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The Incarnation.

GOD'S Word is full of mysteries—wonderful things past finding out. Some of these are deeper and profounder than others. Among these may be mentioned the Incarnation—the Son of God—co-eternal, coequal, and consubstantial with the Father taking to Himself a true body and a rational soul. The mysterious meeting together in Him of the Divine nature and the Human in perfection is a mystery past finding out to finite minds. The faith of the Church is admirably summed up in the Westminster Shorter Catechism answer to the question—“Who is the Redeemer of God’s elect?”—“The only Redeemer of God’s elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever.” One will have to search theological literature long ere one will come across a statement on the Person of the Redeemer so scripturally and sententiously expressed. Into the deep mystery of the Incarnation it is not our purpose, at present, to enter, nor is it required of the believer to solve this mystery in order that he may be saved. But the Incarnation has many important lessons that can be learned by all, whether endowed with mental gifts of a high order or not. We have reason to be thankful that entrance into the Kingdom is not dependent on a high mental equipment or an exact training in theological science. These may be and are very useful, but the very nature of the spiritual truths of the Kingdom of Heaven put all men on the same level—the Apostle Paul is as dependent on the teaching of the Spirit to understand God’s truth as the half-witted Angus of the Hills—all, from the least to the greatest, must be taught by the Spirit. Let us then briefly consider some lessons taught us by the Incarnation. These may be briefly summarised under three divisions, viz.—That the Incarnation shows us (1) What God is; (2) What man ought to be; and (3) What redeemed man shall yet be.

Jesus Christ Incarnate showed to men (1) **What God is.** This is a truth He taught His disciples as the awful hour approached when He was to leave them and go to the Father. It was the hour and power of darkness, and we know the enemy was not idle, judging by his effect on Peter and his work in Judas. Here was a splendid opportunity to drive home to the agitated mind of the disciples the insinuation that this cause was frowned on by God. John the Baptist had been beheaded, Peter was soon to deny Him three times, and Judas to betray Him, and when all these happened, what clearer evidence, Satan might ask, did the disciples require of God's frowning countenance? Agitated and ill at ease, in perplexity as to the dark present, and dreading the still darker future, He announced to them that He was going away to prepare a place for them that where He was they might be also. They knew not the way, as Thomas said—"Lord, we know not whether thou goest, and how can we know the way?" It was then He announced to them that He Himself was the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that no man came to the Father but by Him. It was when He made this announcement that Philip put the question—"Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" came the telling rebuke. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." On this night, weighted with mysterious happenings and events that shook the faith of the disciples to its very foundations, the Redeemer steadies their agitated minds by taking away their thoughts of what is so soon to happen to the great truth that in seeing Him they have seen God Himself. This opens to us a wide field for meditation. The tender pity and infinite compassion of the Son of God, His pardoning mercy, and His redeeming love, all show us what God is. His holiness, which so impressed His disciples, and so awed Peter as he got a glimpse of it to make him say—"Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man," revealed what God in His holiness is. His mighty works of wonder in the realm of nature when He stilled the winds and calmed the sea, when He raised the dead, and cured the diseased, and also in the realm of spirit, when He cast out demons, these were all manifestations of what God is in His power. On the mountain of Transfiguration the disciples present caught a glimpse of the glory of the Eternal, and were awed as they beheld it.

But the Incarnation also shows (2) **What man ought to be.** When man came from the hand of God he was perfect, with a nature in keeping with all the requirements of God's law. That law requires that we should

"love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbour as ourselves." This is what man would have done had it not been for sin, and this is what man is still under obligation to do. But all power is now gone, and were it not that One came who did all this, and paid the penalty of a broken law, there would be no righteousness for any of the children of men such as God requires. In all things He did the Father's will; it was His meat and drink to do it, and in this perfect obedience rendered even unto death the Redeemer showed what man ought to be.

But He also showed (3) **What redeemed man is yet to be.** The case of a sinner is now utterly hopeless for anything he can do himself when he is confronted with the high and broad claims of God's law. Men who have never been brought face to face with these claims may foolishly entertain a hope of getting to heaven by their own righteousness; but no man who has sat down and solemnly faced these claims will ever imagine that his own efforts will take him to heaven. The Gospel of the grace of God reveals the righteousness of God by faith, the simple, sure, and only hopeful way for sinners lost and ruined. This righteousness is imputed to them, and received by faith in the day when they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and the work of sanctification by the Holy Spirit is to be carried on until they shall be like Him. The very best of them are very far from being like Him, now. But however unlike His people are to Him now, yet the whole process of their sanctification and discipline is working towards the fulfilment of the Divine purpose. However incredible it may appear to themselves at times, yet one day they shall be like Him, for this is a work that will not be left half-finished, for He that began it will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ, and in sure anticipation of this desirable consummation, the Beloved Disciple says—"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him" (John iii. 2). Between their present state and that long-distant goal the distance may seem immeasurable and unattainable. Still, the counsel of the Lord shall stand, and as they lament and mourn their unlikeness to Him here, as they view His perfect and holy character, they are called upon by His word to take a look at the distant goal, and with their eyes fixed on that, and these words ringing in their ears—"We shall be like Him"—they are encouraged to continue the journey, waiting for the dawning of the day when the shadows shall flee away and they shall see Him as He is.

A Sermon.

BY THE REV. DONALD MACFARLANE, DINGWALL.

Preached 23rd September 1917.

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.”—Matt. v. 4.

