

Addresses

on _____

The Atonement

.. BY ..

GEO. ALDRIDGE

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

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Aldridge, George
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BY

GEORGE ALDRIDGE,

Editor of "The Bible Standard," Auckland, New Zealand.

"The bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world."
John vi. 51.

PRICE ONE SHILLING, NETT.

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND:
E. Phipps, 31 High Street.

LONDON:
Digby, Long & Co., 18 Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

MALVERN:
C. E. Brooks & Co., Ltd., Colston Press.

SECOND EDITION, 1909.

Archives
234.5
A 365a
1909
c. 2

Atonement

13638 c. 2

PREFACE.

THE following pages contain outlines of addresses delivered in Auckland on successive Sunday evenings to large and attentive audiences. They have been written from notes, with such additions as were deemed necessary to elucidate, or to complete an argument. Printed in response to many requests, the first edition has become exhausted, and a second edition is called for. The task of transcribing the shorthand notes and writing for publication has been well and faithfully done by a friend in Auckland, to whom the author is under much obligation.

The author is indebted to many who have written upon the Atonement, to Drs. Dale, McLeod Campbell, Rev. Edward White and others, and notably to a work by the Rev. W. Griffiths, entitled 'Eternal Life by Death.' No one of these, however, is responsible for the main argument. Such as it is it has grown upon him, as the Biblical significance of the doctrine, known as Life only in Christ, has become more and more apparent. It has been his aim to make his meaning clear, and, next to winning a sympathetic acceptance of his views, he will be satisfied if they are understood.

**AUCKLAND,
NEW ZEALAND.**

August, 1909.

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Addresses on the Atonement.

HUMAN REDEMPTION.

I HAVE been induced to speak upon this subject because of the interest which is taken in it by some, who, having discarded the popular view of man's nature and destiny, find that the prevailing view of the Atonement also must go, and so are anxious to have a conception of this important doctrine which shall harmonise with what they have found to be true on the first question. Both by letter and by verbal enquiry has this question been forced upon me, and I trust that the consideration now given will be helpful, instructive, and profitable. Our subject, then, is 'Human Redemption,' a term which will need a little definition, for the Bible is a book of redemption. This is its main feature from beginning to end. Every theme on which the Christian preacher speaks, to be Biblical, must be connected with some branch of this great subject. To commence a series of talks upon the Bible teaching concerning redemption would be to ask you to consider that Book as a whole, and I desire to draw a marginal line within which I hope to keep. It is a mistake to limit the word

'redemption,' as many do. In the ordinary and popular conception it is simply equivalent to the salvation of the individual man, but such is not its sole Bible signification; it is of wider import, and, as I have said, it covers the whole range of Bible testimony, the opening chapters of the Book showing the seed germs whence the fruitage in the book of Revelation is gathered. But it is that phase which is presented in the Atonement with reference to the salvation of the individual man of which I wish to speak, and more especially with regard to the present proclamation of the message of 'life in Christ,' that you may have clear apprehension of the necessity for the provision God has made, its nature, and the manner and method of its application, as these are revealed in the Scripture. I wish to avoid the language of the schools, having no desire to circulate the current theological jargon, which, while professing to expound truth, effectually hides it. Presenting to you simple facts in the plain language of the Bible, I ask you to note the value of these facts and the meaning of the words as we pass along. Of course all theories professedly rest upon the Bible for their foundation, and it would be unwise for me to say that these modern theories of the Atonement are to be blighted with a breath should I chance to condemn them. All I claim is a patient hearing and the exercise of your reasoning faculties, as certain Scripture facts will be put before you; facts not new, but which are largely overlooked by theologians. The oversight of these has caused hopeless confusion in the formulation of theories,—a statement not intended in the way of wholesale condemnation, yet if it should chance that the elucidation of Bible truth substantiates that idea, so much the worse for the theories condemned. In narrowing the discussion to the question of human redemption, you will observe that we narrow it to the central point. However widespread the actual necessity for redemp-

tion becomes, it is professedly caused by the disobedience of man at the beginning of human history. That disobedience takes effect in its consequences not only upon man, but upon man's surroundings—the whole creation. It is when man forfeits his life that the necessity for redemption originates; so that the remedy is first applied, where it counteracts the result of human disobedience, namely, on the man himself, thence flowing outwards until it covers the needs of the groaning creation. So the fall of man and the salvation of man are the points which are of supreme importance; and when we think of these in relation to ourselves individually, they appear greatly intensified.

It is well to have a clearly defined starting-point. We must not proceed in our investigation and find that we cannot arrive at correct conclusions because we have not all the necessary facts. Let us introduce our subject by taking a passage of Scripture which presents the basis upon which the whole doctrine of redemption is built:

‘Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold . . . but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ.’—1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

Redemption is a purchase of captives from bondage, or of property from incumbrance. The word ‘redemption,’ or, as it is translated in the New Testament, ‘ransom,’ is in the Greek, *λύτρον*—the root being *λῦω*, to pay—and it means ‘the price paid,’ ‘ransom.’ The condition of persons or property from which redemption is procured requires that there be certain adequate means necessary for accomplishing it. Redemption could be with silver or gold. Under the Mosaic Law it applied to estates, land, and dwellings, and in some especial cases to Israelites. But our text speaks of redemption without money, ‘not corruptible things such as silver

or gold.' For these are of fluctuating value, and are not things of highest worth. The passage implies that the blood of Christ is of highest standard value, and that it always maintains that value. 'The precious blood of Christ' is the wonderful medium in the commerce of redemption. Blood—the blood of Christ—is out of the ordinary line as a medium of business transaction; but the work to be done is out of the ordinary line, for it is the redemption of man.

What, however, has the blood of Christ to do with the work of redemption, and why was it necessary that He should die? That is the great question, the proper answer to which is to be found here in the Bible; and if we proceed about our quest aright we shall be able to see why it was necessary to redeem the race, and why in the process it was necessary that the blood of Christ should be shed. The fact exists that Christ has died, that His blood has been shed; and we have the testimony that without the shedding of blood there is no remission. Still the question presses, Why all this? There are many to whom the doctrine of the blood is a tremendous objection against Christianity, and they have said that it is a hideous thing to suppose that so much could rightly be made of it in a true system of religion. Yet it is here in the Word. Why is it here? It is not enough to say, Because God has so arranged it. It is not enough to say that it is so because it is so. If there is a better answer we should seek for it until we find it, to satisfy ourselves and that our faith may rest upon an intelligent basis. The only way in which it can be settled is by an appeal to the Bible. There only can we get the facts discovering the nature of the bondage and how it came, as these are recorded for us. We must go back to the earliest history of man—to the times of Adam in the Garden of Eden—and thence trace the line of human history to the death of Christ,

and I think that so we shall find a solution of the problem before us. Now as a matter of fact it is conceded that it is here in the early chapters of Genesis the entire question of redemption takes its rise. Here it is that we obtain the first view of man and man's inheritance,—here where we get the facts concerning his nature and his relation to the things around him,—here that we get the record of the probationary state of this first man and its disastrous issues. It is the earliest known history of man, and it is therefore the right place wherein to seek the base on which to build. In this we agree with the Standards and Confessions, which all begin here. But at the very outset they seem to get wrong, because they import a view on man's nature which has no Bible foundation; and with this false conception they have a load to carry which gets heavier as the investigation proceeds until it presses them into the belief in the fearful doctrine of eternal misery, with a doctrine of atonement for accompaniment which is no equivalent for it, in any sense, or means of rescue from it. We profess to have received light on this matter of man's nature, and so far as we have understood it the position we take on that must alter considerably our view of Christ in redemption. The importance of this cannot be over-estimated in the controversy.

Taking then, the Bible at its genesis and ours and carefully examining its statements concerning the first man and his surroundings, to learn his nature, and the character and the reasons of his acts, we read the awful story of his sin, and find painted on that black background the red picture of redemption. Let us take up the story that is given for us in the 3rd of Genesis, where we shall find answers to two questions: Does the necessity exist for redemption? and, if so, what is it? Much of the scornful scepticism of to-day is directed against this chapter, and even Christians are to be found who are quite prepared to

admit that if it is not mythical it is very improbable, and that no one can understand it. Yet a careful reading of the Scriptures will show that the narrative is a very important one, and that it lies at the root of all Bible history and promise. I believe this narrative. I have been asked more than once if I believe it to be a true story, and have replied, 'Yes,' and I have been pitied for so doing; but the pity is pitiful to me, because the objectors cannot supply a better account of the origin of existing evil, and until this is done pity and ridicule are pointless. Again, the scheme of redemption is so arranged as to make this narrative an absolute necessity; no other will fit. If this story be allegory, then we may say that the whole book is allegory, for the entire Bible proceeds upon the assumption that this record is true. There is here no sign of symbolism or allegory. If there be anywhere a simple prose history, then it is surely here. Certainly there is a supernatural element in the Scriptures, but the writer opens his record apparently in the full faith that he is writing actual history. It is the starting-point of the record which follows, and it professedly accounts for the particular direction in which human history flows. You will mark this point; this narrative professes to give an account of the introduction to the world of sin and evil, and an allegory could not have served that purpose.

Passing over much that would help us, let us turn to the New Testament to show how the Edenic story is made the base of Christianity as the religion of redemption:

Have ye not read, that he which made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh?'—Matt. xix. 4-6.

'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.'—John viii. 44.

'Not as Cain was of the evil one, and slew his brother.'—
1 John iii. 12.

Another class of evidence is found in Luke iii., which gives the genealogy of Christ, and the line is traced back to Adam, who is viewed as quite as real a person as anyone in the chain. But it is in the Epistles where the connection is strikingly clear. The Epistles are given to explain, to elucidate, and to build Christian doctrine :

'Therefore as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin ; and so death passed unto all men, . . as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners.'—Rom. v. 12—19 [read the entire passage].

If that Edenic story is not true, then we have no explanation of these verses. No fewer than nine times does Paul here refer to the literality of the narrative. Was he in error? If so, how can we place reliance upon his authority anywhere?

'For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. . . It is written the first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. . . . The first man is of the earth, earthy.'—1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, 45, 47.

Here we get the idea of two federal heads.

'For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man.'—1 Cor. xi. 8.

This is a distinct allusion to Gen. ii. 23.

'Adam was first formed, then Eve, and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression.'—1 Tim. ii. 13, 14.

A statement utterly incomprehensible, unless it be granted that Paul believed in this Genesis story, and that it had a doctrinal aspect which he could not ignore.

Another of these allusions which presuppose the truth of the history of Genesis is—

‘But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.’—2 Cor. xi. 3.

We may add to these that the book of Revelation in its course and progress is a commentary on the truth of the narrative before us, that it is but an extended description and fulfilment of the original promise made to the woman. As a prelude, then, to the teaching which follows, I declare that I accept this narrative in its bare literality, and I know of no reason why it should not be so taken. If taken literally, it will supply us with a base for the plan of redemption, showing us the actual need for it, and so helping us to determine just what redemption is. So far, much as it is sneered at, it is superior to every other attempt to describe man's nature and state, and it has a grandeur all its own as an old-world story which is fitted to give us to-day an account of the origin of evil, and to supply the ground for the explanation as to the abolition of evil. If, then, this account foreshadows by a literal explanation of origin the overthrow of evil, it is time for us to see what its teachings are. If Christ and His apostles accepted this narrative, and spoke from it as literal history, then this is an incident in its true form which Adam and his wife experienced, and we have here just what they knew and believed. This helps us considerably, and we are able to strip ourselves of much that is traditional. I accept this narrative, then, with only this necessary remark;—that the writer's conception of the truths involved, or even Adam's view of them, does not necessarily exhaust the narrative. Of so much we are sure, if the narrative which follows be trustworthy.

(A) We have first to consider Adam's position. The second chapter of Genesis puts before us the

creation of the man Adam, and his placing in the garden. The story is intensely interesting, for we have there given the evidence of Divine provision for a certain object. For what was all the care and trouble taken? It is clear that it was that Adam might be put on test or trial. Man is created, placed in Paradise; he is told that he may eat of every tree except one, and to that exception there is attached a fearful penalty upon failure. That man might not be alone, Eve is created, and given to him as his companion. Here comes in another factor,—*this man was a representative man*. This is shown from several considerations:

(1) It is of importance to allude to the principle of centrality, that the facts may be fully put before us. There is here on the part of God the selection of a portion of earth, and the whole narrative seems to infer that it was an enclosed portion;* for when the man sinned he was driven out, and cherubim were placed to guard the way to the tree of life. Coming further down the record, we catch a glimpse of a similar thing, namely, the choice of a land which should be a centre of blessing to the peoples. But in the latter case we observe this fact—that the choice of land and the choice of persons presupposed that other peoples were in existence who needed the blessing, and that upon the obedience or disobedience of the selected persons depended the weal of the peoples generally. These are facts of after-history, and I may be pardoned if I think these same things were in existence in the days of Adam, and that he was the probationary man, the best of the kind, placed in the garden, and upon him as the probationer there rested the possible honour of bringing in great blessing for the race. He was certainly the head of earthly creation, however far that creation might extend, and whatever it might embrace.

*The Hebrew word *gan* emphatically suggests that the garden was enclosed, protected. See Gesenius.

(2) It may be necessary here for a moment to insist that he was a mortal man. Not that he was compelled to die, but that he was of a mortal nature, and could die. Then, was he as we are? So far as the fact of mortality is concerned, yes; but he was singular in this, that he was in the vicinity of that which could mediate life and arrest decay, namely, the tree of life. The fact that he was mortal explains the true nature of the penalty threatened to him in case of disobedience: 'Thou shalt surely die.' Some time ago a preacher asked a very foolish question, If Adam was mortal, why threaten him with death? A more pertinent question would be, If Adam were immortal, and could not die, why threaten him with death? If immortal he could not die, but if mortal he could be put to death. And it is this latter thought which the narrative embodies. To be immortal signifies that we have that within us which can defy the ravages of time or decay. Adam had not that, nor have we. That we may be sure of the nature of the threatened penalty, we turn to these passages:

'For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.'—Num. xxvi. 65.

'Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me.'—Num. xiv. 29.

We observe that the former contains the words 'surely die,' while the latter gives the threat in other words, so that there can be no doubt as to the meaning conveyed by the term.

Here, then, we have before us these facts: that the man was a representative man,—that upon his obedience hangs the welfare of others, either around him or to follow him. The penalty which is threatened him if he fails is death, *a death which*

meant the extinction of the Adamic race, the closing up of hope for the world.

(B) Let us now regard particularly the test :

'And the Lord God commanded the man, saying. Of every tree of the garden thou mayst freely eat ; but, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.' Gen. ii. 16, 17.

Much has been made of the idea of Adam and his wife eating of a literal apple, and so breaking God's command. It would have been equally a violation of the command if the fruit had been an apple and they had eaten it, but the record says nothing about an apple, or indeed as to the kind of food partaken of, and we must refrain from speculation. Suffice it to say that one tree was placed as a test. Man is free, and is placed under the necessity of choosing good or evil, right or wrong. It is evident that, had man proved obedient, the knowledge barred from him would have been afterwards supplied. However that may be, here was the test, and he must, by deliberate choice, under temptation, against all lower seduction, declare his allegiance to the Eternal One.

What could be the test? It could not be the Ten Commandments, because the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth were unsuited to a creature who had but one earthly relationship. There must be, therefore, some positive external trial by which the question of allegiance might be determined at once and for ever. The test was simple, so simple that none could complain that it was too difficult. In it was the maximum of liberty with the minimum of test. He fell, and as a result of that fall the history of man from that time comes before us as a history of evil, marked by rebellion long-continued against the mercy and the grace of God, who created him and who loves him. Viewed in the light of modern sneers against it, this teaching stands as a rebuke directed against boasters. 'Had they been

tested in this way they would have withstood,' and yet, when the tests are applied in everyday life, men fall, knowingly, wilfully fall, and that without the powerful external temptation to which this man was subjected.

