Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you'* (Deuteronomy 9:24), and, *"I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck"* (Deuteronomy 31:27) God testifies through Balaam, that *"He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel"* (Numbers 23:21). Now what Balaam said is true of God's people now. We find in this case, as always, that the accusations of Satan are put to silence before the testimony of Christ. If Joshua stand before the angel of the Lord, and Satan stand to resist him, then we find this: *"The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan ... is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"* (Zechariah 3:2).

As to the question of our acceptance, the blood of Christ gives the one perfect answer; God cannot see one bit of sin upon the believer. He will most assuredly not allow us to walk wrongly, but that is not the question here. It is God's work in the day of grace, meeting me in my need, and giving me a standing in Christ, because God has been so fully glorified as regards all that relates to me; therefore it is that I am now waiting for Christ to come and take me into the glory.

Let us see, then, that we are with Him whilst we are on the way to meet Him. There is no excuse for us in failing.

If we fail as Christians, we are always at fault; but as regards the great groundwork of our acceptance, this has been settled and established for ever. Since Christ has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, I do not need to modify my justification by my sanctification. And further, He ever appears before God for me. Having been brought to God, I have now a far deeper sense of sin than I ever could have in my natural conscience. I own how I have put His name in the dust, and how I do so still, though I call myself a Christian.

If the Lord were to come to-day, would each one of us be able to say, 'Well, the time has come for Him to fetch me to be with

Himself'? Many may say that they are waiting His good time, but is the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ a thought of promise to our hearts? Is it a promise for the fulfilment of which we are looking? Or is it connected with an uncertain mixture of hope and fear as to judgment? If the latter, then I have not really laid hold of the value of His first coming. Are we able to look for Him according to His promise, *"I will come again, and receive you unto myself"* (John 14:3)?

We lose so much of the value of His blessed work.

Have our hearts learned what it is to be before God, loved as Jesus is loved, righteous as Christ is righteous? He *"of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption"* (1 Corinthians 1:30). How can I fear if I have that?

Are we resting upon this work so that, as regards ourselves, we know that when He comes the second time, He has nothing to do for us with respect to sin, because the first time He came, He finished with sin when He bore it and was *"made sin"*? Jesus Christ the righteous is now our Advocate; and His advocacy is founded upon righteousness and propitiation. If Christ should come to-day, would it be for us like taking a person that was waiting for Him, or like taking one that was uncertain whether or not Christ would have him? But I know that I shall be perfectly like Him when He comes, and, therefore, I am seeking to be as morally like Him now as ever I can be.

J N Darby

The Priory, Islington, North London, 15 May 1870

Scripture references are taken from the King James Version as given in the original publication.

This article completes the series begun in "Living Water" No. 149