IN this chapter we have the beginning of Christ's Sermon on the Mount. It begins with this chapter, and ends with the 7th chapter. As He went up to the Mount a great multitude followed Him, for various reasons. Some because He healed many that were suffering from many diseases. Others because they heard of His fame as a worker of miracles, and as a great preacher; but His own disciples followed Him, because they loved Him, and were fed and edified by the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth. It is remarkable that notwithstanding the hatred of the world against Him, wherever He preached in the synagogue or in the open air, the people flocked to hear Him, for He taught with authority, and not as the Scribes and Pharisees. On this occasion His audience was composed of a mixed multitude, His own disciples and those who were still in a state of nature. He preached to both classes, saints and sinners, setting an example before ministers when preaching to mixed congregations. While He began by speaking a word to His own disciples, who, no doubt, sat nearer Him than the rest, He did not neglect to speak to those outside, as we see He did in the 7th chapter, 13th verse—“Enter ye in at the strait gate,” or as we have it in another place, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate,” or agonise to enter in, to use the utmost effort, to struggle as between life and death in order to be saved. But as already mentioned, He gave the first part of His discourse to His own disciples. He calls them several times blessed, and addresses them in the third personal pronoun—“Blessed are they”; but latterly He speaks to them more directly—“Blessed are ye.” He calls them blessed several times, because they were blessed with perfect and manifold blessings. The description He gives of them as poor in spirit, as mourning, as meek, etc., does not mean that some are poor in spirit, others mourn, and so on, but that this is true of each individual of them.

In addressing you from the words of our text, we shall speak—(1) Of the mourners; (2) Of the promise given to

them—"They shall be comforted"; and (3) Of their blessedness.

(1.) **The mourners.** Although the Lord's people have a joy of which the world is ignorant, yet they mourn, for several reasons—(1) They have what may be called personal mourning, because the reason of their mourning is in themselves. They mourn because of indwelling sin, and because of their imperfections and shortcomings in everything they endeavour to do in serving the Lord. They are imperfect in their prayers, and those who have to preach are imperfect in their preaching, and all this causes them mourning. They began to mourn in a legal sense when God by His Spirit convinced them of their sin and misery. They mourn for the misery they brought upon themselves by sin; but not until they believed in Christ did they mourn with the mourning that is blessed. "Then they shall look to Him whom they had pierced, and mourn." They mourn now for being the cause of His death. Though forgiven their sins, they still mourn for them every time they remember them, and pray with the Psalmist—"Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions, according to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord" (Ps. xxv. 7). They shall continue to mourn for causes in themselves, so long as they are in the valley of tears, but not afterwards. The Apostle Paul mourned for his persecution all the days of his life, after his conversion, though all his sins were blotted out as a thick cloud, and covered by God's pardoning mercy. Mourning is more lasting than weeping. Sometimes they weep, but when they do not weep they mourn. In weeping they shed tears, but in mourning they shed what may be called dry tears, which are more painful than wet tears.

(2) They mourn with what may be called sympathetic mourning. They are in sympathy with their brethren who mourn. When one member of the body suffers, the other members feel it, and are in sympathy with it. In like manner, when one member of Christ's mystical body suffers, all the other members are affected by it, and those who are not so are like an artificial leg, that does not feel any pain though all the living members of the body would be pierced through by a knife. This is a test by which you may know whether you are a living member that can have sympathy with the Lord's people in their sufferings. When the Lord's cause is low they mourn, as Nehemiah did when he heard that the remnant that was left of the Captivity were in great affliction and reproach, and the walls of Jerusalem also broken down, and the gates

thereof burned with fire. When he heard these words he sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven—(Neh. i. 3 and 4). He not only mourned, but he made an effort to do all he could to help the cause which he had so much at heart. If you mourn when the Lord's cause is low, you will do all you can to raise it up and cause it to prosper.

They mourn in sympathy with their fellow-creatures, though these might not be the Lord's people. Many are suffering bereavement in these days by the loss of near relatives who have been killed in the present terrible war. We feel deeply for parents whose sons have been killed on the field of battle, and as we feel for them we pray for them that God's dealings with them in His holy providence might be sanctified, and might work for good to their souls.

(3) They mourn when they see sinners transgressing God's laws, like the Psalmist, who said—"I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved because they kept not thy word (or law)," and in the present day there is much cause of mourning on this account, and unless the transgressors of God's law repent and forsake their evil ways they shall mourn for ever in eternity.

(4) They mourn when the Lord's people are removed from this world, and so few of them left, as the Prophet Micah did—"Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage; there is no cluster to eat; my soul desired the first ripe fruit. The good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none upright among men; they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly.—(Micah vii. 1, 3). Oh, how much we would rejoice if we saw the Lord's people so numerous now as we have seen in our younger days, and we cannot help mourning because they are so few in this evil generation.

(5) They mourn when Christ is absent from their souls, and they must continue to mourn till He comes again, according to His promise—"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come unto you" (John xiv. 18). Other causes of mourning might be mentioned, but we proceed to consider—

(II.) **The Promise**—"They shall be comforted." It is comfort that the mourners need, and who will comfort them? (1) God the Father will comfort them—"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." (Is. lxvi. 13). A loving mother will do all she can to comfort her weeping child; much more will the Heavenly Father,