To sum up so far as we have gone. The redemption is by the shed blood of Christ. That is made clear, being so put in the Gospel story, and the emphasis of apostolic teaching rests upon it. The redemption is linked by the same facts and the same teachers to the story of Eden. The nature of the man and his relation to his surroundings are prime elements in determining the nature and the needs of the redemption. These we have traced, and so much being clear, we have commenced aright, and the foundations laid will bear the structure yet to be reared. The fact of the fall reveals to us the need for redemption, and calls us to earnest quest for the way back to the lost life. We have but to direct our thoughtful attention to our present state as a proof that the necessity for redemption exists to-day. Yet, blessed be God! it is not necessary that we should know all the details of the need and of the plan for redemption before we can know that we are saved from the consequences and from the power of sin. Salvation is a present thing. It can be secured by the realisation that God hath provided a way of escape from the ruin which the first man has entailed upon the race. That which appeals to our need, and earnestly beseeches our acceptance, is not merely an emotional stimulus, but when investigated, it is seen to be a full satisfaction to the mind and heart. When we seek deeply into the record, we find that it yields such revelation of wisdom, and love working through wisdom, that we are captivated, enchained, and made the bond-slaves of Him through whom the glorious plan has been wrought out.

THE DEATH PENALTY: WAS IT INFLICTED ON ADAM?

THAT is a very clear question, and so far as the nature of the inquiry is concerned there is no room for doubt as to its meaning. To it we shall give a reply, with the hope that the answer will be as clear as the question. It may seem as if we were not going straight to the heart of our subject. Promising to speak upon the Atonement, the objection may be raised, 'You are taking up matter which could well be left alone that you might engage in more practical work.' But it is just here in connection with the early history of man that errors have become rooted, errors against which we protest. To be accurate in any statement of doctrine we must know something about the genesis of things; we must know something of man, of his origin and nature, and of the circumstances surrounding his test, if we would have clear ideas as to the nature of the Atonement, which affects him as a whole and ransoms him from conditions which the fall brought upon him. It is the custom, when referring to this subject, to go at once to the New Testament and to say, 'Jesus died for me,' without considering it necessary to examine the testimony of the Old Testament as to how the death of Christ affects me, and why that death was necessary. Now if the Old Testament does not embody a Divine revelation equally with the

New, if the great sacrifice of the New be not just the substantiating of the Old, yea more, if the language of the later revelation is not to be explained by the usage of the earlier, then we may at once give up the defence of the Christian Atonement. I do not mean that the New Testament language is not conclusive, but what I mean is, if the groundwork of the Christian Atonement is not to be found in the Old Testament, then the whole of the New Testament doctrine of Christ's death is broken up and turned into a hopeless puzzle. With the Old Testament against us the battle is lost. And yet more, it is in connection with the question now raised that the matter must be primarily settled. It lies as an imperative necessity at the very threshold of the inquiry that the facts connected with the death of the first man should be clearly perceived, or we shall have an increasing haziness as we go further. If in any sense we have been affected by the fall of Adam, and are in any way related to the penalty which was threatened to him, or to the changed conditions which came upon him, and if Christ's death affects us in the way of removing the liabilities entailed upon us from that source, then it must be granted, that the whole matter is of the deepest importance. Let us, for the purpose of this inquiry, put aside all we may have learned aforesaid and let us resolve to study the subject afresh.

A satisfactory answer to our inquiry is not to be found in theological works, or in the science of to-day. These may be wrong on account of fundamental erroneous conceptions. They one and all point to the fact that men do die, and they triumphantly say, 'Yes, the death penalty was inflicted and men are under it now, and in consequence they die; there is, therefore no further need for inquiry.' Here we join issue and declare that a huge mistake has originated at this point, a mistake which has helped to build up the theory of soul-immortality, which has founded

and strengthened the belief in the fearful dogma of eternal misery, and which has changed the face of the truth of the matter so that it is supposed to represent mankind as now enduring the penalty threatened to Adam. Against this we say, and we hold it as true, that man is now the recipient of Divine grace and a sharer in God's love to the full extent of the duration of his present life. Mark, it is not meant that these men are mistaken as to the fact of the present mortality of man, but they are mistaken in the assumed fact that man is mortal because the original death penalty was inflicted. We declare to you that if that penalty had been inflicted, there had been no man at all, either mortal or immortal. At this point we press this question, believing it to be an all-important one, inasmuch as upon the right answer to it depends our conception of the plan of redemption as revealed in God's purposes. This is a question which would not be put were we not thoroughly convinced that upon it the Bible and popular belief are in conflict, and that it is of the greatest importance that the truth should be known. On matters appertaining to the Bible men are accustomed to take certain things as true, because they have been asserted. We claim to be emancipated from this bondage, and are free to examine every doctrine of the Bible by the clear searchlight which itself supplies. So we proceed in our investigation, resolved at all costs to have the truth. Should we discover in our search that the old teaching is true, by all means let us hold it, defend it, proclaim it, and all the more conscientiously because of the examination; but if not true, let us cast it to the moles and the bats, determined to have nothing but the truth, wherever it may be found and wherever it may lead us. In the previous address it is affirmed that the man Adam was put in the garden of Eden under test. So much was in the Divine plan. No being is deemed worthy of possessing eternal life, excepting as worthiness is

proved by full obedience under a test. So the test was given, a very simple one, but in connection with that test was a threat made, which is now quoted :—

‘ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.’—Gen. ii. 17.

Before proceeding in our enquiry let us try to understand what this language meant to the man who heard it.

1. What was the nature of the threat? what does the language convey? It threatens *immediate* death; no long space of time should elapse between the crime and the punishment; the transgressor should die immediately upon his fall ‘in the day.’ There were no modifying words with it. This view might be altered by after circumstances, but as the words stand they are decisive.

2. Not only was it to be an *immediate* death, but it should be an *inflicted* death. Some may hesitate to accept this view, but we must remember that it was a judicial penalty, to be meted out if the law was broken. He who gives the probation, utters the threat also, and He has the power to enforce the penalties of His own laws. So much is conveyed in the story. It meant the same in the mouth of mortal rulers and judges, as it did in other threats which the Almighty makes, *e.g* ;—

‘ Now therefore restore the man’s wife : for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live : and if thou restore her not, know thou that *thou shalt surely die*, thou, and all that are thine.’—Gen. xx. 7.

‘ And the king said, *Thou shalt surely die*, Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father’s house.’—1 Sam. xxii. 16.

‘ For on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, know thou for certain that *thou shalt surely die* : thy blood shall be upon thine own head.’—1 Kings ii. 37.

‘ And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Did I not make thee to swear by the Lord, and protested unto thee, saying, Know for certain, that on the day thou goest out,

and walkest abroad any whither, *thou shalt surely die?* and thou saidst unto me, The saying that I have heard is good. . . . So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada: and he went out, and fell upon him, that he died.'—1 Kings ii. 42, 46.

These instances are sufficient to amply prove the position here taken that the threat signified *an immediate, inflicted* death—a death not resulting from natural decay, but that the life should be violently taken—a premature death.

3. What would such a death entail? The answer is clear. It would deprive Adam and Eve of life, and to take away life from them would mean the entire suppression of possible offspring. The great world of men descended from them would never have been. Immediate, violent death then and there upon transgression meant the prevention of the Adamic race with all its potencies and possibilities. So much ought to be settled before we proceed any further, for if this be established, then the case is limited considerably. Here is no room at all for the inquiry into the terms, 'spiritual death,' 'temporal death,' and 'eternal death.' These are theological phrases which belong to a region outside the Bible altogether; we have but to deal with the Bible narratives and the facts which they present, and form our judgment upon them. We need not suppose anything to exist there but what is actually taught us. Here, then, we have reached the first step in our inquiry, and to know so much is a help towards the answer to the whole question. The facts already considered show that the man sinned under test. The test was not a difficult one; it was a simple act of obedience which was demanded, and the man failed.

We look now upon the man and his wife as, in response to the call, they stand before the Judge and sentence is passed upon them, and we ask, 'Was the threat carried out?' Let us be very careful; let us test every word by the Word of God. On one occasion when speaking on this theme, a listener

declared that he should not like to carry the fearful responsibility for teaching the people such error. Yet we speak only that which seems to be Bible truth, and it is for you to weigh, consider, and judge. Let us once more enquire, was that penalty inflicted? Observe, it is not 'Did Adam die?' for he did die; the Scriptures affirm it. But was the *penalty* carried out? Did the sinning pair die *according to the terms of the penalty*? It will not do to answer hastily in any case. The position which we take, that Adam was a mortal man, being a sound one, then he could die, and seeing that he depended upon the tree of life to mediate life, if driven away from that, he would of necessity die, for he would be thrown back upon his own nature. The real question is—in accordance with the terms of the penalty was he put to death? and the answer must be, emphatically, 'No.' Instead of suffering an immediate and an inflicted death, he and his wife are sent out from the garden under a new probation, spared to beget offspring, and to look forward to the prospect of redemption. This must surely be evident to the most casual reader of the narrative. Someone will say, 'But you forget the marginal reading of the text,' and attention is directed to this objection because it is put forward by many advocates of Conditional Immortality as if it satisfactorily explained the whole circumstances. In the margin of the Authorised Version there is the reading, 'dying thou shalt die,' standing for the words in the text 'thou shalt surely die,' and a good many scholars suppose that here we have indicated to us a lengthened period of time for the dying, rather than a speedy execution of the penalty, that Adam then became a dying man. Some say that he then became a mortal man, and that the long centuries which followed ripened the seeds of corruption and decay which his sin had sown in him. But it has already been shown that Adam was a mortal man before being placed on

test; he was so in creation, 'of the earth, earthy,' and if men had only considered the facts, the idea that death was a long process would never have found lodgment. They have found that he did not die speedily, and so the other interpretation was invented to harmonise with the penalty! We confess that this was a view which we once held, but we found that it did not explain the facts and demanded stretching to the point of cracking to make it fit. We summarise the evidence which induced us to put that on one side as altogether unworthy of a place in explanation of the truth.

(a) We ask,—does the marginal reading conflict with the text? A very important query, for upon that supposition this explanation has gained currency. The answer is that it does not. The margin shows what is the fact, namely, that in the Hebrew the expression is of peculiar idiom; to intensify the verb 'die' it is doubled, and if it had been translated word for word it would not have been good English.

(b) Our translators seem to have had the notion that they could best express the intensity of the Hebrew double verb by using the English adverb 'surely.' It is not necessary to know anything of Hebrew to feel that they were right. There are numbers of such expressions in the Scriptures in which the translators have done this, as for instance Gen. ii. verse 16, 'of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat,' literally, 'to eat, thou shalt eat.' Says an able writer, 'In one form or another this emphatic threat of punishment by death occurs in the Old Testament at least forty-seven times, and in all these occurrences the emphasis is expressed in the one language by repeating the principal term, and in the other by employing the adverb *surely*.' If here the term indicates a lengthened period then of course the other instances will bear the like meaning, but the texts already cited show that that would be impossible, the context in each case forbidding any

such interpretation. In the eagerness to become possessed of Scripture doctrine, care must be taken that the arguments in support of it are not faulty.

How then are the facts to be explained? Let us once more assert that the threat signified nothing less than *undelayed physical death*, an immediate infliction, yet when Adam and his wife stand before the Judge no such sentence is passed. Mark! the language towards Adam (iii. 17-19) tells of toil for a livelihood; towards Eve (verse 16), of multiplied conception with pain; and upon the serpent, concerning whom no recorded *threat* is delivered, there is the penalty of present degradation and future destruction (verses 14, 15). Thus, according to the narrative, death is not inflicted on the sinning pair. If it be argued that suffering is entailed by the fall, and this is the penalty; a sufficient answer is that we should not say a judge has passed sentence of death if the culprit is sentenced to the treadmill for life. Nay, here is no penalty at all, but in lieu of penalty, it is actually a prolonged life that is assured in the promise made to Eve (the promise of child-bearing), and to the man in that he is to pass out of the garden of Eden to struggle with the earth for a livelihood. Further, it is implied that in measure man should be the conqueror, for he is to *eat bread*, the result of his own toil, and the very fact that by the sweat of his face he should be able to win bread from the earth implies that he should keep himself in being until his nature, which was mortal, should give way, and then in the natural course of events he should return to the ground whence he was taken. Instead of suffering the penalty, he passes out from the garden under a new probation—a probation which involved toil and suffering as its attendant conditions. Again, that threatened penalty, in its cold, bare terms, precluded all possibility of hope to the man, hope of any kind, but here he is sent out with the hope of redemption ringing in his ears—a hope that seemed to promise

that that which he forfeited should be restored: the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. We here point out an important element, *viz.*, if Adam died in accordance with the terms of the penalty, then he paid the penalty due for his sin; there is no penalty beyond it; but if so, on what grounds does Christ die and 'be made sin for us'? We may say of Adam as the hymn puts it—

'Payment God will not twice demand,
Once from my bleeding Surety's hand,
And then again at mine.'

If Adam paid the penalty, then any theory which represents Christ's death as an equivalent for his sin, represents God as vindictive to the last degree in demanding a penalty both from the sinner and from the Saviour. If Adam paid the penalty, then Christ could not pay it; if Christ died and gave His life for the life of the world, then we may be sure that the penalty of death was not paid in the person of Adam.

If, then, the death penalty was not executed, we may ask, Why not? What is the ground for the exercise of mercy? Weigh carefully the following thoughts. As this man was placed upon probation, which, while it gave him hope for the future, yet sent him forth under new and hard conditions of life, we conclude that he was respited, that certain extenuating circumstances were taken into account, and that this was done for the purpose of showing mercy to a race which should spring from the pair thus saved from the threatened death. On looking over the history to discover if such a thing exists, we find that the penalty was threatened for personal transgression, sin, which was the result of yielding to wilful desire. But reading the narrative, we notice that Eve was subject to a strong temptation from a subtle outside influence, that the tempter came before her offering a more extended sphere of knowledge than she possessed. Not that this could extenuate the guilt of

disobedience, but its criminality. When they are arraigned, Eve pleads this palliation, that she had been tempted by a power from without, and that through the temptation she and her husband had fallen, showing that they of themselves did not originate the conception of wrong-doing. So much appears in the record, and when we see that God clothes their sin-born shame with skins of His own providing, and thus covers their sin, it does seem that we have traced the truth to its source. Taking into account the fact that temptation came from a subtler intelligence than their own, with the object in view that these two innocent persons should fall, we have a complete answer to the question, and a good foundation for the mercy of God and the redemptive work of Christ. Here, then, have been put before you the facts; the exact meaning of the threatened penalty, with the striking feature of the story that it was not carried out! Another probation is granted, a change which, whilst it entailed toil and suffering, with many evils, because they had sinned, yet, on the part of God, evinced grace all through.

An important question may here be put. If God does not fulfil His first threat, how can we reconcile it with His truthfulness? A careful consideration of the facts shews that His truthfulness is not in any way affected hereby. Had Adam of his own will and motion without external temptation eaten of the tree and then escaped the doom, there would have been room for the question. But if God had put Adam to death, the circumstances being as they are, then He would have acted in a manner totally without parallel in the after-history. 'He delighteth in mercy,' and human judgment agrees that the prerogative of mercy was righteously, not arbitrarily, exercised. It is a principle to be noticed in the Bible that threats are uttered, but that certain circumstances will modify the threat, and in some cases remove it altogether.

'At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy it; if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.'—
Jer. xviii. 7-10.

'In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, and said, Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. Then came the word of the Lord to Isaiah, saying, Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.'—
Isa. xxxviii. 1-5.

His threats leave room for the exercise of His grace. It is a positive enactment that 'the soul that sinneth it shall die,' yet, be it observed, 'if he turn from his wickedness he shall live.'

But a more serious question which has been put deserves further consideration. It is this: If the threat of death announced to Adam was not carried out, what proof is there that the threat of eternal punishment will be fulfilled?

1. However this question should be answered, it does not affect the solution of the main issue. We have reviewed this in the light of Bible facts, and if we have found good reason for the belief that Adam did not come under the penalty, then we must accept that, and no problematical question relating to God's actings should be allowed to disturb our finding.

2. There are, as we have seen, some good grounds here for the exercise of God's prerogative of mercy, inasmuch as we have shown that the man sinned under strong temptation, and not of his own

motion. But knowing ourselves as we do, and human nature from that knowledge, can we say that a like ground of modification now exists? If not, then clearly we have no right to assume that the threat of the second death can be set aside.

3. God's threats are provisional upon repentance.

'If that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.'—Jer. xviii. 8.

He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. There is evidence that Adam and his wife were sorry for their transgression; yet whilst their repentance afforded a ground for the exercise of Divine mercy, it did not remove all suffering. The lower level of the new probation involved in its conditions, suffering, privation, pain and death.

4. The state of probation is confined to the present life; therefore, repentance is possible to those only who are alive; 'after death, the judgment.' No mercy is held out to any beyond the grave, so far as opportunity for repentance is concerned.

We now draw attention to the final evidence in answer to the main inquiry. It lies in the question, 'What are the circumstances here recorded which are likely to remove, to mitigate, or to increase the penalty?' One or other of these was done. Death is threatened—immediate, inflicted, physical death. It has been shown that it did not fall according to the threat. It was, therefore, removed, but theology, denying this, and burdened with the doctrine of soul-immortality, has been compelled to advocate a mitigation or an increase, chiefly the latter, for the simple threat has been evolved into the complex doom, 'death, with miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal.' Part of that death-penalty has been a life of toil and suffering for the man, and sorrow, pain, and multiplied conception for

the woman. If the dogma of eternal misery be true, then we have the frightful idea given that because of that early sin God increased the numbers of the human race, a large portion of which would inevitably find its way to the abodes of the lost. Mark the language! 'I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception.' To the sufferers, on the common view, it is as if the Judge had passed a death sentence to be brought about gradually; a hundred lashes a day until death is effected, and the hope of mercy held out gives room for the exercise of a provision whereby the race is increased, and victims are found in large numbers to partake of a horrible doom to which physical death gives an entrance!

The importance of these things cannot be over-estimated in any of the inquiries into the nature of human redemption. Here we try to lay firmly our foundation. By making inquiry here we shall be able to appreciate the facts which are to come before us concerning the work of Christ in bringing man from death into the ultimate joy of eternal life.

WHAT IS THE ATONEMENT?

HITHERTO we have been preparing the ground for the inquiry into which we now enter. We are anxious to know what is the meaning of the Atonement, how it affects us as individuals, and what it does for the race, how it can remove the barriers which have been raised by sin, and give us a free eternal life, and do it with perfect righteousness. Accepting the grace of God as manifested in Jesus Christ, and recognising that the value of the Atonement to me does not rest upon my intellectual comprehension of it—the *fact* of the Atonement, and not the *theory* of the Atonement being the all-important thing—yet if there is presented a reasonable explanation of the Atonement, then let us know what it is, that we may not hold views which may be opposed to all ideas of human reason and to all conceptions of Divine justice. Anxious to arrive at this position, we have been careful to call your attention to the early chapters of Genesis, which record the necessity for and the initiation of the atoning work. Here, in the story of Adam and Eve in the garden, are to be found the facts which occasion the need for redemption. As already pointed out, the usual way is to take certain New Testament statements, and from them to form a theory. Indeed, one of the most recent works on the Atonement, written by Dr. Newman Hall, does not go back to the story in Eden at all. He begins with the Jewish sacrifices, devoting a few pages to these

and to the witness of prophecy, and then leaves the Old Testament altogether, giving the strength of his book to the New Testament. This is a very partial method. Any theory formed upon an incomplete study will in itself be necessarily incomplete, and perhaps being biassed by the preconception of the framer, it will be unsound. Whether the theory now put before you be right or wrong, we have begun aright by studying the facts which demand the Atonement. We know what actually happened to place the first step in the stairway of redemption, and the next advance is to show how the Atonement is designed to meet the needs which are hereby shown.

It is clear at the outset that our view of the Atonement must differ from the theories ordinarily held concerning it. If for no other reason, the position taken on man's mortal nature will make this apparent. The popular belief argues that man is immortal; talks in proud style of never-dying souls; boldly affirms an immediate entrance to a state of bliss on the dissolution of the body, and without a spark of pity consigns all who do not agree to its particular dogmas to a life of endless misery. 'Man,' say its exponents, 'must live forever either in heaven or in hell.' They start wrongly by assuming that man possesses an immortal soul, and necessarily that belief is bound to colour everything that follows, and this matter of the Atonement is sure to be distorted by it. Having decided that Adam was an immortal being, theologians have been compelled to deal with the language regarding him in a manner totally different to the usage of ordinary speech. They have been forced to give a figurative meaning to the word 'death' in the penalty threatened to man, defining it to be 'death with miseries, temporal, spiritual, and eternal'; and this is the doom which is supposed to await all the impenitent. The Atonement to be effective, then, must be of such a nature that in some way it shall meet and counteract this peculiar and

threefold doom. When we ask how orthodox theology supposes that the Atonement meets this, it is affirmed that Christ came and suffered the penalty instead of the sinner—as the hymn puts it, ‘Jesus paid it all, all the debt I owe.’ At once a strange medley of thought is produced when we begin to reflect on these things; we are hurled into a vortex of opposing ideas, and the wonder is, not that men are infidels, but that more are not so, and more would be so were it not manifest that in spite of the theological contradictions evolved by men, the glorious truth of the love of God shines clearly forth. Look for a moment at this death with its threefold miseries! The first part is physical death—which is only a small part of the penalty on the common view,—that which comes to all alike, apart from any consideration of sin or holiness. But the other two are of great importance. The second is spiritual death, which is supposed to be separation from God in a state of sin. Was Adam separated from God? Not that the Scriptures record. Indeed, after his sin Jehovah came and held converse with him, and arranged for his future in such a way that it showed His loving interest in the man in spite of the fact that he had sinned. But turn now to the Substitute: Did Christ suffer this spiritual death? Did He die in our stead in this? If the theory so often promulgated be true, then He must have suffered just the same. He identified Himself with human nature; He was a partaker of flesh and blood. Did he suffer spiritual death? The following passages will answer:—

‘We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet *without sin*.’—Heb. iv. 15.

‘*Him who knew no sin* he made to be sin on our behalf.’—2 Cor. v. 21.

‘Christ . . . *who did no sin*, neither was guile found in his mouth.’—1 Peter ii. 21, 22.

‘Which of you *convicteth me of sin*.’—John viii. 46.

If one should point to that agonising moment when Christ cried out in His suffering, 'My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?' we answer that this was something more than any spiritual separation, it was a very real thing, and is something that must be experienced when the sinner dies for his own sin under the righteous indignation of God. But this spiritual death, so-called, is an addition which is a preparation to something else, a cause which, unless there is something to change it, must result in its effect, the germ which must bring about its certain issue—eternal misery. The common conceptions assume that the penalty for sin is eternal misery, and that Christ suffered the penalty in man's stead. We have no alternative but to examine this and to test it by facts. So we ask, if He really took the sinner's place, how was it that He did not suffer the sinner's doom? This is a stumbling block in the way of the thinking man. Christ did not suffer that penalty. If he did not, can He be a real substitute? The Scriptures affirm that He rose again on the third day, and they make this a prominent part of their teaching. They declare that He ascended to the right hand of God. If so, how has orthodoxy any equivalent atonement? for it is clear that He never bore the penalty for sinners, and you have the fact to contemplate that the Substitute suffered death for three days, justice exacting that as an equivalent for the eternal misery of the sinner! It is sufficient to state this; it is its own refutation. The objection may be raised, 'but the Divinity of Christ must be thrown into the scale, and no one can estimate the amount of suffering which He could endure in that time, and which might be equivalent to the penalty for sin.' Against that is to be placed the idea of immortality for the man which makes him almost, if not quite, divine. The common opinion as to the three days is that Christ was enjoying Paradise in the company of the thief during that time. It is clear that in no

sense did Christ suffer the pains of Gehenna. No, there are two many glaring absurdities in that popular belief, and we say, away with them all, away with your horrible penalty for sin, away with your definition of the Atonement, away with your notions of soul-immortality; they insult common sense, and are not in harmony with the Word of Truth.

Let us now note what has been already learned in our quest into the Genesis of things. We have seen that Adam and Eve were placed in the garden on probation to test their worthiness for endless being, but they failed, lamentably failed, and thereby they became amenable to the penalty threatened, namely death, simple death. Full and fair warning was given; no complaint could be made of ignorance of the penalty. Adam had no right to live; the barrier had been raised between man and Jehovah, and the problem now to solve is, how—given a sinning man who has forfeited life by his transgression—how can he be made at one with the righteous Judge? Can the man do anything? No, he is death-doomed. Life had been bestowed on one condition, and it is only fair to say that the condition was a simple one indeed—abstinence from a needless article of food. They ate, and thus became amenable to the threatened doom, undelayed physical death. Then remember, had that forfeit been exacted according to the terms of the threat the whole Adamic race would have died in him, because it was all there. This is a self-evident truth which must be admitted. The great world of men descended from him, and whose history is a marvellous one, would not have existed had that forfeit been exacted as threatened. The culprits are arraigned. What shall be done? Most humbly and truly they state their case. A lying philosophy from without had accosted them. They were not justified hereby, but it accounted for their sin, and therefore they shall be redeemed from death. But how? *By the Atonement.*

Here, as a necessary prelude, it may be well to say a word or two upon the Bible idea of the Atonement. Perhaps the usage of the word will help us. The word occurs very often in the Old Testament, and from a consideration of it as there found the following statements have been formulated :—

Atonement is not the bearing of a penalty, but something Divinely appointed and accepted to prevent the infliction of the penalty and to justify God in pardoning sin.

That whenever there is an atonement there is no execution in any sense of the penalty. It is argued by some that Christ bore the penalty for sin instead of man, but the infliction of punishment is destructive of the very idea of an atonement. Where there is punishment there can be no atonement, and where there is atonement there can be no punishment.

Punishment implies guilt—there may be suffering without the consciousness of wrong-doing, but there can be, rightly speaking, no punishment, because there could be no transfer of moral consciousness and moral character. If I commit a sin, it remains true to all eternity that I have sinned, and no power in heaven or on earth can make another being conscious of having committed my sin, and consequently no other being could possibly bear my punishment.

The Scriptures do not say that Christ bore our punishment. They say: 'He died for us,' He made 'His soul an offering for sin,' He 'made reconciliation for iniquity,' 'He taketh away the sin of the world.' If, then, these statements are sound, we may say that the Atonement is a substitution of one thing for another to prevent the penalty and to serve as a ground of reconciliation. What, then, in the economy of redemption is that which was substituted?

One thing stands out distinctly on the face of the record, that when Adam sinned there was a forfeited life, a forfeited physical life, and further, that life was a *virgin* life. Some have concentrated their thought

upon the idea that it was an *innocent* life, but such a thought is not made prominent in the narrative. It was a physical life, and it was a virgin life. A virgin life of equal value should ransom it, the second man should die in the prime of life instead of the first man, who on that account was spared. Observe we are here building upon the deduction already made that Adam did not suffer the penalty, because if he suffered it then the debt was paid, and there is no room for either pardon or punishment. If Adam suffered the penalty there can be no place for Christ to come in and make an atonement. If, however, Christ did make an atonement, then there was no punishment. So again we say that the death which was threatened to Adam was physical death, a death which meant the absolute suppression of a race. Now mark this as a striking thing! It is very suggestive that to make the ransom intelligible to our first parents, victims were slain and coats of skin were given to the criminals to hide, to cover their sin-born shame, and that in this act was the first of those great typical ransoms which always cover, and which by a long succession of links lead up to the one great ransom. Notice, too, that the life which was forfeited by that first pair was granted to them again under new conditions, but still it was forfeited—it was to be ransomed, and types of that ransom run on from the sin in the garden to the cross on Calvary. Such passages as the following show this.

‘For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life; and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.’—Rom. v. 10. 11.

But there is a statement made by our Saviour which deals expressly with this very question:—

‘I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; yea, and the bread which I will give is *my flesh, for the life of the world.*’—John vi. 51.

Here is just that of which we are in quest! Let us open out this statement, feeling sure that it holds the key to the whole subject. We go to the Old Testament and take a helpful passage:—

'For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar *to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement* BY REASON OF THE LIFE.'—
Lev. xvii. 11.

This was a part of the education which the world was receiving to prepare it for the advent of the Son of Man, as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the difference between these sacrifices and that of Christ being that they were local and confined in their operation, but His sacrifice had a world-wide aspect. This text gives us the grand charter of the atoning blood, there for the first time clearly recorded, and perhaps promulgated, although it is plainly seen in the directions given to Noah in Gen. ix. 4. Note now the 10th verse, Lev. xvii:—

'I will set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.'

Why is this prohibition given? Because the blood as containing the life had been set apart by God for the most solemn uses at the altar. The difference in the language is remarkable, and there are two separate expressions in the one verse, both of which are important. The blood is not to be eaten because the life is in the blood, and that blood has been given 'to make atonement,' that is to say, the life which it contains is the atoning principle or element in the blood. The blood by means of the life atones for the life, thus it is simply a case of 'life for life'—one life offered and accepted for and instead of another. If this be not what Moses means, it will be hard indeed to find out his meaning from his words. This word here, 'atonement,' bears the signification 'to cover upon' or 'over.' Just ponder this significant

expression, 'I have given it to you to cover over your souls.' Is there then something about their souls or lives which needs to be covered over? It seems so, but what could that be but sin, together with the death which it brings? Here is the material chosen simply because it has animal life in it, and put as a covering over physical man, whose life has been forfeited through sin. And by 'the atonement,' as it is called, or 'the covering over,' that which had to die on account of the sin lives on account of the covering blood. This is not the empty phraseology of a sect. It is a truth which lies embedded in the very vitals of the Scripture revelation, that the atoning blood is actually a God-provided covering for putting out of sight the death-entailing guilt of a sinner. Here is laid down the principle of 'life for life,' the life of the substitute for the life of the offerer. We advance to another passage :—

'When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin. . . . He poured out His soul unto death.'—Isa. liii 10, 12.

His soul or life an offering for one thing, and that one thing is sin. So John the Baptist puts it, and so Paul also.

'Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'—John i. 29.

'We thus judge, that *one* died for *all*, therefore all died; and *He* died for *all* that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again.'—2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

These texts lead us back to that key-statement made by the Saviour wherein He has affirmed that His flesh is 'given for the life of the world,' and the other passages show that it was an offering which was caused by sin, a sin which involved in it universal death, and thus we see the death of Christ as the gift of a life in view of a universal death. The blood or life of Christ is given for one other thing, namely, the

life of the world, and this is the grand redemptive work of Christ. The life of the first pair was forfeited; here is a life given in ransom, and on this particular view, His life being given to redeem the forfeited life of Adam, everyone takes benefit from that sacrifice to the entire extent of his existence. Apart from that ransom pledged on the day of transgression, the first pair would have died childless. Thus we owe our life, being, and happiness to that death upon the cross. Thereby is great light thrown upon those passages which speak of Him as the Saviour of all men.

‘So then as through one trespass the judgment came *unto all men* to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came *unto all men* to justification of life.’—Rom. v. 18.

‘We behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He should taste death *for every man*.’—Heb. ii. 9.

‘One mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself *a ransom for all*.’—1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

Bearing in mind that this word ‘atonement’ is taken from the Old Testament, and that it means the ‘covering over,’ we have the thought that the death of Christ upon Calvary did cover over the sin of Adam, for when we read that He gives His life for the life of the world, we have but to ask, ‘When was the life of the world lost or forfeited?’ and the answer is, ‘When our first parents sinned in childless state, and became amenable to the threatened penalty.’ That death on Calvary is retrospective, and reaches back, covering over that sin, and gives a chance of a new probation.

Some may say, ‘If your view is correct, the atonement reaches to all, and gives to all an equal right to happiness hereafter.’ That is a step too far. It is too much to affirm that because of the death of Christ He has brought Himself under the pledge to give eternal

life to all. Eternal life is given on other grounds, namely, the revelation of God's love, and the conditions of faith and repentance. Do you not recognise the fact that by this redemption you are placed on new ground, and that you are personally responsible to Him for your life and conduct? Under Moses there was a local test, but now the test is that of faith in Jesus and repentance towards God, and it is universally applicable.

Christ has entered into the Holy of Holies with His own blood (Heb. ix. 24). Mere sacrifice on behalf of another is nothing in itself unless accompanied by faith in its virtue. Take the idea of the sin-offering brought to the Tabernacle. There must be faith in the offerer or it would be valueless. Take again our Saviour's teaching in John vi. There He speaks of His flesh given for the life of the world. Yes, but it is only he who should eat thereof that should live for ever. Eat—that is, personally appropriate it (ver. 63).