who loves His children, comfort them. Christ will comfort them, as He comforted His disciples when they were sorrowful. "And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (John xvi. 22). (2) The Holy Spirit will comfort them. He is called the Comforter, because it is part of His work to comfort those that mourn. Christ promised to send them this Comforter. He was to convince the world of sin, but He was to be a Comforter to God's people. The means by which they are comforted is the word of the Gospel. The Gospel is full of comfort. Ministers of the Gospel are instruments of comforting those that mourn in Zion. It is part of their work to do so, and they are commanded to do it—"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God" (Is. xl. 1). The Apostles needed comfort themselves, and they comforted God's people with the same comfort wherewith they were comforted themselves. (II. Cor. i. 4). Sometimes they are comforted before they meet with trouble, in order that they might be supported in the time of trial, as Christ comforted His disciples—"These things I have spoken unto you that ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer I have overcome the world" (John xvi. 33). Some have been accustomed to receive comfort beforehand, so that when they get great comfort they look forward for a great trial; but if they do not receive comfort before hand, they shall receive it when in trouble, the time they need it most, or after the trials. When they are long without comfort they are apt to come to dark conclusions concerning themselves, and like the Church of old who said—"The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me" (Is. xlix. 14), but it was not so, for the Lord said—"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee on the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me" (verses 15 and 16). Or, like the Psalmist who said—"Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? Doth His promise fail forever more? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?" (Ps. lxxvii. 7, 9), but he found out he had spoken this in his infirmity, and then he remembered God's gracious dealings with him in the past—"I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old" (verses 10, 11).

They shall be comforted when they see the Lord's cause prospering, sinners awakened and coming to the means of grace, desiring, like the Greeks of old, to see Jesus, and it will be a comfort to them to see their fellow-sinners mourning for their sins.

(III.) **Their blessedness**—"Blessed are they that mourn." By nature they were cursed; cursed in their persons, cursed in their basket and their store, in their going in and out, wherever they were in the world, but now the curse is removed, and they are blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings. They are blessed with the forgiveness of sin; their sins are put away far from them, "as far as the east is from the west." They shall never meet them again to condemn them. They are blessed with a new nature that hates sin and loves holiness. They are blessed with the privilege of adoption, and they are heirs of the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them (I. Peter, i. 4). They are blessed by having Christ as their Saviour and portion, and as Christ is theirs, all things are theirs. They are so blessed that they cannot be cursed. Balaam was employed by Balak to curse the people of Israel, and was promised a reward for his evil work, and although he tried to curse them, he could not do it, and instead of cursing them he pronounced them blessed—"How shall I curse whom the Lord hath not cursed? or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied? . . . Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" (Numbers xxiii. 8, 10). Wicked people curse the Lord's people, but their cursing is of as little effect as the curse of Balaam, and their blessing shall do no good to themselves or to others.

In a world of sin and misery you cannot escape mourning; but there are two kinds of mourning—a godly sorrow that worketh repentance which is not to be repented of, and the sorrow of the world which worketh death—which of these have you? The rich man who came to Jesus asking Him what he should do in order to obtain eternal life, when he was told that he had to part with his riches, went away sorrowful, for he preferred his riches to eternal life. Many prefer the world and the things thereof to eternal life. As there is a great difference between godly sorrow and the sorrow of the world that worketh death, there is a great difference between the subjects of these sorrows.

There are times when the Lord's people feel in such bondage, and are so mournful that they cannot sing the songs of Zion, like the people of Israel in Babylon, when taunted by their enemies, answered—"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" (Ps. cxxxvii. 14). They had their harps hung up on the willow trees. They did not throw away their harps, but preserved them there in the hope of using them when God in His good time would bring them back from captivity. There are some who can sing the songs of Zion when they like themselves, but the Lord's people cannot sing till their hearts are attuned by the Holy Spirit. There is a difference in singing by art and singing by the heart. Singing by art is the rule in many churches in our day, and singing by the heart is the exception. The singing of the former class shall cease at death, and that of the latter shall continue throughout eternity. When the Lord's people who now mourn shall be brought home to heaven, after they finish their course in this world, who can express their comfort and fulness of joy there, without any mixture of mourning. The days of their mourning are ended at death, and nothing can deprive them of their comfort throughout eternity.

Some Noted Preachers of the Northern Highlands.

REV. JAMES FRASER, ALNESS.

JAMES FRASER was the son of Rev. John Fraser, Glencorse, in the Presbytery of Dalkeith, and latterly of Alness. His mother was Miss Jean Moffat. His father suffered for his adherence to the Covenanter cause, having been deported to America. On the coming of William, Prince of Orange, to England, Mr Fraser and his wife returned to Scotland. He was called to Glencorse soon after his arrival in this country. In 1695 the people of Alness addressed a call to him, which was set aside by the General Assembly. The congregation, however, renewed their call the following year. The people of Glencorse set about building a new church, in the hope that Mr Fraser would remain with them, but just as the church was nearing completion it went on fire, and was burnt to the ground. The minister felt that God was speaking to him in this incident, and that it was his duty

to exercise his Gaelic where it was needed; so he accepted the call to Alness, where he was inducted in 1696. He laboured at Alness for fifteen years, dying in 1711. His son, James, was born there in 1700. He passed through the ordinary curriculum of arts and divinity at Aberdeen. On the death of Mr Mackilligan, son of the better known Covenanter minister of Fodderty, James Fraser was called in 1726 to the charge once ministered to by his father. A certain section of the congregation opposed the settlement, and on the day of his ordination the Presbytery found the doors of the Church shut against them. The ordination services were conducted in the open air in the church-yard, and for some Sabbaths the young minister had to preach in the open air. The opposition, as time went on, died away, and soon his influence as a preacher began to be felt. The solemn and searching truths he declared made careless sinners ill at ease. The claims of God's law and its threatenings were set before them. Christ was held up before them as God's provision for the lost after they had been driven out of all refuges of lies.

His near neighbour was the godly Mr Porteous, Kilmuir, a cousin of his own. Some of the people who had been awakened under Mr Fraser's preaching began to find their way to Kilmuir. Mr Porteous's people were afraid that this might awaken a spirit of jealousy in the mind of Mr Fraser, whom they highly respected and loved. They, therefore, asked Mr Porteous to speak to Mr Fraser, and assure him that he had done nothing to induce the people from Alness to become occasional worshippers in his church. Mr Porteous readily complied with the request. Mr Fraser's reply showed a fine Christian spirit and sanctified commonsense. "My dear brother," was his answer, "this will never produce any alienation of feeling between us. It is entirely of the Lord. He has given me a quiverful of arrows, and it is not yet exhausted, and these arrows are piercing their consciences; hence their pain and cry for relief. But the Lord has given you a cruise of oil, and they run to you for relief. The whole is from the Lord, and no coolness shall arise between us." It has been well said in connection with this incident that "it not only reflects most creditably the unselfishness of Mr Fraser, and his absolute surrender of himself to the interests of his Master's kingdom, and the wise considerateness and modesty of Mr Porteous, but also the sterling Christian good sense of the people, who loved them both" (Macpherson's Edition of Fraser's "Treatise on Sanctification," p. xix).

Once a month Monday was observed as a "question day," and the exercises were similar to the Friday "question meeting" of sacramental occasions, when topics of doctrine and experience were discussed.

Mr Fraser inherited from his father the estate of Pitcalzean, in the Parish of Nigg. His wife was one of the Macleods of Geanies, in the Parish of Tarbat. These Macleods were connected with the Assynt family. Dr Kennedy describes Mrs Fraser as "a cold, unfeeling, bold, unheeding, worldly woman," but even such a wife may be made a blessing, as the well-known story sets forth. "Never did her godly husband," to quote Dr Kennedy again, "sit down to a comfortable meal in his own house, and often would he have fainted for sheer want of needful sustenance but for the considerate kindness of some of his parishioners. She was too insensate to try to hide her treatment of him, and well was it for him, on one account, that she was."—"Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire," p. 37, 5th Edit.). Light and fire were denied him in his study in the long, cold winter evenings, and "as his study was his only place of refuge from the cruel scourge of his wife's tongue and temper, there shivering and in the dark, he used to spend his winter evenings at home. In this way he actually wore a hole through the plaster of each end of his accustomed beat, on which some eyes have looked that glistened with light from other fire than that of love at the remembrance of his cruel wife,"—(Ibid., p. 38). But all this was one of the things that Mr Fraser found working for his good. While in company with a number of his brethren, who had no reason to be tongue-tied as to the virtues of their wives, one of them hinted that Mr Fraser could not join with them in the chorus of praises. "How so?" was the instant question. "She has sent me seven times a day to my knees when I would not otherwise have gone; that is more than any of you can say of yours." On the day of his death, some of his elders, grief-stricken, came to the manse, and found Mrs Fraser busy feeding her poultry. One of them, approaching her, said, respectfully and sorrowfully—"So Mr Fraser has gone to his rest?" "Oh, yes; the poor man died this morning," was the icy reply from the tearless widow.

In 1752, a Mr Grant had been intruded on the parish of Nigg, against the wishes of the people. The people refused to attend Mr Grant's ministry, and Mr Fraser went occasionally to preach and baptise for the dissentients. The intruded minister threatened if he persisted in visiting his parish that he would take steps to have him deposed from the ministry. Mr Fraser replied that should matters

be brought to such a pass he would reside on his own property at Pitcalzean, and preach to the people there. Eventually a minister from the Secession Church was called to Nigg.

Mr Fraser was very helpful to Mr Macphail, Resolis, as already recorded in one of these sketches. The saintly minister of Resolis had become very depressed in mind, and came to the conclusion that he had been so useless that he must resign his charge. He sent for Mr Fraser so that he might preach for him, and intimate thereafter the decision Mr Macphail had come to. Mr Fraser preached in such a way that Mr Macphail asked him not to intimate his resignation, as he had been so encouraged by the precious truth he had listened to.

Mr Fraser is known to many as the author of a "Treatise on Sanctification." This work is an exposition of Romans, chapters vi. to viii. 4. It has also a number of important essays appended. The manuscript, beautifully written out, was dated July 1769, which was only two or three months before his death. The first edition of the work was issued at Edinburgh in 1774, with a short note by the well-known Rev. Dr John Erskine. A reprint appeared in 1813, and later an abridged edition was issued by the Religious Tract Society. In an introductory note to the sermons appended to the 1834 edition, Mr John Russel, one of the ministers of Kilmarnock, says of Mr Fraser:—"I had the honour to be personally acquainted with the author, and consider that acquaintance as one of the happiest circumstances of my life. In him centred all the amiable qualities of the divine, the scholar, and the Christian. Indeed, one may say, without exceeding the bounds of truth, that the illustrious title marked out for Gospel ministers by Paul, when he says that 'they are the glory of Christ,' eminently belonged to him." The first of the above sermons is an elaborate treatise on Hebrews ix. 14, and occupies no less than fifty-two closely-printed pages. It was usually called by the Gaelic-speaking people "an t-searmon mhor" (the great sermon). The late Principal Cunningham, New College, Edinburgh, said the sermon was uncommonly good, but what astonished him was where a congregation could be found to follow it and appreciate it. But there were giants in spiritual and doctrinal matters in those days. Mr Sage tells us in his "*Memorabilia Domestica*" that one Sabbath evening he read a passage from Mr Fraser's work on Sanctification to Hugh Ross, a native of Alness, who had heard Mr Fraser preach in his youth, and received ever-

lasting benefit from it. As he read he noticed his listener became very excited. "What book is that you are reading from?" he asked Mr Sage. "Why do you ask?" "Well," replied Hugh, "I do not know what book it is; but this I know, that seventy years ago I heard these sentiments on that passage delivered by Mr Fraser, when lecturing on Romans, and they are as fresh in my memory as when I heard them from his lips."