It is on the ground of that manifested love that God offers eternal life. Adam under test utterly failed, but Christ has given to every son of Adam another chance of life. Because born of the Adamic race, we die, however pure or holy—the one doom awaits all. But upon this present platform of probation God offers to us eternal life through His Son. If it be asked, Why does not the ransom give eternal life? it is enough to answer that it was a fleshly mortal life that was lost. It was a fleshly mortal life that was laid down in ransom. It therefore gives a fleshly mortal life, and hereby is a good argument derived for the idea that this redemption is universal, and includes the whole of the Adamic race. There is another thought which it is well to give, namely, that Christ had the right to live. He had kept the law and had fulfilled all its requirements, and as the new head of all mankind He had successfully resisted all evil, was 'in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' But He laid aside that claim and

gave His blood or life for man's redemption. God raised Him from the dead with a *new* principle of life. He never resumed that old blood-life; *that* was forever given up as a ransom price, and He now possesses a life in Himself becoming the head of a new race.

'As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born (or begotten) not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.'—John i. 12, 13.

It being God's purpose in sparing the old sinning race to produce from it a worthier race, of which Christ is the Head and federal representative now in the heaven.

The line of thought thus opened will be perhaps new to some, but it need not be any the less true. At all events, let us weigh it very carefully, and judge whether it is not more intelligible than that old view on which we have animadverted. This appeals to our reason, and compels our allegiance to God who designed it. It becomes more real and matter-of-fact because it introduces us to things which call for our affections, while it does not stultify our reason. Other questions, such as the 'Righteousness of Vicarious Death,' or 'Substitution,' will be taken up later. Meantime, the broad ground to be recognised is that God will deal with us according to our use of the present life, a life graciously given in order that we may have the opportunity of *eternal* life, the conditions for obtaining that life being repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ. These are simple for each and all. By acceptance of these, and agreement with them, the new birth is certain, and the way is open, not only to eternal life, but also to the kingdom of God, in the new family of which Christ is the Head.

SUBSTITUTION.

THE usual method of presenting the Atonement is to show man as a sinner, and the utter impossibility of any value attaching to his efforts to save himself: then to present Christ as the Saviour to whom the sinner must link himself by faith, by which act he shall be saved. We are as keenly alive as any to the necessity for thus presenting the individual aspect of the work of salvation, and the necessity and virtue of faith. We recognise that faith has a large part to play, and to that we shall call attention later, but at present the one definite object before us is so to present the Bible doctrine of the Atonement, that God's method of work in the gracious, full, and perfect provision which He has made for the salvation of man may be better understood. It is a common thing to insist upon faith for salvation, but it is not a common thing for a preacher to try to create, to feed, and to foster such faith in the individual as shall bring about his obedience and salvation, by the endeavour to show how God's love works by wisdom in a manner perfectly intelligible to the human mind.

The task is not an easy one because of the difficulties of the way, and it is wise to take this subject stage by stage. By carefully following and prayerfully studying the Word of God, we shall have a clearer view of this important matter; a view which will give us present help by showing the foundation

rock of salvation lying so firmly beneath our feet that we shall never lack perfect faith and a perfect sense of security.

As just mentioned, there are difficulties which lie in the way of proclaiming this subject, difficulties which arise from the presence of ideas which have become rooted in us. It is an extremely difficult thing for one educated in certain theological views to be freed from their trammels when they have been found to be untrue. Ideas somehow become ingrained, and the constant use by ourselves and by others of language which is only intelligible on the supposition that they are true, has helped to fasten the views themselves more firmly into our very nature. Just so long as our opinions are not questioned and we do not come into contact with anyone or anything which contradicts them, 'all goes merry as a marriage bell.' But there comes a rude shock if we meet with a candid friend or a no less candid foe who is disposed to test our opinions by an appeal to truth, and we discover that the long-cherished opinions have no foundation in the domain of truth, and that the superstructure which has been resting upon them is a failure. At one time the shocks which came to us were so rude and so frequent that we seemed to have lost all basis for faith, and to be left without a hope of salvation at all. But a patient enquiry has served to show past errors and their cause,—the acceptance of theological dogmas as true without testing them, and especially the acceptance of the common view as to man's nature. As soon as these elements are put right we are in the position to pursue further enquiry with regard to truth, and the good rule is acquired and appreciated, 'read the Bible literally wherever possible.' The adoption of this rule will clarify the vision wonderfully. Have you not noticed some morning when, on going out into the open air, the fogs of the night are hanging around like some thick veil which keeps out the brightness of the dawning

day. But presently the power and warmth of 'King Sol' are felt, and gradually the mists have been dispelled and the glorious sun speedily reigns where before the mist and the fog had sway. Or, to change the figure, we are ascending some hill on a bright sunshiny day and we notice that as we go higher our range of vision increases, the circle of the horizon widens, until we reach the topmost eminence and the full sweep and beauty of the view lie before us. Apply these figures to our Scripture inquiry. Mist and doubt have hung about us and we are only just realizing that they are flitting away before the bright beams of truth; or, human traditions have narrowed our vision, and it is only as we ascend above them and climb the hill of truth for ourselves, breathing the pure air of inspiration, that we are able to extend our range of sight and see 'marvellous things in His Word.' May we do this with regard to the grand subject which now comes before us!

The Bible doctrine of substitution is the next step in the argument; it cannot be overlooked or passed by, because its bearing upon the whole question is of great moment. Before treating of it, let us take the word away from its ordinary theological colourings, because, dressed in them, it carries with it a sense which Scripture repudiates. Substitution is an important Bible doctrine, although it is not expressed in that word, but the language which conveys it is clear, such as the words 'Christ died for us,' 'He gave his life a ransom for many.' Theological substitution is susceptible of some such interpretation as this:—That we are doomed to the penalty for sin, that penalty being eternal misery. The Atonement must correspond to the demand, so it is argued that Jesus Christ took upon Himself the sins of men and bore them all, paying the penalty to be exacted for their commission. There is a hitch in the matter somewhere, for if He bore the consequence of man's sins, it is but right to ask, 'Is it justice to exact the

penalty for a man's sins from both the sinner and the substitute?' Further, we are justified in asking, 'How was it that justice was satisfied with the death of the substitute as the equivalent if it demands anything different from the sinner?' Some, seeing the failures embodied in such positions, have rashly gone off upon the opposite tack and have affirmed that in no sense did Christ die as the substitute. They maintain that the penalty passed upon Adam was carried out on himself, and that therefore there was no need that Christ should die for that offence. Of course this is the issue as has been shown,—'Did Adam pay the penalty?' Analysing the narrative which records the fall we say that he did not. The objector replies, 'But the penalty was death, and he died.' True, but the death was not the infliction of the penalty threatened. Put the question fairly, 'Was the penalty merely mortality, or was it death, *immediate* death?' No one can hesitate a moment who bears in mind the full meaning of the language of the threat. It was immediate death as a judicial infliction. The mere fact that he died is no proof that the penalty was inflicted, unless it can be shown that the life was taken 'on the day' on which he sinned. There is full evidence that he was spared and that he lived 800 years afterwards. The fact that he died demonstrates his mortality throughout, and also shows that his mortality was continued because of his sin. At no time did he rise above this state. Had he been obedient, perhaps the state of mortality would have been changed for that of endless being, but he failed and thus became amenable to a penalty which, however, was never executed. In lieu of that, a pledge was given in the garden, that the man should be redeemed; that a ransom price should be paid for his redemption, and because of this ransom, pledged on the day of his transgression, man was spared and sent out upon a new probation to toil for a livelihood and to be the parent of a race of men out of which

should be produced a race of loyal and immortal sons of God. Let us concentrate our thoughts for a moment upon that man in whom was centred the life of the world. Sparing him meant sparing and giving life to a race; exacting the penalty meant closing the fountain of life to a race. His life was spared, but a virgin life as valuable, as full, should be taken for it. There is the true germinal idea of substitution. The mere statement of that however, is not sufficient, and it is right to demand that something like proof should be advanced to make this clear. We draw close attention, therefore, to the following facts. The book of God puts before us two things in marked distinctness, inviting our attention to them, in such a way as admits of no possibility of doubt as to their meaning.

The Old Testament opens, with a statement that Adam was made from the dust of the ground by God, and he is put before us as a representative man on whose obedience or disobedience hangs the future of the race that shall spring from him. It is clear that that man is important, because of the manner of his being brought into existence, and from his representative character. He is a new creature, and is the hope of the life of the world. The New Testament opens with a new creation of another man, Jesus Christ, created in the Virgin's womb. He is a new creation virtually as much as Adam was. That one was made of the dust of the ground and the other made in the Virgin's womb does not alter the fact of *special creation*. Here is our first fact—the Old Testament has one man, Adam, and the New Testament has the man Christ Jesus, and both are specially-created men.

The second fact is that these two men are linked together by the Bible in a very remarkable manner. Right away from the garden of Eden to the history of Christ does the addition of link to link go on. Take the following illustrations. It must have been a

strange impulse which possessed those Old Testament writers to record such long lists of mere names. We should say that there is too little space occupied already with the record of events, without encumbering the narrative with these. There is much that our insatiable spirit of curiosity would fain know that is not told us. Why should these names protrude so often? Early in the book of Genesis we begin to trace the line of genealogy, commencing with Adam, and coming on generation after generation. We pass over a few chapters of history, and no sooner does some prominent man appear upon the scene, that at once the genealogy is given which links him on to the first man, and this feature is repeated, until we come to the first nine chapters of Chronicles—a book which is supposed to be a record of national history, but in which the whole line of genealogy is given in completed form down to that time. We ask, with wonder, Why should this be? The 'higher critics' complacently tell us that these different genealogies indicate that there are separate books or histories from which the various books were compiled. Supposing that to be true, our question is not answered, and our wonder is not thereby lessened; we say, The genealogies are here, why have they been perpetuated? And the only answer we know of is that it is the hand of God in the history which supplies this the backbone of Scripture. With stately steps the genealogical record goes on, causing only wonder until we arrive at the end of the chain, and then we pause and look back and are struck with greater astonishment as the truth bursts upon us. What is it we see? In the garden of Eden there was a promise made of reversal of the awful deed then done, and the promise was in the words which are given as a threat to the serpent, the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; nothing more. The line of genealogy from Adam is preserved in Gen. v. We go from that onward, and read it

again from Abraham, again in Chronicles, and so we read on, discovering these genealogies lying in the record, and apparently not of much practical utility, until we arrive at the Gospels, and then we find that Matthew follows in the footsteps of other historical writers and gives a list of names. Yet once again, and for the last time, in Luke iii., the chain is put before us, but in this latter list there is a remarkable difference. We are compelled to look at the near end of the chain first. Now-a-days a man is supposed to derive honour from the long list of illustrious heroes who have preceded him. It is no small boast for a man in England to say that his ancestors 'came over with the Conqueror.' But here is one who by the arrangement of His genealogy gives honour to His predecessors! You will particularly note that fact for there is a striking significancy in it. Here, by birth, is a man who is destined to set aside the Adamic headship of the race and Himself to become its Head by a rescue from the consequence of the first man's transgression.

What is the lesson which that genealogy teaches? That the seed of the woman has come. The creation of the first man is linked on to the creation of the Second Man, and then genealogy has done its work. It ends there. There is no more blue blood. There is but one chain and the two-ends are, Adam the first man, and Jesus Christ the Second Man. So far then we may say that the Bible intends us to understand that the Second Man is put in place of the first, because of the greater prominence which is given to Him by this genealogy.

There is, however, another special sequence which in Scripture is very apparent, to which attention must be called. The Old Testament puts very prominently before us the feature of sacrifice—blood sacrifice. Certainly the view has long obtained in the Christian world that that represents the doctrine of substitution, and this we firmly believe. Yet although

it has been so long affirmed, it is certain that the doctrine has not been often shown in its true and full Bible significance. Turn again with me to Lev. xvii., 11—14:

'For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement BY REASON OF THE LIFE. . . . For as to the life of all flesh, the blood thereof is all one with the life thereof; therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh; for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof; whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.'

Here is the Divine law of sacrifices, the blood was not to be eaten because it contained life, and that blood was used upon the altar to atone for life. Thus whatever the Old Testament doctrine of sacrifices might afterwards mean, it signified the giving up of life. That fact stands out clearly enough in the narrative. Let us look again at the beginning. Even if we cannot at this stage make much use of the reference, at all events it is suggestive.

'And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins and clothed them.'—Gen. iii., 21.

You will observe that this takes place in direct connection with human sin, and in the case of those on whom the death had been threatened but to whom victory and deliverance are now announced. In the ordinary way, to make coats of skins would mean the slaying of the animals; taking from them their natural covering to make clothing for the sinning pair, whereby was covered over their sin-born shame. This is easy to account for in the light of that which follows. Closely connected with that action is the offering of Cain and Abel; the rejection of the one offering and the acceptance of the other can only be explained upon the ground that the one brought the prescribed offering which yielded life, and the other did not. So we might go on, but we point out that

the patriarchal sacrifices are but few in number. When we come to the Mosaic ritual we find the stated and regular arrangement for the offerings in the wilderness and onwards. The lamb was to be offered morning and evening, and yearly atonement was made by a special sacrifice when the priests went into the Holy of Holies. As to the facts there will be little exception taken, but you will note that these offerings were continued until Christ gave His life, or as the Scriptures phrase it, 'poured out His soul unto death;' 'His soul was made an offering for sin.' 'The life is in the blood,' says the record. Adam, as we have seen, forfeited life, and it was life that Christ gave, and so the death upon Calvary was linked to the sin in Eden. There is the fact but not all the fact. We insist upon it that the life that was forfeited was a *virgin* life, as is clearly shown in the Scriptures, and right here it seems there has been a great oversight as to the work of substitution. Taking that Adamic life meant destroying a possible race. We have seen the chain of sacrifices; now look at some of the links, asking what, and how much evidence is contained in them of this important fact. On noting the special injunctions which are given to the Israelites concerning the sacrifices which must be brought, we find that they are to be 'without blemish.' This is taken, and no doubt rightly so, as a type of the righteousness of Christ and the perfect holiness of the True Offering, but that is not all. If anyone will take the trouble to read all that is said concerning these sin-offerings, he will discover that whether of the beeves, the sheep, or the goats, it is demanded that they shall be perfect males; they must be young, of the first year, and in other ways they must carry a virgin life to lay down upon the altar. The fount of parental capacity must be there but with the seal unbroken. In other sacrifices the law was not stringent. But the offering which pointed to the sin-bearing Christ must bring this feature! Connect

this with the fact of sin in the garden and see what is designed, and then go over to the Gospels with me and there read the Scriptures. Is there nothing of the great Anti-type which meets the typical teaching? Yes, most assuredly. Do not let us by a false modesty neglect plain teaching and overlook important revelations. The chief point to be insisted on here, is that Christ was a man in the full sense of the term, and that He died in the full vigour of young manhood, without offspring. Did you ever think of what is meant by this? Supposing He had lived and begotten children like unto Himself, and a race of pure and perfect beings had filled this world, what a different world it would have been! But it was not so. That important phase which the sacrifices had foreshadowed was a fact in His life. When He died there was the extinction of a race apparently. That pure and holy virgin Christ-life was given, is given for the life of the world. And so you have the Bible doctrine of substitution put before you. The Bible puts it thus,—

‘And as for his generation, who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living?’—Isaiah liii., 8.

There is the predicted fact—cut off without offspring! What a world it would have been with the Christ-life developed in multitude, yet see verse 10:—

‘When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, *he shall see his seed.*’—Isaiah liii. 10.

That is, by this means God designs to bring forth a Christ-life in multitude. Out of the old Adamic race the Christ-life shall be developed, for Christ has become the Head of the race by the gift of His life for the life of the world, thus having purchased it to Himself, and the glorious design of the Father is that out of the old dying sin-stricken Adamic race

He will bring a new Christ race so that the Second Adam may say, 'Here am I and the children whom thou hast given me.'

These are the facts :

(a) Adam was spared to beget seed.

(b) Christ had so to own the race that He should be empowered to give life to those who would have it on God's terms. So the language both of the New Testament and the Old is in beautiful harmony. Take for instance the fact of the Atonement in the Old Testament. As already pointed out in the last address the word Atonement signifies literally a 'covering'; in the New Testament we have the word (*ὑπέρ*) 'over.' That which is over, is *protectingly* over. So that the world as at present constituted would not have been, but for this gracious provision.