Mr Fraser died at Alness on the 5th October 1769. His cousin, Mr Porteous, Kilmuir, preached the funeral sermon on Sabbath from the text—"Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him" (Gen. v. 24).

The Difference betwixt the Law and the Gospel.

REV. RALPH ERSKINE.

I.

The law supposing I have all,
Does ever for perfection call.
The gospel suits my total want,
And all the law can seek does grant.

The law could promise life to me,
If my obedience perfect be:
But grace does promise life upon
My Lord's obedience alone.

The law says, Do, and life you'll
win;

But grace says, Live, for all is
done;

The former cannot ease my grief;
The latter yields me full relief.

The law convinc'd of sinful breach;
By gospel-grace I comfort reach;
The one my condemnation bears;
The other justifies and clears.

The law shows my arrears are great;
The gospel freely pays my debt:
The first does me the bankrupt
curse;

The last does bless and fill my purse.

The law will not abate a mite;
The gospel all the sum will quite:
There God in threat'nings is
array'd,

But here in promises display'd.

The law and gospel disagree,
Like Hagar, Sarah, bond and free,
The former's Hagar's servitude;
The latter's Sarah's happy brood.

To Sinai black, and Zion fair,
The word does law and grace com-
pare.

Their cursing and their blessing vie
With Ebal and Gerizzam high,

The law excludes not boasting vain
But rather feeds it to my bane:
But gospel grace allows no boasts,
Save in the King, the Lord of
Hosts.

The law still irritates my sin,
And hardens my proud heart there-
in;

But grace's melting pow'r renews,
And my corruption strong sub-
dues.

The law with thunder, Sinai-like,
Does always dread and terror speak;
The gospel makes a joyful noise,
And charms me with a still, calm
voice.

The legal trumpet war proclaims,
In wrathful threats, and fire, and
flames:

The gospel-pipe, a peaceful sound,
Which spreads a kindly breath
around.

The law is weak through sinful
flesh,

The gospel brings recruits afresh;
The first a killing letter wears;
The last a quick'ning spirit bears.

The law that seeks perfection's
height,

Yet gives no strength, nor offers
might;

But precious gospel-tidings glad
Declare where all is to be had.

From me alone the law does crave,
What grace affirms in Christ I
have;

When therefore law pursuits en-
thrall,

I send the law to grace for all.

Gleanings from many fields.

The Power of God in Redemption.

BY REV. STEPHEN CHARNOCK, B.D.

[The following extract is taken from a remarkable sermon, entitled "A Discourse Upon the Power of God," by Rev. Stephen Charnock, one of the most noted of the Puritan preachers. This discourse forms one of a series on the existence and attributes of God, in which the preacher presents to his readers, in an impressive and awe-inspiring way, the greatness of our God. Here we have no mere dry statement of theological commonplaces, but the truth, presented from a heart that was awed in the presence of the great mysteries of the being of the Eternal. During the Commonwealth, Charnock acted as chaplain to Henry Cromwell, Chief Governor of Ireland. On Cromwell's death, Charnock came to London, and, according to his biographers, Adams and Veal, there he spent "the greatest part of fifteen years without any call to his old work in a settled way." In 1675 he was appointed joint pastor with the Rev. Thomas Watson in Crosby Hall. He died in July 1680, in the fifty-second year of his age.]

THE power of God appears in redemption. As our Saviour is called the Wisdom of God, so He is called the Power of God (I Cor. i. 24.) The arm of power was lifted up as high as the designs of wisdom were laid deep. As this way of redemption could not be contrived but by an infinite wisdom, so it could not be accomplished but by an infinite power; none but God could shape such design, and none but God could effect it. The divine power in temporal deliverances veils to that which glitters in redemption, whereby the devil is defeated in his designs, stripped of his spoils, and yoked in his strength.

The power of God in creation requires not those degrees of admiration as in redemption. In creation the world was erected from nothing; as there was nothing to act, so there was nothing to oppose; no victorious devil was in that to be subdued, no thundering law to be silenced, no death to be conquered, no transgression to be pardoned and rooted out, no hell to be shut, no ignominious death upon the cross to be suffered. It had been in the nature of the thing an easier thing to divine power to have created a new world, than repaired a broken and purified a polluted

one. This is the most admirable work that ever God brought forth in the world, greater than all the marks of His power in the first creation.

I. The power of God in redemption will appear in the Person redeeming.

1. **In His conception.** "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35).

2. **The second act of power in the Person redeeming is the union of the two natures, the human and the divine.** The designing of this was an act of wisdom, but the accomplishing of it was an act of power. He was "of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." The Word was made flesh; the Word from eternity was made flesh in time. Word and flesh in one Person; a great God and a little Infant. The terms of this union were infinitely distant. What greater distance can there be than between the Deity and humanity, between the Creator and the creature?

God blessed for ever taking the properties of human nature, and human nature admitted to a union with the properties of the Creator; the fulness of the Deity in the humanity. Was there not a need of an infinite power to bring together terms so far asunder, to elevate the humanity to be capable of, and disposed for, a conjunction with the Deity? Nothing less than an incomprehensible power could effect what an incomprehensible wisdom did project in this affair. The divinity of Christ is as really united with the humanity as the soul with the body. The Person was one though the natures were two; so united that the sufferings of the human nature were the sufferings of that Person, and the dignity of the divine was imputed to the human by reason of that unity of both in one Person. Hence the blood of the human nature is said to be the blood of God—Acts xx. 28. All things ascribed to the Son of God may be ascribed to this Man, and the things ascribed to this Man may be ascribed to the Son of God, as this Man is the Son of God eternal, almighty. The Person suffered, that was God and man united, making one Person. Now, let us consider what a wonder of power all this is. The knitting a noble soul to a body of clay was not so great an exploit of almightiness as the espousing infinite and finite together. What a wonder is it that two natures infinitely distant should be more inti-

mately united than anything in the world, and yet without any confusion! That the same Person should have both a glory and a grief; an infinite joy in the Deity, and an unexpressible sorrow in the humanity; that a God upon a throne should be an infant in a cradle; the thundering Creator be a weeping babe and a suffering man, are such expressions of mighty power as well as condescending love, that they astonish men on earth and angels in heaven.