Now the philosophy of this world rails against the idea of vicarious death, and accuses God of cruelty and delight in blood for no purpose whatever; accuses men of lack of thought and perception, who can imagine anything so wild as the idea of a vicarious death. In the opinion of such philosophy it is quite impossible to believe it, and yet! and yet! quite unconsciously the philosopher lives because of the existence of this law in the world around us. As a matter of fact we live because of vicarious death. The great law of this world is that 'life feeds on life' everywhere: through almost every grade, and certainly in the higher orders of being, life feeds on life. Creatures so ferocious as the lion and the tiger feed upon the innocent fawn and the lamb and the harmless cattle; the eagle and the vulture, and the hawk, upon birds so innocent as the dove and the beautiful singing-birds; and yet man who sits down to his mutton-chop, his beef-steak, or his fish, talks of the folly of belief in such an impossible thing as a vicarious death! What, pray, is it but that law by which we live? And this natural law is by the Bible carried into the spiritual world, the great fact in

nature being made the great fact of revelation. That which is true and necessary here in our daily life is taken and lifted to the plane of redemption. Nor does the vegetarian escape, for the grain, the vegetable, the fruit which he eats, also yield life to supply him with food; yes, and not merely do they give up a life but the possibility of large multiplication.

Observe how Christ seizes on that great fact in that simple ordinance which He left for His disciples, the Lord's Supper as we call it. What have we there? A little bread, and that we are told represents His body 'given' or 'broken' for us. See how fitting it is and how entirely it harmonises with the great line now put before you! What is bread? It is made of wheat, of grain with the life taken from it. Take a handful of wheat which, if cast into the soil under ordinary conditions, will bring forth its thirty, sixty, or hundredfold, because of the existence of the life force in it, but instead of doing that grind it into meal, and what has been done? By destroying its power of multiplying, there has been taken away all possibility of reproduction, but in that state it will give life to me. So true is that natural law here taken by the Saviour and employed to perpetuate the fact and value of His death. Christ has adopted as an emblem that which most beautifully enforces the idea of the great law 'life feeds on life;' on life violently taken. Why do we live? Because other life has been violently taken. You must observe that it is no objection that all must die because mortal. The creatures would die some time because of their mortality, but *this* is premature, violent death, and the world is full of such in order to continue and to preserve the life of the world. Thus does nature yield its testimony to this—the grand Bible doctrine of substitution. This is the fact then on which we insist, that Christ laid down His life, a life in its prime, in virgin state, to purchase

the race to Himself. Thus He has become the great federal Head of the race, and owns us all. Life is continued to the race, the individual members of which are on probation, and now the message is that 'Whosoever will' may have a share in the eternal life which God has given Him because of His obedience unto death.

THE ATONEMENT IN RELATION TO
ETERNAL LIFE.

WE now advance in our argument to another and a very important step. It is with us, as with many others, the firm belief that the gift of eternal life is made possible by the atoning work of Christ, but the manner in which it is made possible is not generally very clearly understood. We believe, however, that in Scripture this is made both clear and reasonable; and because we so believe we place before you such testimony as will show the ground on which we hold this opinion. We purpose, therefore, at this point, to show that it is not a purely arbitrary thing on the part of God to give eternal life, nor is it connected with some unreasonable scheme of redemption, but it is the fruit of a love that works by wisdom,—love which should prompt an immediate and heartfelt compliance with the Divine conditions; and wisdom which, as we view its completeness and its beauty, should compel our entire and whole-souled allegiance. Before proceeding, however, we shall repeat some of our last statements. The positions already taken are of the utmost importance in the argument, because it is just here where apparently the best of men go astray. Here writers widely differ, and their theories of the Atonement are subjected to the keenest criticism, because they are held to be subversive of all sound ideas of justice, and because

they represent God and His purposes in anything but a favourable light. Only recently we have seen a small pamphlet which criticises the popular view of the Atonement, and the author of this pamphlet—an Auckland writer—declares the doctrine to be irrational, etc. With much of what is said in condemnation of the popular theory we agree; but the writer overshoots the mark when he supposes that he has overthrown 'substitution.' The Bible doctrine remains untouched by anything that he has said.

Any view of the Atonement, to be a truthful one, must harmonise with *all* the facts which the Bible presents, for only from the Bible can we know anything about it. That book, which declares its existence, declares the manner of it also, and contains the historical facts which show its necessity. We have insisted that the story of Genesis gives not only the opening history of man, but also the facts which show the cause of, and the need for, an Atonement. In that history we find a representative man who, by disobedience, forfeited his life—a life that was a blood life, and a virgin life—the latter feature being of especial importance. It was a life which had not multiplied itself. We find further, as a part of that story that the life-forfeit is not exacted: this sinning pair are granted a continued life, but under new conditions. They enter upon a fresh probation, having, as its issue, the hope of redemption, a hope which was centred in the seed of the woman, who should apparently reverse the dread work of that day, at least so much of it as was directly traceable to the serpent. Coming to the New Testament we found that it records the life-story of another man, and the manner in which these two men, both new creations, are bound together shows that this Second Man is the seed of the woman, and that on His way to complete the work promised, namely, to bruise the serpent's head, and to bring in redemption for the race of man, He acts as the Substitute, prefigured

by the animals which yielded their skins to cover the sinborn shame of Adam and Eve. In acting as the Substitute, His work fits the needs of man, as the second half of a tally stone fits the first, for He gave a life which was a blood life, and which was a virgin life, and in the giving He declared that He gave it for the life of the world—a life given for the sin-forfeited life. He laid down as a ransom price His precious valuable life. That is not a mere piece of rhetoric: the life of Christ was precious. It had a value of its own. Although it was a fleshly perishable life, it was unstained by sin, and being a new created life, it was exempt from certain things which are inalienably linked with the Adamic life. For, observe! it was a free life. Being of God, directly given from Him, and not possessed through the medium of any human father it was free, and being, moreover, His own on test, seeing that He was obedient, He could say as no other man could say:

‘Therefore doth the Father love Me, because *I lay down My life, that I may take it again.* No one taketh it away from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment received I from My Father.’—John x. 17, 18.

That life was given, and the question must press,—Had no violence been done to it, how long would it have continued?—and, viewed from a rational point of view, what were its possibilities? You will observe that we do not speak of Christ as paying the penalty, but as giving His life a ransom price; thus it is one thing given for one thing. It is a substitution, a vicarious death. The life given was the Son's gift, and the resurrection of the dead the Father's act, and the conclusion which we reached was that because of this all men have been blessed with their present life; that by Christ's sacrifice He purchased the race to Himself, and that He thus becomes ‘the Lord of both dead and living,’ and that from the very first, as

expressed in the words of hope, the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, all have been put on probation to Him. As all results of that probation are not manifested in the present life, He has authority to raise from the dead, and it is upon this ground that the resurrection can and will take place. Here we sum up this part of the subject. The given life of Christ goes back in its efficacy, and includes the spared life. What does it accomplish? Not eternal salvation, *but it secures to all a share in this life and a possibility of the life to come.* The present is the time of probation, a time of test and not of reward, and by its means there is assured to man a resurrection from the dead, this being a necessity in the plan to accomplish the purposes of the present. This is a reasonable ground for the doctrine of universal resurrection, the only valid reason which we know of, and it is the natural and necessary consequence of the universal aspect of the Atonement. Christ gave His life 'a ransom for all'; He tasted death for every man,—every man, therefore, to some extent, benefits by that work. Determine the nature of that benefit to be the present life, and then you establish the Lord Jesus Christ as the Second Man; the Lord from heaven to whom all, by virtue of that purchase, are on probation. To realise that every man enjoys this life by the grace of God as a sphere of opportunity for an eternal life, is to obtain an enlarged view of the grace of God, and of the meaning and value of the work of Christ, while it also gives a power and a reasonableness to the doctrine of resurrection and of coming judgment which no other theory can supply.

Let us now go back for another fact. When man sinned and his life was spared because of the ransom then pledged, he could not be put upon the same probation again. By sin he had acquired a knowledge of evil; but God, having spared him, is at liberty to put him under what probationary terms He pleases.

God must make the terms, and so we have man sent forth from the garden under the conditions specified in Genesis iii., 16—19, and He who gave the conditions has a right to change, curtail, or enlarge these, according to His sovereign will, to bring about the destined end which He had in view, the ransom pledge being always the base of His dealings with men, and its efficacy being always pre-supposed. There is no need to speak here of the position which the patriarchs occupied, or to speak of the Israelites and their laws; suffice it to say that conditions are given to both. We come now however, to the important present question, 'How, and on what grounds, can we have eternal life?' It is obvious that our contentions as to the fact of the Fall, and the actual work of Christ being much opposed to current statements, it is necessary to ask this important question. We yield to none in reverence for the Bible; and it is because we believe that God has therein appealed to man, as a reasonable being, that we venture to speak in this manner upon these themes. Our procedure is not the popular method, there being little effort made to induce an intelligent apprehension of these important subjects.

How do we obtain eternal life? We have cast aside, as utterly unworthy of reason, not to say of revelation, the idea that we get it because Christ suffered the penalty for us.

(A) Our first affirmation is that the Bible represents the gift of eternal life as all of grace. This is a feature of importance, and it seems to me that under the light of the doctrine already examined it becomes a still more prominent fact. Grace found the way of redemption; grace provided man with life and opportunity; grace provided him with hope of eternal life, and gives him the conditions of its attainment. This is always to be remembered with heartfelt gratitude. It is not to be reckoned of debt.

(B) The great fact is declared that recognition of the Son as the gift of the Father and becoming identified with Him, ensures eternal life :

‘For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life.’—John iii. 16.

‘If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.’—Rom. x. 9.

So far then we say we understand, but still the question presses—How? What are the grounds by which it can be done? Let us put it more fully. By the grace of God and by the work of Christ we have obtained the right to live. This life is a probationary one; on probation towards God who spared us, and towards Christ who bought us. We realise that we are sinners, and that only perfect righteousness can obtain eternal life, and that, therefore, we are liable to death for our sins. With the burden of our sins pressing us, how can that burden be removed? how can the guilt be so taken away that we may obtain the gift of eternal life which is only given to righteousness? Does Christ take that away? If so, how? Is it true that He suffered the penalty instead of sinners? That would give the clear right to the possession of eternal life because the penalty has been paid; but then, on the other hand, there would be no room for *pardon*. Let us to the Word :

‘If, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life; and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have now received the reconciliation.’—Rom. v. 10, 11.

What is it that comes to the front in these verses?

(a) That man is at enmity with God. Nothing can be clearer than that it is a one-sided variance. The Lord has no enmity. He is pitiful. It is man who makes himself God’s enemy by rebelling against

Him and departing from Him. God is unchangeably loving, but man's sins have hid God's face from him, and his iniquities have raised the barriers of separation. Theology has based its reasoning upon the idea that God has veiled His face in offended justice and wrath, but the view here presented is that it is man who is at enmity with God.

(b) The next thing I notice is that it is not God who needs reconciling to man but man to God. Man is the wrong-doer, he is guilty of sin and crime against his moral Governor. The wrong-doer is unwilling to begin reconciliation, and so the first step is taken by the person offended against! Hence it is we, not God, who received the reconciliation. Note carefully the following statement :

'But all things are of God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation' . . . 'Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.'—2 Cor. v. 18-21.

This is the startling fact, that God did not need that Christ should reconcile the world to Him, but that He Himself laid the base on which the reconciliation of man to God can be effected! Hence he proclaims pardon to all.

'The word which He sent unto the children of Israel, preaching good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all).'—Acts x. 36.

His ambassadors were to go forth to let men know that He had no vengeful feeling against them, and to offer a free and full pardon for all their trespasses.

(c) Now we come to the grandest of all teachings: it lies in the one word 'Forgiveness.'

'In Whom (the Beloved) we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of His grace.'—Eph. i. 7.

'Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.'—Eph. iv. 32.

It is this term which covers the whole ground, and explains how God can give to any man eternal life. As soon as this word is understood, then away to the four winds will fly all these false ideas of the work of Christ which have obtained for so long. The idea that Christ paid the debt which we owed is a very common one, but it is not and cannot be true so long as the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins is taught, for if Christ paid my debt, then it ceases to be a debt. I am no longer a debtor, and there could be no forgiveness, but the great topic of God's word, the true apostolic doctrine, declares that He *forgives sinners*.

'Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this Man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins.'—Acts xiii. 38.

'And you, being dead through your trespasses . . . did He quicken together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses.'—Col. ii. 13.

'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins.'—1 John i. 9.

'I write unto you, my little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake.'—1 John ii. 12.

How harmonious are these utterances with the Old Testament Scriptures manifesting the same God, rich in mercy! Read such heart-stirring words as these:

'And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, the LORD, the LORD, a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.'—Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

'Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again and have compassion upon us; He will tread our iniquities under foot: and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.'—Mic. vii. 18, 19.

Yea, 'this God is our God for ever and ever.' Don't speak of sin as a debt; it is not that, God is not a creditor. Sin is a crime, and God is the moral

Governor. It is not because Christ has paid down so much suffering as an equivalent for my sins that I may venture to throw myself upon Him, but because He has given Himself as a sacrifice. The debt of my sin was never paid, and never will be. Instead of being exacted it has been forgiven freely and fully. Let us exercise reason. If He suffered in the sense usually taught, there is neither pardon nor penalty; there can be no room for either. On the supposition that He suffered the penalty, what is there left to punish? Can God, will He, punish twice, once the Substitute and then the unrepentant sinner? No! the simple truth is that God holds Himself open to deal with man in any way which He may please to adopt, and He proclaims His Son as the Lord of the human race, asking all to accept Him and to live in obedience to His will, and to those who will accept Him He proclaims forgiveness of sins. This is the grand prerogative of grace which He exercises—'forgiveness.' How the sweet word should chime in our hearts, 'He will not always chide; neither will He keep His anger for ever.' 'I, even I, am He that blotteth out thine iniquities.'

But forgiveness can only be obtained by acceptance of the Divine conditions upon which it is given, and in obedience to the declared will. The terms on which it can be obtained are clearly revealed. Christ has given His life for the life of the world. He thus becomes the Head of the race, the Lord of both dead and living, and He is empowered to offer eternal life to all who will accept it on the specified conditions, and those who accept will become members of an immortal race of which He will be the eternal Head. The terms are easy and the blessings great. What are the terms? Let us for a moment or two see what is said of them.

The New Testament puts before us 'Jesus as Lord.' He is such because of His substitutionary work, in which He 'tasted death for every man'; and the

question for each person to decide, to whom the message comes, is, Will you acknowledge Him as *your* Lord? The conditions of acceptance are stated and must be agreed to. They are given in clear and easily understandable terms. Here, for example, is a noteworthy passage:—

‘The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.’ (Rom. x. 8, 9.)

Mouth-confession and heart-belief are the terms, and these of necessity imply the obedience of faith. This belief accepts Him as the One provided by God to accomplish the work of redemption, and on the Divine testimony lays hold upon the gracious assurance that faith now receives the forgiveness of sins, and is guaranteed the gift of Eternal Life. This puts the believer into a new relationship. As a pardoned sinner, through faith in Jesus as Lord, he is transferred to the race of the Second Man, is “accepted in the Beloved,” and becomes a sharer in “sonship” privileges. The new relationship calls for a life of obedience which shall testify to the reality of the faith-confession, and the new standing. In apostolic days the first step of obedience to the claims of Christ was manifested by submission to immersion in water. This act was to the early disciples a preparation for the Kingdom? a test and proof of repentance; a means of washing away sin; by it righteousness was visibly begun, and faith in God’s promises was declared. It was submitted to in response to the gospel which presented as its foremost message the near approach of the Kingdom of God—a message which was sent to ‘the Jew first.’ When, later, the Epistle to the Romans presents that reasoned doctrine of the universal relationship of Christ to man in this great Atonement teaching, and

attention is thenceforward centred on Him not primarily as the Messiah, King of Israel, but as Lord of all, then the relation of baptism is changed to comprehend this great doctrinal enlargement. In baptism the believer manifests openly the acceptance of Christ's Lordship; openly shows that he is transferred from the Adamic race to the race of which Christ is the Head, that he "died with Him," was "buried with Him," was "raised with Him." Thus baptism sets forth the nature of the faith now cherished in the universal aspect of the work of Christ, and is a loving token of the nature of the new relationship set up between the Lord and the believer. Thus viewed, this doctrine of baptism is seen to be in beautiful harmony with the theme presented in these addresses, and affords another proof of the soundness of the view taken. May we not now ask, What response will you make to the call for your acceptance of this message of grace, and will you in the water of baptism openly testify to the nature of your faith, and manifest your submission to Him Who is Lord of all?



THE ATONEMENT AND THE NEW BIRTH.

IN our last address we spoke of the manner in which believers become possessed of Eternal Life, and tried to so present this topic that thereby the loving, all-wise character of God might be apparent. We desire not simply to gratify, or to afford the mental pleasure that comes from a clearer comprehension of a subject which has been deemed mysterious, but to make it as intelligible as the Bible teaches it, so that you may be induced to accept it and to obey it, that God may be owned as your Father, and Christ as your Saviour. It is manifest that we could not well leave the subject at the point reached in our last address, for although attention had been directed to the steps in God's merciful provision, and to repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to be exhibited by those who would avail themselves of this provision, the method of actual entrance into this eternal life was not dealt with. We may trust that the doctrine of the Atonement which shows the grounds for the bestowal of eternal life, will also reveal the actual mode of change from mortality to immortality. It is this part of the subject which we are now to consider, and we may expect that, having been guided clearly hitherto, we shall not be left without assistance now. To present a fully-rounded view of this theme, it is necessary that we recognise and examine not only

the ethical and spiritual grounds, but we must look at their connection with, and necessary completion in, the material and the tangible. We have seen man's repentance and faith, and God's forgiveness, but these are only the preludes, the necessary present conditions, yet to be followed by the designed bestowment of immortality and incorruptibility, and it is the bearing of the Atonement on these which must come next in order in our investigations; we desire, therefore, to know how we, who are mortal beings, can be changed that we may become immortal. This is a materialistic question, as you see, and in that aspect it harmonises with every step so far taken. In our investigations hitherto this is the plan we have followed, a plan supplied by the Bible, fitting in with our knowledge derived from the material world around us, and inasmuch as the investigations have supplied and confirmed the material view, we have at least a presumption for belief that we need not forsake that method of inquiry just yet.

On a former occasion we spoke of the New Birth, endeavouring to show the nature of the Bible teaching on that important theme, as connected with its doctrine on man's nature, and with a desire to separate it from the fallacious beliefs which are held upon it. Now, however, whilst we may say many things regarding it which are familiar, our desire is to present them in the light afforded by the Atonement, that you may see the position which it occupies in the Bible economy, the place which it fills in the chain of Christian doctrines. No consideration of the Atonement can be complete without a consideration of the New Birth, for the work of the Atonement leads up to it, and no full and satisfactory consideration of the doctrine of the New Birth can be reached without the governing ideas supplied by the Bible doctrine of the Atonement. These assertions we propose to verify by a presentation of facts, and once more refer to some important

conclusions, that they may serve as necessary starting-points. If the argument hitherto presented be valid, it is shown that in the death-penalty threatened to Adam there was involved the suppression of a race. That penalty was not inflicted, for the sinning pair were spared, which meant sparing the race that should issue from them. The first man, by his transgression, became unworthy to retain the headship, and the hopes of mankind were to be centred upon the coming seed. The evidence obtainable shows that Christ is the 'woman's seed,' that He is the Second Man, and, therefore, we look to Him as the Head. He is tried that His worthiness for the position may be manifested, and then, having shown His own entire worthiness, it might have been supposed that He would beget offspring, and be the Head of a race which, being like Himself, should be permitted to occupy this earth and replace the Adamic race, which not only sinned in its head, but continually sins. Instead, the gospels insist upon the great fact that He voluntarily gave up His fresh young life, His life was prematurely taken, and thereby the possibilities of a holy race springing from Him were destroyed. Looking at this fact by itself we could say, 'Here is substitution, vicarious death; here is the gift of life for life, the life of Christ for the life of the world, and the purchase price seems to more than meet the need.' But was the purchase a worthy one? To have thus bought the race, to give it by this purchase its present existence and standing, is something for which we who share in it should be grateful; but in view of what might have been, had the Christ-life been multiplied, was the purchase a worthy one? Had its effects stopped there, the answer would be a negative one, but we are called to view with wondering adoration the marvellous wisdom and grace of our God, who has designed that by this means the Christ-life should be multiplied, that a Christ-race should come into being.

By the exercise of His wisdom, and by the out-working of the glorious plan, the old Adamic race is spared, and for this very purpose, that out of it the Christ-life should be developed in multitude. We have shown that this was within the scope of the prophetic view (Isa. liii.), as it is also in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ii. 9-18. This is the fact which calls forth our praise, yet we have still the question to put, how is this done? How can we who are in nature of the Adamic race become members of the Christ-race and like Him? Are the stages revealed by means of which this is accomplished? They are. We saw in the last address how God could righteously give the sinner eternal life by the exercise of His prerogative of forgiveness. This is the necessary preliminary step, and we shall try to answer the question from its material side by saying that we find all we need to complete the subject in the doctrine of the New Birth.

This statement naturally cuts at the root of that view of the New Birth which is limited to the idea of conversion, for we are compelled to give to this term a material character. The fact that a righteous race is by God's intent to be developed out of the dying Adamic race—by the grace of God and by the operation of His wonderful plan—gives to it a conception of reality and materiality which prepares us for the very real and expressive Bible language which is used concerning it. In that language we find the answer to our question, 'How can we cross over from the Adamic life to the Christ-life, from the mortal to the immortal, in such a way that Christ will be the Father of the everlasting age?' That answer is, 'By the New Birth we are born into the Christ-life,' an answer which must be extended, argued, and proven.

We begin, then, by saying it is a noteworthy thing, apart from any theory that may be built upon it, that in connection with the work of Christ for fallen

man, the language which applies to man's redemption should be expressive of a change signified by terms connected with natural birth. On turning to the New Testament, we are struck with the fact that it employs the words 'begotten' and 'born' of believers in a manner which is certainly peculiar, and it is chiefly, although not exclusively, the beloved apostle who uses the terms; Peter and James give us the same word, and Paul gives us others which correspond. Now, these terms bear deep signification, and naturally we ask, what do they mean? They are usually supposed to refer to conversion, and the expressions 'born again,' 'new birth,' are commonly used as descriptive of the change which is wrought in us by the Spirit as soon as we believe, that is, that belief and the New Birth are closely-related if not synonymous terms. That is a very feeble grasp of the great idea which is given in the Bible. We may emphatically state that we believe in conversion, and in the good old-fashioned sort of conversion too. We believe in the complete turning round — the forsaking of the life led in the service of Satan, or of self, to the recognition of Christ as the Master, the Director, as well as the Redeemer. We believe that the meagre current view of the New Birth has arisen from that bad habit of spiritualising Scripture which has so much to answer for. May God deliver us from all narrowness on this matter, and let us learn to stretch out our faith to the full extent which in the course of our investigations we may find the revelation to cover!

There is no need to enter upon a very elaborate exposition of the doctrine of the New Birth. What we now do is to show its rightful place in God's great purpose of redemption, so that its meaning and import may be understood. If we have rightly learned the value of the things already presented, it will be seen that the doctrine of the New Birth follows naturally and inevitably as a consequence

necessary to complete the teachings. If we have entered upon the life which we inherit from Adam by birth, and only by birth, and as mortality operates in us to bring us to death, then whatever may be the process by which it is effected we can only enter upon a future life *by a birth*. You will notice that this phase is presented in the Epistles as actually taking place :—

‘Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the Word of God, which liveth and abideth.’—1 Pet. i. 23.

In the use of the words, ‘begotten again,’ the Greek *ἀναγεννάω* is peculiar to Peter. He uses it in the third verse also of the same chapter. There is an allusion first to the fact of our earthly life and the method whereby we become possessed of it, its nature also being described in the expressive words ‘corruptible seed.’ The stream rises no higher than the fountain. It is possible, however, for a man to be ‘begotten again,’ the second begetting as real in fact as the first, yet it may differ from it in the mode and in the effect. The seed in this case is incorruptible, and it is the Word of God. With this agrees the following passage :—

‘Of His own will He brought us forth (He begat us) by the word of truth.’—Jas. i. 18.

Both are buttressed by the statement given in John i. 12, 13 :—

‘As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, (*begotten, see margin,*) not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.’

Here then we learn that those who accept Christ as their Lord by the testimony of the Word are ‘begotten of God.’ Paul testifies to this :—

‘In Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel.’—1 Cor. iv. 15.

In the 1st Epistle of John this truth is put in very

forceful terms. We learn what is the present position of the believer—he is begotten of God :—

‘Every one that loveth is begotten of God.’—1 John iv. 7.

‘Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God.’—v. 1.

‘We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not.’—18.

Now return to Peter, to that striking verse :—

‘Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy *begat us again unto a living hope* by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance *incorruptible*.’—1 Peter i. 3, 4.

You see the begotten state is not a perfect state : it is not so in nature, it is not so in grace. When we see a natural law used as an analogy of spiritual things, we have a right to look at its workings and results. In nature the begotten state precedes, and is consummated by, the birth ; so also in grace. Here and now, if believers, we are begotten again, and we are to look on to the birth as to a living hope or a hope of living. So we read in 2 Peter i. 4 :—

‘He hath granted unto us His precious and exceeding great promises ; that through these ye may become *partakers of the divine nature*, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust.’

What is the change that has taken place in us now? We are still mortal, still fallible, still corruptible. In what are we born again? Our minds are still liable to be prejudiced, as our bodies are still liable to the ills which surround us. Yet a real change has been effected under the influence of the Word of God. We have cast off allegiance to Satan and have avowed ourselves as bond-servants to Him who has purchased us with His precious blood. On the testimony of God’s Word we have accepted the forgiveness of sin, and are waiting for the realization of our hope, a ‘living hope.’ This is the preliminary stage, preliminary to what? To the New Birth. So the

Bible teaches the believer to look for the end, even Eternal Life. God holds Himself at liberty to give Eternal Life to whomsoever He will, and He has laid down certain conditions by means of which it may be obtained, and as a pledge that His promise will be given, He shows us His Son already in possession of it, and assures us that this 'life is in His Son,' and as a personal guarantee He bestows the witness of His Spirit.

But we further ask you to notice that in the Gospels eternal life and the kingdom of God are presented together, they are to be entered together, the kingdom being the sphere of the enjoyment of the life. Look at the familiar story given in John iii ! Christ's message has been 'the kingdom of God nigh.' His visitor is a Jew thinking to enter that kingdom by virtue of his Abrahamic descent; he comes with all his Jewish beliefs and prejudices. But the new Preacher is proclaiming certain conditions as necessary to be fulfilled by even the sons of Abraham. Is it not that we have here the important fact that the man thinks more of the kingdom than of the eternal life which must be possessed if any would enjoy the kingdom? Listen to his opening words !

'Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God ; for no man can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him.'—John iii. 2.

The reply given by Christ makes the great man small ; this is novel doctrine to him :

'Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'—John iii. 3.

Nicodemus accepts the image in sober earnest :

'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?'—John iii. 4.

But his astonishment is even greater as he listens to the following :

'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.'—John iii. 8.

How can these things be? that is the question which we with Nicodemus would ask. Christ openly spake of the New Birth, and affirmed that no one can enter the kingdom save as he experiences it, and here He affirms of those who share in it certain characteristics *which are not possessed by any man in the present*, so far as we know.

Let us go back to our position on the work of Christ. Christ came into the world and lived a life of purity. No one convicted Him of sin. Coupling the origin of His life with the fact of His personal obedience to God, we learn that that life was His own. But that life which was His was given up completely. Because of this complete sacrifice God raised Him from the dead and gave Him an 'indissoluble life.' In the gift of that first life there was the suppression of a race, but prophecy had shown that the Christ should not thereby be without a seed, and the seed should share in the new life of the new Head of the race; the child must have the same kind of life as the parent.

Christ attained to that endless life which was God-given by a New Birth. The birth from above being necessary ere there can be entrance into God's kingdom, then He too must be changed. Was He?

'He is the head of the body, the church ; who is the beginning, *the firstborn* from the dead.'—Col. i. 18.

'Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, *the firstborn* of the dead.'—Rev. i. 5.

'Whom He foreknew, He also foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be *the firstborn* among many brethren.'—Rom. viii. 29.

This then was His New Birth. If His resurrection was a second birth, why not ours? We ask, Did He fulfil the conditions specified as to be manifested by

every one born of the Spirit? We repeat that text and ask that its language be specially noted :

‘The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.’—John iii. 8.

Believers now cannot go and come as the wind, but every one having been born of the Spirit can. Mark the point of comparison indicated by ‘so’! Christ in resurrection was Spirit-born. Did He then fulfil these conditions? We have no source of reply save that which the history affords. Read the narratives in Luke xxiv. 13—22, 33, 34, John xx. 19—27, Acts i. 9, and note especially the following :

‘He *vanished* out of their sight.’—Luke xxiv. 31.

‘As they spake these things, He himself *stood in the midst.*’ 36.

‘When therefore it was evening, and *when the doors were shut* where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and *stood in the midst.*’—John xx. 19.

‘And after eight days again His disciples were within, . . . Jesus cometh, *the doors being shut, and stood in the midst.*’—26.

These passages being the witness, Christ did show the characteristics of the text. He could come and go as the wind by virtue of His resurrection, or birth of the Spirit.

The Saviour implies that Nicodemus should have known all this. If he knew the Old Testament Scriptures he must have known the fact of resurrection, and somewhat of its wondrous attendant powers.

Here then is our argument, that the resurrection of the righteous is the New Birth, and that the powers here referred to are such as shall be evidenced in, and accompaniments to, that resurrection. So the plan is complete, complete as calculated to effect its purpose, and complete as not leaving a question unsolved. We put it briefly. The threatened penalty meant death and race-suppression, the mercy of God spared the sinning pair to beget offspring,

and thereby produce a race. But the ransom, pledged in the slaughter of the animals to clothe the sin-born shame of the guilty pair, must be paid. Jesus Christ is the Second Man, to whom the promise pointed, 'the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head,' and He filled the requirement, by giving His life a ransom for the life of the world. The ransom involved the gift of a life and a race-suppression, both of which are seen in Christ's sacrifice; but God employs this sacrifice to produce the Christ-life in multitude, thus:

1. Christ purchases the whole race to Himself by the gift of His life.
2. God pardons individual transgression, forgives sin upon agreement with His conditions, and promises eternal life.
3. He provides for entry upon this eternal life, (*a*) by conversion by means of His Word, (*b*) by resurrection from the dead; the first of these being begettal, and the second the New Birth. They stand in relation to each other thus:

'If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you.'—Rom. viii. 11.

'He that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.'—Gal. vi. 8.

Repentance is the Alpha of the great scheme of salvation so far as the individual is concerned, the Word is the 'incorruptible seed' producing begettal, and the resurrection is the 'New Birth.'

We have followed the plan of the Atonement till we have seen its fruits in the redemption of the race to its present life, and of the believer to the possession and enjoyment of eternal life, and every step so far is credible and easy to understand. There is yet one phase of this great subject of human redemption which has not been dealt with, and upon which we touch, as it is a matter of more than passing

interest. It lies in the question: If *all* men are indebted to Christ for the present life, how does the salvation provided in Christ affect them now in regard to a possible future? Besides giving eternal life to those who believe in Him, according to the terms provided in the gospel, is there any point where the atoning work touches those who have never heard this gospel of eternal life? We think there is, and to make the subject as complete as we believe the Bible to put it, we shall, later, treat of the universal aspect of human redemption. Meanwhile we ought now to have learned sufficient to compel us to bow not only in admiration of the matchless wisdom of God, but also in adoration that He has conceived the wondrous plan and has carried it on till now, holding it out to us and asking that we should fall in with it, that we too may be sharers in the life which He will give to all who are linked to Christ by faith, that all members of His family may be gathered together in one in the 'Father's house,' through the merits of Christ, the great Head, the Second Man, the Lord from heaven.



THE ATONEMENT AND THE PEOPLES OUTSIDE THE OPERATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

IN our investigations into the Bible doctrine of the Atonement, we have steadily progressed step by step, first striving to make sure of the ground, then of the foundations, and lastly of the structure. This aspect of our talks has been sufficiently marked so that the clear outlines of the examination have been impressed upon our minds. The doctrine of the Atonement is a *reasonable* one; to obtain our assent and consent it appeals to our reason and asks us, in measure as we comprehend it, to acknowledge the wisdom of God Who planned it and Who asks our agreement with it. God would have all our affections aroused by means of the contemplation of the great love which He has shown, and He does this by the presentation of a plan which proves His love, and by its fitness establishes its efficacy to redeem. That is a very poor view which presents the Atonement as if it were an arbitrary act of God, arranged by His own good pleasure and presented to us without any reason being offered to explain why it should be designed, and how it operates. God does not ask us to accept it on the basis of authority merely. It is true that He is the great God and that He must act righteously because of His very nature, but it is the privilege of

His creature, man, who has been endowed by Him with the faculty of intelligence, to judge of His actions and from an intelligent standpoint to acquiesce in the decision that they are righteous. On that basis we have builded so far, and we are now ready to declare that this grand plan of redemption in Christ is a wise plan and that it offers a reasonable way of escape for man. What we have mainly tried to show is—

(1). That the life we now enjoy, this mortal life, is really ours by virtue of the grace of God, and the purchase made by Christ; and this must alter our whole conception of the nature and effect of the Atonement. These become more apparent to us; we are able to judge of them much more clearly, and thus our faith is deepened, and our understanding of the character of the God of love is extended. Speaking for ourselves, we gladly testify that the unfolding of the 'life' facts has served to make much clearer the redemptive plan revealed in the Bible, and we are deeply impressed by the wisdom which designed, and the love which carried out, this wonderful purpose.