3. Power was evident in the progress of His life. In the miracles He wrought, how often did He expel malicious and powerful devils from their habitations, hurl them from their thrones, and make them fall from heaven like lightning. How many wonders were wrought by His bare word, or a single touch: sight restored to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, impure leprosy chased from the persons they had infected, and bodies beginning to putrify raised from the grave. But the mightiest argument of His power was His patience; that He who was in His divine nature elevated above the world should so long continue on a dunghill, "endure the contradiction of sinners against Himself," be patiently subject to the reproaches and indignities of men, without displaying that justice which was essential to His Deity, and in an especial manner daily merited by their provoking crimes. The patience of man under great affronts is a greater argument of power than the brawniness of his arm.

4. Divine power was apparent in His resurrection. The restoring of a dead body to life requires an infinite power, as well as the creation of the world. But there was in the resurrection of Christ something more difficult than this. While He lay in the grave He was under the curse of the law, under the execution of that dreadful sentence, "Thou shalt die." His resurrection was not only the retying the marriage knot between His soul and His body, or the rolling the stone from the grave, but the taking off an infinite weight, the sin of mankind, which lay upon Him. So vast a weight could not be removed without the strength of an almighty arm. It is therefore ascribed not to an ordinary operation, but an operation with power—Rom. i. 4—and such a power wherein the glory of the Father did appear—Rom. vi. 4—"Raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father;" that is, the glorious power of God. It is a wonder of power that the divine and human nature should be joined, and no less wonder that His person should surmount and rise up from the curse of God under which He lay. The apostle therefore adds one expression to another, and heaps up a variety, signifying thereby that one

was not enough to express it: Eph. i. 19, "Exceeding greatness of power," and "working of mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead." It was an hyperbole of power, the excellency of the mightiness of His strength; the loftiness of the expressions seems to come short of the apprehension he had of it in His own soul.

II. The power of God appears in the publication and the propagation of the doctrine of redemption. This power will appear if you consider—

1. **The nature of the doctrine.** It was contrary to the common received reason of the world; it was contrary to the customs of the world; it struck at the root of the religion of the world, and the ceremonies wherein they had been educated from their infancy, delivered to them from their ancestors, confirmed by the customary observance of many ages, rooted in their minds and established by their laws. This doctrine of the gospel was of such a nature that the state of religion all over the world must be overturned by it; the wisdom of the Greeks must veil to it, the idolatry of the people must stoop to it, and the profane customs of man must moulder under the weight of it. The difficulties of carrying it on against the divine religion of the Jews, and rooted customs of the Gentiles, were unconquerable by any but an almighty power. It was contrary to the sensuality of the world and the lust of the flesh. It thundered down those three great engines whereby the devil had subdued the world to himself, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." The first article of the doctrine ordered them to deny themselves, not to presume upon their own worth; to lay their understandings and wills at the foot of the cross, and resign them up to One newly crucified at Jerusalem. The cross, disgrace, self-denial, were only discoursed of in order to the attainment of an invisible world; and an unseen reward, which none of their predecessors ever returned to acquaint them with; a patient death, contrary to the pride of nature, was published as the way to happiness and a blessed immortality. The dearest lusts were to be pierced to death for the honour of this new Lord. Other religions brought wealth and honour; this struck them off from such expectations, and presented them with no prospect of anything in this life but a prospect of misery, except those inward consolations to which before they had been utter strangers, and had never experimented. It made them to depend not upon themselves, but upon the sole grace of God. How impossible was it that a crucified Lord and a crucifying doc-

trine should be received in the world, without the mighty operation of a divine power upon the hearts of men!

2. Consider the instruments employed for the publishing and propagating the gospel. These were mean and worthless in themselves; not noble and dignified with an earthly grandeur, but of a low condition, meanly bred; they possessed nothing but their nets; without any credit and reputation in the world, as unfit to subdue the world by preaching, as an army of hares were to conquer it by war. Had it been published by a voice from heaven that twelve poor men, taken out of boats and creeks, without any help of learning, should conquer the world to the cross, it might have been thought an illusion against all the reason of men; yet we know it was undertaken and accomplished by them. They were destitute of earthly wisdom, and therefore despised by the Jews and derided by the Gentiles; the publishers were accounted madmen, and the embracers fools. Had they been men of known natural endowments the power of God had been veiled under the gifts of the creature.

3. Consider the means by which the gospel was propagated. The apostles bore not this doctrine upon the points of their swords: they presented a bodily death where they would bestow an immortal life; they employed not troops of men in a warlike posture; they had no ambition to subdue men to themselves, but to God; their design was to change their hearts, to wean them from the love of the world to the love of the Redeemer. The apostles had as little flourish in their tongues as edge upon their swords; their preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom; their presence was mean, and their discourses without varnish; their doctrine was plain, a crucified Christ; but they had the demonstration of the Spirit, and a mighty power for their companion in the work. They were opposed by all the wisdom and power and force of this world. The gospel never set foot in any place, but the country was in an uproar; swords were drawn to destroy it, laws made to suppress it, prisons provided for the professors of it, fires kindled to consume it, and the executioners had a perpetual employment to stifle the progress of it.