(2). The next thing which we undertook was to show how believers obtained eternal life. Careful inquiry proved that the death of Christ laid the basis on which God was free to deal with His creatures as He chose, that He now offers the gift of eternal life to whomsoever will accept it on His terms, these being faith and obedience, the acceptance of the Lordship of Christ, and He on His side promises to forgive. Thereby is removed the *moral* barrier to the gift of eternal life; the *physical* barrier being removed by the provision made by means of which we are now begotten, and are by resurrection to be born, into His family, being made partakers of the Divine nature. These present clear lines and remove difficulties which press on any other view. There, in the opinion of many, we might leave the subject; if so

much is made clear, what we have to do is to believe it, and to proclaim it, and there it ends.

But there is another phase of this great subject which no Bible student can afford to neglect if he desires to have a complete view of Christ's atoning work, and would be at rest upon the teaching as to the character of God. It is a question which is passed over by almost all writers on the Atonement, and, indeed, teachers apparently prefer to leave it alone, with the remark, 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' That question briefly put is, 'How does the work of Christ affect the peoples to whom the message as we have it has never come?' Let us show you the full nature of this question. It has been pointed out that sparing our first parents meant sparing them to beget a race, and that the work of Christ has given to all the life that now is, and that by the fact of the purchase He is Lord of all, and all are on probation to Him. But we have to notice that the present testimony, obedience to which secures eternal life, is given to the *few* and not to the many. A plain fact or two will put this vividly before you. When the Israelites were chosen and were placed in the land of Canaan, there were given to them a covenant and a code of laws, adherence to which meant present temporal, and future eternal, welfare, but the surrounding nations knew nothing of this; such offers did not come to them in this way. Then again when Christianity came it began in Palestine, and it was centuries before it reached out over the continent of Europe offering salvation to all. Here and there were little communities from the first century who knew of it, but take our English forefathers, and they knew nothing of it until very nearly 1000 years had elapsed. It is true that whilst tradition asserts that Joseph of Arimathea carried the gospel to Britain, and that Paul visited that land in his last mission tour, and history definitely shows that at one time Christianity had spread widely before the days

of Augustine, yet the following centuries record such a declension that by the days of Alfred even the teachers knew but little of the meaning of the gospel. How could it be otherwise when the Bible as a whole was unknown? Then look at the present, the fact that English speaking people know of it should not blind our eyes to the truth that there are many to whom this message has never come, and we must ask, 'What of these?' Here then is the question, 'If all men now live because of the mercy of God, and if all are under the headship of Christ by virtue of His purchase, and the message of salvation has come, and still comes, only to the few, of what account is that provision to the many? how can they be condemned or saved by that which they have never known?' Here are the difficulties, and you will agree with me that we raise a worthy question. We have a strong feeling against the kind of Christian thought and teaching which contemptuously says, 'O, these people have had their life and enjoyed it, and have gone down like dogs, and there is the end of them.' This summary mode of disposing of the question is a very unsatisfactory one, and it ignores that basic fact of the universal aspect of the purpose which we have shown to be existent. Although this particular phase is passed over by writers on the Atonement, because probably there has been nothing in their theory which would meet it, yet the difficulty has been seen and certain ideas have been propounded as an explanation. We dismiss as unworthy of a moment's thought the idea that all the heathen go down to hell to suffer forever. That may have been held once, and may have served a purpose in the din of Exeter Hall as a stimulus to missionary zeal, but it is not now within the limits of practical discussion.

There are, as you know, some passages of Scripture which present a universal aspect of the Atonement, and from man's misunderstanding of that to which they relate they have been supposed to teach the

eternal salvation of all. At the same time it is conceded that there are texts which present the idea of a limited salvation, and so men have taken to balancing the texts against each other. According as one side seemed to preponderate, the decision has excluded the other side. So some men declare that the passages which teach universality in redemption must govern those which seem to suggest a limited salvation, while others again contend for the full meaning of the limited passages and rob the universal of their strength. Now, as true Scripture students, we shall weigh these carefully and shall endeavour to understand them, and perhaps we shall find no contradiction at all. Let each passage have its due force and reference, and if it be the book of God in which the statements are found, we may rest assured that the want of harmony will be in our ignorance and not in His revelation.

Just a word on present universalism, which, while a cherished and with some a hidden belief, yet shows entire disagreement as to the manner in which it will be effected. A close analysis will prove that it is a hope, a sentiment, rather than a solid ground for certainty. To use the words of Tennyson, they

‘ faintly trust the larger hope.’

It is granted by the majority that salvation is not fully possessed in this life, yet it is hoped that the future will yield the opportunities and effect the salvation which the present has failed to accomplish. But how? One section replies, it is after death and during the state which follows death that the process of evangelization goes on, in Hades; as men depart from the stage of action here, they pass under some powerful influences which change them from the rebellious to the submissive, and so become converted. We contend that this view assumes too much. It assumes that men can live in spirit-state when they are dead, and it then assumes that there

is evangelization in the spirit-state ; two tremendous assumptions, and *the Bible knows nothing of either*. Another section holds the view that the resurrection will bring all back to the state which Adam lost, that men are raised to an innocent life and that they then enter upon probation for eternal life, which is to be obtained on conditions in that age. That is a very faulty view, for the Bible says nothing whatever of a return to innocent life ; but it does say something about judgment and punishment at and following resurrection.

Another view which is somewhat extensively held both in England and America, is that the resurrection will restore men to be judged and punished, but that after this—after the infliction of the second death, there will follow a resurrection and a probation ! There is not a word of Scripture for this, and the theory does not give the grounds why men so widely separated from the doctrines of Christianity as the Hindoo, the Buddhist, the Mohammedan, the North American Indian, and the Hottentot should be judged and punished at all.

On what do these conflicting views rest ? We answer, first upon false views as to man's present standing, and upon certain passages of Scripture which employ universal terms. Let us examine a few Bible statements :—

(A) God is the Saviour of all men.

'Exercise thyself unto godliness ; for bodily exercise is profitable for a little ; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation. For to this end we labour and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is *the Saviour of all men*, specially of them that believe.'—1 Tim. iv. 8-10.

We sometimes wish that those who use these texts would look at the context a little. There they might learn that the conditions of obtaining any future life is godliness now. Here is a faithful

saying worthy of acceptation, but it does not declare that eternal life can be obtained apart from godliness now.

(B) But if He is the Saviour of all, how far does that salvation extend? This is the answer—

‘But we behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He should *taste death for every man.*’—Heb. ii. 9.

From this text is drawn the argument that therefore every man will be saved eternally. But it does not say so. That depends upon the nature of the death Christ suffered, and its issues. It is possible for all to be saved to the full extent demanded by the passage and yet that some, perhaps many, may be lost finally. We have here seen two things, and have admitted them, namely, ‘that Christ is the Saviour of all men,’ and that ‘He tasted death for every man’—here, therefore, is a universal aspect of the Atonement.

(c) Now we ask—in what position does that place Christ in regard to man? By it something is gained for Him, what is it?

‘For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might *be Lord of both the dead and the living.*’—Rom. xiv. 9.

(D) But how is that Lordship of Christ, secured by His purchase, now operating towards men?

(1). It opens to man a possibility of complete salvation.

‘He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again.’—2 Cor. v. 15.

(2). Christ becomes the propitiation, that is, the Atoning sacrifice.

‘He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.’—1 John ii. 2.

These Scriptures show that His work so far done puts all upon a life-probation. That point is an important one, in view of the claims of universalism. We have then a life given 'for all,' and upon that basal gift is predicated a universal probation, to provide for and to assure us of a universal resurrection. What is the needs-be of a universal resurrection? Does it lie in the assumed fact that God will give to all the life of innocence which Adam lost? No, resurrection comes in because of the necessity for judgment which is the touchstone for eternal life. It lies in the plan that all men should be judged, and this with reference to the kingdom of God, a kingdom which is future. Only the worthy ones will enter, and that worthiness is to be determined in the present time. Here then lie the grounds for resurrection. We hold that any view of so-called universalism which teaches that all men will be saved stretches these texts unduly, lessens the meaning of sin, and destroys the functions of the Judge. That brings us then to the point which we have before reached, namely, a universal probation. Still a universal probation presupposes the possibility of salvation for some, because it provides a ground of judgment. Now seeing that the message which we have has been limited in its operation, how can men outside its reach attain to salvation? There must be clear governing principles which will make the probation operative.

We ask your careful attention here :

(A) The multiplicity of seed guaranteed after the Fall provides for the salvation of an adequate number as it admits of a possible loss, but we must conceive of that multiplicity as *distributed*, and not confined to people who should hear of the elective message of salvation.

(B) The promise made to Abraham contemplates the blessing of *all* families of the earth, yet that blessing is not an immediate one, but is to be attained by the development of a plan ; a plan which

is sketched in the Bible and which develops historically ; a plan which involves selection at every stage and which steadily works towards the end which is in view. And it is in the unfolding of that plan that the present Gospel message works for selection ; God is now choosing a people who shall be the means of blessing others in the ages to come. In the meanwhile the generations the world over die without the knowledge of this. The nature of the Gospel offer is such that it provides eternal life as a gift to faith, not merely to gratify the person to whom it is given, but that the recipient may be an associate with Christ in the royal rule of that time when the Abrahamic promise shall be fulfilled.

(c) Now let us go back to these 'all people.' What does the work of Christ effect for them? It gives them a life which is a probationary one, and thereby guarantees a resurrection from the dead because they are all under the headship of Christ. But the resurrection which will bring them back can be a prelude to neither punishment nor reward unless there is some clear principle of probation before them. A common error has been that if the gospel has not been sent to them, there has been, or can be, no possible hope of salvation. But that is to overlook the special character of the gospel message, and to suppose that God is limited to one method of working at any given time. It is surely a reasonable proposition to say that His present purposes with regard to the church do not exhaust all possible methods of dealing with the individual. A plan which demands the election of a few, does not exclude the possibility of some other mode of salvation for the many, which, whilst it may not call to high honour and dignity, may yet give the blessing of eternal life.

We point out a few instances which will strengthen that view. God was dealing with the peoples in Noah's day on a very well-defined basis. There was no distinction made, and no especial election

apparently indicated ; but the basis of His dealings with them was governmental. Presently there was a forward step taken in the call of Abraham, who is placed under conditions which were fulfilled by him and by his seed only. That did not destroy God's method of dealing with other peoples who were not so chosen, and who were not brought under these conditions. In the land of Canaan is a priest of 'God Most High,' but apparently he and the peoples to whom he ministers are not under these Abrahamic conditions. The Abrahamic choice is one to special honour and privilege for the ultimate blessing of all. Precisely the same thing is manifested and continued in the history of Israel. Pharaoh and his people were not under the Abrahamic conditions. But God deals with them as responsible to Him, implying that the basis is not one of authority merely, but that they are personally responsible to Him. So also in later days in the wilderness Balaam is a prophet recognised and used by God, but yet not under Israelitish conditions. I do not know what those other conditions were, but it is affirmed there is evidence to show that they existed, and it may be that under the mist of ceremonies and ritual found in other races there will be clearly traceable the germ-principles of righteousness by which they will be judged. Take such passages as the following :

'Wherefore, O King, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if there may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity' [margin : 'a healing of thine error'].—Dan. iv. 27.

'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to Him.'—Acts x. 34, 35.

'We bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto the living God . . . who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways. And yet He left not Himself without witness.'—Acts xiv. 15-17.

'The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent.'—Acts xvii. 30.

Here then is the germ-thought that seems to come before us in reading these passages and their context, that in the recognition of a Being who is Creator, to Whom men are under obligations for existence and sustenance, lies the base of human responsibility and of judgment, and of salvation or loss. That idea is borne out in such a passage as Rom. i. 20:

‘For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse.’

At least there is here given a ground for individual judgment, which is sure to come and which is pledged in Rom. ii. 6—16.* But now let us look at the issues of that judgment:

* There is a side question which may profitably be noticed here. There has been and still is controversy amongst believers in ‘Life only in Christ’ as to whether Christians will rise from the grave mortal or immortal. One section strenuously contends that they will rise in their mortal bodies, and will afterwards, if found worthy, be immortalised before the judgment-seat of Christ. Another class holds equally strongly that they will rise from the grave immortal, and that the judgment of works relates not to a judgment for life or death, but to position in the kingdom. To the latter class the statements of Paul in 1 Cor. xv. are conclusive; and to the former the fact of the judgment of works is satisfactory. But there should never have been controversy. If the word of truth had been rightly divided, we should see that both were in a measure true, the two relating to two different parties—that is, that the believers in this dispensation will rise immortal because of the operation of the forgiveness of sins, and thus eternal life is the gift of God, the judgment through which they pass having sole reference to the question of their position and standing in the kingdom, but that those who appear in Rom. ii. and Rev. xx. must stand before the bar in a mortal state, because the issue of that judgment is to life or to death.

‘God, who will render to every man according to his works, . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ.’

'To them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life: but unto them that are factious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath.'—Rom. ii. 7, 8.

It is, you will observe, upon the results of a first probation that these men are judged. If 'patient in well-doing,' eternal life is granted. That surely is not the life like that which Adam lost, again to be tried. No; they 'seek for glory, honour, and incorruption,' and the promise meets all that by granting eternal life. You will mark again that this is the gift because of righteous conduct—a totally distinct bestowal from that which is predicated in the gospel message upon faith. On the other side there is 'wrath, tribulation, and anguish,' but not a word about a restoration to life:—

'And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works.'—Rev. xx. 12.

'Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment.'—John v. 28, 29.

Does not the great white throne judgment of Rev. xx. 12 agree with this last?

So far, therefore, as the Atonement is concerned, there is no evidence that the universal work of Christ goes beyond these things; but that it goes so far is a matter which does seem to come well within the range of the Bible doctrine. We note again that life is given—the present life—which insures resurrection and guarantees judgment. The awards at that judgment are bestowed for present character or for acceptance of certain conditions. To this extent it is universal. But it is limited where man has his part to play. The grace of God provides the

possibility, makes the conditions, and guarantees the fulfilment, but it does not compel men to accept them. Man is invited, not compelled, to become immortal. So, to come back to the passage noted in 1 Tim. iv. 10, 'God is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe.' All men are saved from the Adamic condemnation by the grace of God. To all men in different times, and under varying conditions, the offer of eternal life has come; but to such as believe in the Lord's Christ now there is a special salvation—"salvation with eternal glory"—which grants to them the forgiveness of sins, and thereby they escape the judgment of condemnation to death; 'there is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.' Eternal life is secured by faith and bestowed in resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 50-55). The great guiding principles of Scripture are clear enough all through, and we need not go beyond it or leave certain realms unexplored on the plea that the subject is mysterious. Sufficient is revealed to enable us to understand that God has not left the great world of men without a witness. He has made ample provision for all, according to His own purpose. He has deemed Himself accountable to every human being and has provided accordingly, so that at the great white throne no man will be able to say, 'I did not know.'

This aspect of the Gospel works even in our own midst, and satisfactorily answers the question which must surely press upon us sometimes, 'What of the children who die in years of irresponsibility?' of the ignorant and the many amongst us to whom the Gospel never comes? The reply is that the Atonement of Christ is universal, and to that extent all are on probation, necessarily so. In the case of children, seeing that Christ has purchased the life and is the Head of the human race, if the child has no sin to answer for there is nothing in the way to hinder a grant of life in the age to come; and as to the

ignorant, etc., there is room to believe that they will be dealt with on that great principle already pointed out in Rom. ii. It is our conviction that outside of this great line of teaching it is not possible to obtain a view of the Atonement which will commend itself as satisfactory to the mind of the honest Scripture student, and which will harmonise so many apparent discrepancies and afford such abundant evidence of the wisdom and grace of God. You see that in this we have not gone outside the words of Peter—

‘And in none other is there salvation ; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.’—Acts iv. 12.