4. But consider the great success it had under all these difficulties. After the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, you find the hearts of three thousand melted by a plain declaration of the doctrine, who were a little before so far from being favourable to it, that some of them at least, if not all, had expressed their rage against it in voting for the condemning and crucifying the Author of it. But in a moment they were so altered, that they breathe

out affection instead of fury; neither the respect they had to their rulers, nor the honour they bore to their priests, nor the derisions of the people, nor the threatening of punishment, could stop them from owning it in the face of multitudes of discouragements. In less than twenty years there was never a province of the Roman Empire, and scarce any part of the known world, but was stored with the professors of the gospel. So much did this doctrine overmaster the consciences of its followers, that they rejoiced more at their yoke than others at their liberty, and counted it more a glory to die for the honour of it than to live in the profession of it. Thus did our Saviour reign and gather subjects in the midst of His enemies; in which respect, in the first discovery of the gospel, He is described as a mighty conqueror, and still conquering in the greatness of His strength. How great a testimony of His power is it that from so small a cloud should arise so glorious a sun, that should chase before it the power and darkness of hell, triumph over the idolatry, superstition, and profaneness of the world. This plain doctrine vanquished the obstinacy of the Jews, baffled the understanding of the Greeks, humbled the pride of the grandees, threw the devil not only out of bodies but of hearts, tore up the foundation of his empire, and planted the cross where the devil had for many ages before established his standard. How much more than a human force is illustrious in this whole conduct.

III. The power of God appears in the application of redemption.

1. **In the planting grace.** As we could not contrive the death of Christ for our redemption, so we cannot form our souls to the acception of it; the infinite efficacy of grace is as necessary for the one as the infinite wisdom of God was for laying the platform of the other. It is by His power we have whatsoever pertains to godliness as well as to life (2 Pet. i. 3). The gospel which God useth in this great affair is called "the power of God to salvation;" also, "the rod of His strength." And the day of the gospel's appearance in the heart is emphatically called "the day of power," wherein He brings down strongholds and towering imaginations. The gospel of God is the power of God in a way of instrumentality, but the almightiness of God is the principle in a way of efficiency. The gospel is the sceptre of Christ, but the power of Christ is the mover of that sceptre.

This power of God is conspicuous in turning the heart of man against the strength of the inclinations of nature. There would be no, or far less, resistance in a mere animal

to be changed into a creature of higher nature than there is in a natural man to be turned into a serious Christian. There is in every natural man a stoutness of heart, a stiff-neck unwillingness to good, forwardness to evil. Not one converted soul, from Adam to the last that shall be in the end of the world, but is a trophy of the divine conquest. None were pure volunteers, nor listed themselves in His service, till He put forth His strong arm to draw them to Him. This power of God is also conspicuous, as it is wrought against a multitude of corrupt habits rooted in the souls of men. Every proud thought, every evil habit captivated, serves for matter of triumph to the power of God. To have a heart full of the fear of God, that was just before filled with the contempt of Him; to have a sense of His power, an eye to His glory, admiring thoughts of His wisdom, a faith in His truth, that had lower thoughts of Him and all His perfections than he had of a creature; to have a hatred of his habitual lusts, that had brought him much sensitive pleasure; to loathe them as much as he loved them, to cherish the duties he hated, to live by faith in, and obedience to the Redeemer, who was before so heartily under the conduct of Satan and self; to chase the acts of sin from his members, and the pleasing thoughts of sin from his mind; to make a stout wretch willingly fall down, crawl upon the ground, and adore the Saviour whom before he outdared, is a triumphant act of infinite grace and power that can "subdue all things to itself," and break those multitude of locks and bolts that were upon us.

This power of God is also conspicuous in the manner of conversion. There is not only an invincible force used in it, but an agreeable sweetness. The power is so efficacious, that nothing can vanquish it, and so sweet that none did ever complain of it. The almighty virtue displays itself invincibly yet without constraint, compelling the will without offering violence to it, and making it cease to be will; not forcing it, but changing it, not dragging it, but drawing it; making it will where before it nilled; removing the corrupt nature of the will without invading the created nature and rights of the faculty; not working in us against the physical nature of the will, but "working to will" (Phil. ii. 13). It is a "drawing with cords," which testifies an invincible strength; but with "cords of love," which testifies a delightful conquest. It is no mean part of the power of God to twist together victory and pleasure; to give a blow as delightful as strong, as pleasing to the sufferer as it is sharp to the sinner.

2. The power of God appears in pardoning a sinner.

In the pardon of a sinner, after many overtures made to

him and refused by him, God exerciseth a power over Himself; for the sinner hath dishonoured God, provoked His justice, abused His goodness, done injury to all those attributes which are necessary to his relief. God has to exercise a power over Himself to answer His justice and pardon the sinner, as well as a power over the creature to reduce the runaway rebel. Unless we have recourse to the infiniteness of God's power, the infiniteness of our guilt will weigh us down. We must consider not only that we have a mighty guilt to press us, but a mighty God to relieve us. A man is no more able to apply to himself any word of comfort under the guilt of sin, than he is able to convert himself and turn the proposals of the Word into gracious affections in his heart. The power of God is more visible in silencing a tempestuous conscience, than the power of our Saviour was in the stilling the stormy winds and the roaring sea.