The more this great subject is studied the more shall we feel that here indeed is the love of God made manifest—the love which provides for all the opportunity of salvation—the love which is so pure and so tender that whilst it offers eternal life to all, it will not force it upon anyone. If now men spurn the offers of Divine grace, we can only point to the emphatic language of Scripture, which threatens a fearful looking-for of judgment which will bring death and destruction. If one should object, ‘But this is not final,’ then we reply that language has no meaning. The Gospel comes to us with the offer of eternal life, and, showing us the way of righteousness, says ‘the end thereof is everlasting life’; but when it speaks of the sinner it says, ‘whose end is destruction,’ ‘the end of these things is death.’ Beyond that we do not go, we dare not go. Only so far as the Scriptures lead dare we who are true to God take a step.

Lovingly and affectionately we appeal to all, pointing to the surpassing love of God, to the wisdom of God, to the work of Christ, and ask you to yield yourselves fully to the control of Him who has already bought you with His blood.

COMPLETED REDEMPTION.

IN closing the present series of addresses we cannot refrain from expressing thanks to God for the opportunity given for these discourses, and we may also venture to express the hope that they have been of benefit to those who have listened. We have endeavoured to show what the Bible teaches upon the all-engrossing theme of the Atonement. We have had before us the successive steps which have marked the carrying-out of the plan, and now in this last address we call attention to the magnificent purpose to which each step taken has been a necessary prelude. At the outset we put before you the subject of human redemption in its individual aspect, and this is the main feature which we have endeavoured to expound and to illustrate. As we have gone on we have placed before you the evidence which we accept as proof of the doctrines. One thing especially we have impressed upon you, because it is in the main neglected, and that is, that in order to understand the doctrine of the Atonement we must begin with the history of man. Unless we commence with the dawn of human history, where the Bible begins, we shall fail to understand the theme, its progress, and its termination. There we began, and mainly because of that we have confidence enough to say that therefore we are more likely to have reached the truth upon this subject. We began with the story

of the first man on test ; we considered the fact of his disobedience, and the penalty which was threatened, and the actual sentence pronounced. Thus we contemplated the actual needs which redemption must satisfy. To see the manner in which the evil comes, and the nature of the evil which is introduced, is a necessary preliminary to the study of the manner in which that evil can be removed.

We tried to estimate the true place which Adam held in the world and his relationship to all who descended from him, or were connected with him. Then having seen something of the position of this first man, we crossed over to view the Second Man, His position and His work, and we saw how designedly the first man and the Second Man are linked together in the Scriptures of truth, observing that they are placed at the two ends of the chain, and that the obedience and death of the Second Man serve as the basis of redemption for the first man and his multitudinous seed. We endeavoured to obtain a clear idea as to the exact nature of the work accomplished by the death of Christ, which He tasted for every man, and found it to be a death with a universal relation—'all,' 'every,'—to be understood in the fullest sense, that it signifies that the life we now have is ours because of that redemptive work planned by God and wrought out by Christ.

Then we have seen how eternal life can be given, and on what grounds. This was done that we might understand something of the character of God and the fulness and freeness of His grace. Thereby we magnified the teaching concerning the 'forgiveness of sins,' that being the moral base on which eternal life is secured.

Our next step was to contemplate the Divine arrangements for the perfecting of that which is pledged in the assurance of forgiveness, namely the grant of immortality. Here came in the doctrine of the New Birth, a teaching ample, clear and explicit.

In our last we considered a much neglected theme, the manner in which God has dealt, and purposes to deal, with the peoples to whom the message concerning Christ has not come as it has come to us. This is a topic fruitful in thought, and we think there can be found in it a grand stimulus to heart-love to the God who has not left the peoples without witness in that He 'does good,' and provides for their redemption upon clear and easily-found conditions. But now we shall go a little further afield. As you will see, our subject is an ever-widening one, and we wish to call attention to the outer circle of all.

We interpose a word of caution. We do not claim to possess all knowledge. On many Bible themes, it is perhaps impossible with our present mental imperfections and the vastness of the revelation, to obtain a full and complete understanding. It is as if we traced some golden thread through a beautiful pattern, but ever and anon lost sight of it. Or, as standing on some elevated position we overlook a landscape, streaked and silvered by some meandering stream glancing in the bright sunlight; here and there we can trace its course, but now and again we lose it as it passes through some grove of trees, or flows behind some eminence or wanders through some green dell; yet we know it is there, for it appears in the distance, and is lost to view because it passes beyond the limits of our vision. So now God gathers to Himself all the threads of His revelation and weaves all into the pattern to gladden Himself and to bless mankind, and the silver stream will flow on to its destination in the ocean of God's love. 'Now we see as in a glass darkly, but then face to face,' and we, enraptured though we now are with the grandeur of His revelation shall then be lost in wonder, love, and praise, as we scan the wonderful course of God's intent and the result of all His ways. Let us be content to be truth-searchers. Truth must be sought, for it comes not at the beck of royalty, nor answers to the mere

desire of man ; it must be bought and paid for, it must be sought with diligence and when found is to be prized as men prize hidden treasure ; to be cherished as the most precious thing which can be gained by mortal man. God's own truth, our priceless diadem.

Our topic is redemption,—what is redemption? what is the signification of the word? To understand its meaning will be to have a good foundation for understanding the doctrine which it expresses. It lexically signifies actual deliverance from some state. Take the following passages :—

'Did I say, . . . Deliver me from the adversary's hand? or, Redeem me from the hand of the oppressors?'—Job vi. 22, 23.

'I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.'—Jer. xv. 21.

'But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads ; because your redemption draweth nigh.'—Luke xxi. 28.

Now take the word with this signification attached and apply the same meaning to it in the following:—

'Ourselves also . . . groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, *the redemption of our body.*'—Rom. viii. 23.

'I will ransom them from the power of the grave ; I will *redeem* them from death.'—Hos. xiii. 14.

'The Lord Jesus Christ who shall *fashion anew the body* of our humiliation that it *may be conformed to the body of His glory.*'—Phil. iii. 21.

In order to realize the full signification of this redemption as it affects man we look again at the first things. We see the man Adam in his original standing. He is put before us as the sole heir of the world. If he were blessed with children, then all the regal honours, the lordship, the dominion he was designed to have if faithful, would be shared with them ; but he fell, and in that fall he inevitably drew down with him all his descendants. When fallen, he had no power to lift himself back to the position whence he had fallen. He was under bondage to sin,

and could not effect his own redemption. That, as we have seen, Christ accomplishes. How? He is found faithful, He is tried and true; He has a right then to eternal life which is promised to perfect obedience. He died for us and became by His death the Lord of both dead and living. So He really becomes the Head of the race. Adam forfeited the headship, Christ redeems it, and by right becomes the worthy Head of the race; thus the Son of Man becomes the sole Heir of the world and holds the power of gift of participation to all who own His right and acquiesce in His conditions.

In how strange a manner this redemption has been effected! So we think at first, but when we follow it under Bible guidance, how eminently wise and merciful! And look at the beginning of it as an apostle sketches it, Phil. ii. 5-8. He was the Word in the beginning with God, the Child born of the woman, the Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief! Is it not wonderful? Redemption has not been accomplished as we might have planned it. We should never have arranged for the Christ to be cradled in the manger, despised, scorned, not knowing where to lay His head, and becoming a laughing-stock to the Gentile, the object of hatred to the Jew, and at last put to a shameful death. No, no, we should have introduced Him to the world in some gay pageant, and would have had the whole universe look on with admiration whilst He struck the first blow for redemption. But how miserably we should have failed! As we now look upon the plan we confess that it could not have been better. We join with Paul in the glorious ascription given in Eph. i. 3-8;—

‘Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ; even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love; having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto Himself, according

to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved; in whom we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound towards us in all wisdom and prudence.'

Having investigated the theme thus far, we have to say that according to the Bible range of view, redemption does not end there. We have seen the work of Christ in offering eternal life to believers now, and have endeavoured to stretch our conception of redemption to the salvation which is possible to all. But that is not the end. The great defect of all systems of theology for centuries has been that they have laid almost exclusive stress upon provisional redemption and have ignored the Bible view which presents it as realized in the day of Christ, so that the Sacrifice exceedingly precious, by which redemption is procured and assured, is deemed the only important point in theology, and the plan of redemption and its great object are merely secondary to that means. Reflection teaches this; if that Sacrifice alone is sufficient to secure our salvation how comes it that it does not save from temporal death, from temporal evil, corruption, etc.? and that it is an absolute necessity that Christ should come again to salvation in behalf of those who honour His sacrifice? We see that something additional is needed, namely, the future personal interference of the Saviour on our behalf, and this shall take place. When that occurs then will redemption be completed, and it is that particular time and work to which we desire to call your attention now, that you may see that it is not to be circumscribed to the present. We notice then as a first fact:—

(A) Although the position which we now occupy as believers in Christ is ours by personal appropriation of the provision, and thereby is secured to us the assurance of eternal life, that is not the end-all and be-all. This is shown by the fact that that assurance

is designed to have a present progressive sanctifying influence upon the believer. When we yield ourselves as servants to Christ we have to acknowledge Him as Master.

'Our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin.'—Rom. vi. 6.

'As children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance. . . . Knowing that you were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, . . . but with precious blood.'—1 Pet. i. 14-19.

'For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present age; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works.'—Titus i. 11-14.

Man's idea of salvation seems to be summed up in the conception of future happiness in heaven; God's idea takes in present purification and sanctification, as present preparation for future happy service. We are here put to school, to be taught by obedience and submission, that we may be prepared for our future duties and privileges. So that redemption when rightly viewed is seen not only to prepare the believer for eternal life, but for eternal glory; as the apostle phrases it, 'salvation with eternal glory.'

(B) There are yet wider prospects opening out to us in this term 'redemption,' relating to man racially. The great masses of mankind, how may they be saved? We have tried to show the principle which should guide us in this quest. That not only in successive dispensations has God had different conditions, but we may well believe that amongst peoples outside the range and operation of these He has had His own way of making them responsible. We may not know what these conditions are until we stand by the side of our Lord Jesus Christ and

witness the actings of that judgment in which He will judge the secrets of men 'in that day,' but the fact is sufficient for present knowledge. It is when we reach the contemplation of that future age, that one of the results of His redemption manifests itself clearly. Observe! when Christ returns to earth it is filled with men. Many of these will openly oppose Him and shall be destroyed. That destruction, judging from the description given of it both in Daniel and the Revelation, will be limited to the actual opponents to His claims. There is the great world of men outside not numbered amongst these, what of them? Here the redemption comes in, and the plan provides for their benefit, if they will receive it. For then will be introduced the millennial age in which the Prince of Peace shall reign and under Whose sway they shall enjoy the best of temporal blessings with the privilege of serving Him for ever. Under that beneficent rule it is not only conceivable, but certainly intimated, that in course of time every human being upon this earth shall acknowledge Christ as Lord and God, as Father, 'As truly as I live, saith the Lord, the earth shall be filled with my glory.' God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven, and a holy, happy race shall yet fill this earth of ours.

(c) But to accomplish this there must be a removal of all things which would militate against such a result, and that is promised. The work of the Lord Jesus is to destroy the works of the devil, and the great plan has provided for everything necessary to reach that end. Until the return of Jesus Christ from heaven, redemption is incomplete; the workings of Satan still go on and he is the god of this world. Look at that phase of Christ's work which is presented to us in the pledges paid down in the miracles He wrought! Think of the many and varied forms of evil with which our world is now afflicted, all of which have come in because of the sin of man! Then

reflect upon the gracious fact that all these evils are to be removed. We delight to look upon the miracles in this aspect; to us they have a value not otherwise apparent. They are the pledges of the nature and perfect character of redemption to be enjoyed by man when the plan of God is completed.

(D) To accomplish this will involve a manifestation of a phase of redemptive work which lies outside man but which is necessary to be performed in order to secure his complete happiness. It will mean the redemption of earth from the evils which now afflict it. It would be but a partial redemption if man were to be redeemed and the earth which is his inheritance were left untouched. Look at Rom. viii. 20-29, with its allusions to the groaning, travailing creation, and the hope of deliverance! What is the present state of this earth? Contemplate its deserts, its earthquakes, storms and hurricanes, malarias and pestilences, diseases and deaths! As we view them we ask, what shall the issue be? The answer which readily springs to the lips of many is that the earth shall be burned up, destroyed in a flaming sea of wrath at the presence of God. Is that so? Is that an effect of redemption? A thousand times no! We listen to the voice;—

‘And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. . . . They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.’—Isa. xi. 6-9.

‘The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, the excellency of our God.’—Isa. xxxv. 1, 2.

‘I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. . . . That they may see,

and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this.'—Isa. xli. 18-20.

'Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.'—Isa. lv. 13.

Such is the Scripture language, and how gracious and full of promise it is! It pictures the scenes when 'the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.' This is God-like redemption.

Thus we see that the work of Christ has far-reaching issues. Beginning with the salvation of the individual man now, it carries forward the work until it places the saved from this dispensation in the midst of that glorious age to come, to fulfil their appointed functions in the accomplishment of all God's purposes. Think what high honour and glory are before us! What are we now? Nothing. Perhaps the object of the scoff and the sneer of those who deride this Book and the salvation which it provides. We are not numbered in the ranks of those whom the world reckons great and mighty. 'Not many mighty, not many noble are called.' Well, what of that? Ours is a higher honour and a more enduring glory. Ours to be with the Prince of Peace when He commences His beneficent reign. Ours then to hold the position of honour and trust if we are faithful to Him now. Not for our own aggrandisement, not to gratify the lust of power, nor to satisfy human ambition, but to serve God for the benefit of humanity. This is the high calling and as that service progresses, so will the work of redemption here inaugurated be carried on and completed to the honour and glory of God Who planned it. Is that sketch, faulty though it be and wholly incompetent to tell even the half, anything of a stimulus and incentive to you? How glad we shall be to know that thereby you have determined to serve the Lord Who has purchased you and Who

now desires to claim as His own that which He has bought and paid for. You by rebellion may make His purchase worthless, but on His side all is done that can be in the way of provision, and the good news bears to you the loving invitation, 'Come unto me.'

But when will this completed redemption take place? You will notice that the first man was lost, then his inheritance. Man is redeemed, then his inheritance shares in that redemption. Phil. iii. 20, 21, shall be followed by the purification and renewal and glorification of the earth. All this shall result from the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Again you ask, When? All this was promised, say you, centuries ago. Where is your ground for faith that it ever will be?

We grant that as yet all this is unrealized, that our fathers thought as we do, many of them. They have died and left to us the heritage of faith, and yet the blessing is future. We climb the hill they thought was the last, but still the glory shines on ahead of us; ah! it is weary, weary work the waiting time. But the dawn of the eternal day is breaking, Christ is nearer now than when we first believed. Look at the signs of this! Nominal Christendom is fast becoming Godless, and Christians are lapsing into apathy regarding the Lord's coming and are careless about the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

When Israel sinned in the wilderness in refusing to enter the promised land, God made a promise and sealed it with an oath:—

'In very deed, as I live . . . all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.'—Num. xiv. 21.

Ages roll away, and the promise and oath then given are unfulfilled. But see! it is night, and upon the plain of Bethlehem are grouped the shepherds, and the beautiful starlight overhead is suddenly lost in the bright gleams of that supernatural radiance.

which beams upon them, and they are swathed in the glory of the Lord. They listen to the angelic song which heralds the birth of the Saviour, and which speaks of the glory to flow from that; then the song dies away and the darkness comes in, but the promise is here and the Child is born, and the work has been so far accomplished. When next that song is sung, the promise shall be fulfilled in its widest extent, and not the angels only but all mankind shall join in the cry, 'glory to God in the highest!' As we scan the history of the Divine purpose from Eden to the New Jerusalem, from Paradise lost to Paradise regained, from the introduction of sin to its banishment, with all the countless evils which have come in its train, from the pall of gloomy death to the bestowment of eternal life, we sing with the angels, 'Glory to God!'

May that day soon come, when man, woman and child, shall join in that swelling anthem, and earth's vales and mountains echo the glad acclaim, 'Glory to God!' and then, and not till then, shall we fully understand and value and experience the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

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