3. **The power of God appears in preserving grace.** The counter workings of indwelling corruption, the reluctances of the flesh against the breathings of the Spirit, the fallacy of the senses and the roivings of the mind, have ability quickly to stifle and extinguish grace, if it were not maintained by that powerful blast that first inbreathed it. No less power is seen in perfecting it than was in planting it; no less in fulfilling the work of faith than in ingrafting the word of faith. God doth more magnify His power in continuing a believer in the world, a weak and half-rigged vessel in the midst of so many sands whereon it might split, so many rocks, whereon it might dash, so many corruptions within, and so many temptations without, than if He did immediately transport him into heaven and clothe him with a perfectly sanctified nature. What is therefore in this world that is destitute of notices of divine power? Every creature affords us the lesson; all acts of divine government are the marks of it. Look into the Word, and the manner of its propagation instructs us in it; your changed natures, your pardoned guilt, your shining comfort, your quelled corruptions, the standing of your staggering graces, are sufficient to preserve a sense and prevent a forgetfulness of this great attribute so necessary for our support and conducing so much to our comfort.

It is good to see blessings as they issue from grace and mercy. It much commends any blessing to see the love and favour of God in it, which is more to be valued than the blessing itself.—Psalm lxiii.—*Dr Sibbes*.

He that is led by the flesh, he consults with his enemy.—*Sibbes*.

Searmoinean leis an Urramach Aonghas MacMhaolain.

Searmoin III.

Eoin, I. Caib, 29 Rann.

“Feuch Uain Dé, a ta toirt air falbh peacaidh an t-saoghail.”

(Air a leantuinn o t.—d. 277).

Tha còir dhligheach aig gach fìor iompachan air buannachd na saorsa a cheannaich Crìosd air a shon. An uair a tha urras air bith a paigheadh fiachan an neach air son am bheil e na urras, gus an fheòrling dheireannach, tha e cordadh ri reuson, ri lagh, agus ceartas, gu 'm faigheadh fear-nam-fiach buannachd an diolaidh a thug an t-urras air a shon, gu 'm biodh fhiachan uile air an dubhadh a mach, agus e féin air a shaoradh a phrìosan agus o bhreith-eanas. Air an amhuil cheudna, tha e cordadh ri ceartas, co maith ri trócair Dhé, gu 'm biodh peacanna an dream air son an d' thug Crìosd e féin mar iobairt gun smal do Dhia, air a' maitheadh dhoibh, agus air an dubhadh gu h-iomlan a mach a leabhar a chuimhne. “Ma dh' aidicheas sinn ar peacaidhean, tha esan frinneach agus ceart, chum ar peacaidhean a mhaithheadh dhuinn, agus ar glanadh o gach uile neo-fhireantachd.”

5. Anns an àite mu dheireadh, tha truailidheachd nàduir pobuill an Tighearna air a thoirt air falbh ann an obair naomhachaidh, tre naomhachadh an Spioraid, agus crathadh fola Chrìosd. Cheannaich Crìosd saorsa d' a phobull o 'n uile pheacaibh, cha 'n e mhain o chionta, ach mar an ceudna o uachdaranachd, agus o thruailidheachd a pheacaidh, o pheacadh gin agus gnìomh; agus an deigh dha saorsa cheannach dhoibh air thalamh, bha e air àrdachadhgu deas laimh Dhé, chum an t-saorsa cheannaich e a chompartachadh, chum aithreachas a thabhairt do Israel, agus maitheanas peacaidh. Cheannaich e 'n t-saorsa so le umhlachd a bheatha, agus le fulangasaibh a bhàis; phaighe e 'n fheòrling mu dheireadh d' a fiach, an uair a leag e sìos a bheatha air a chrann-cheusaidh: Cha robh, 's cha bhi am feasd, feum aig air ni sam bith tuille dheanamh chum saorsa cheannach d' a phobull. Gidheadh cha 'n 'eil obair Chrìosd mar Fhear-saoraidh fathasd air a crìochnachadh,—seadh, cha bhi obair mar Fhear-saoraidh gu h-iomlan air a crìochnachadh, gus am bi an t-saorsa a cheannaich e air a compartachadh, agus air a deanamh

èifeachdach, chum slàinte shìorruidh a shluaigh. Air an aobhar so, tha Crìosd fathasd a toirt air falbh peacaidh an t-saoghail, a giùlan air aghaidh obair na saorsa o linn gu linn, anns an eaglais. Tha e saoradh a phobuill o am peacaibh, an uair a tha iad air an ionnlaid, air am fireanachadh, air an naomhachadh, agus air an toirt gu sealbh air beatha mhaireannach.

Ach 's ann trid an Spioraid Naoimh a tha e giùlan air aghaidh na cuid so do obair na saorsa; 's ann trid oibreachadh an Spioraid, a tha peacaich air an dùsgadh, air am beothachadh, agus air an gairm gu h-èifeachdach o dhorchadas gu solus; agus 's ann trid an Spioraid cheudna a tha Crìosd a giùlan air aghaidh obair naomhachaidh 'nan cridheachaibh, a tha e 'g an glanadh o gach salchar feòla agus spioraid, 'g an cruth-atharrachadh chum iomhaigh féin, agus fa-dheòidh, 'g an deanamh iomchuidh air son oighreachd nan naomh 's an t-solus. Agus an uair a bhios a mhuinntir shaorta gu h-iomlan air an deanamh iomchuidh air son na h-oighreachd so, nochdaidh Crìosd iad an làthair Athar, gun smal agus gun lochd. An sin, cluinnear iad uile seinn cliù an Uain a ghràdhaich iad, agus a dh' ionnlaid iad o 'm peacaibh na fhuil féin, agus a rinn rìghre dhiubh agus sagairt, do Dhia agus d' a Athair-san; dha-san gu robh glóir agus cumhachd, gu, saoghal nan saoghal. Amen.

III. Rachamaid a nis air ar n-aghaidh, gu bhì toirt fa'near, an doigh anns am bheil e iomchuidh dhuinn a bhì sealltuinn ri Uan Dé.

I. Anns a cheud àite, tha sinn air ar gairm gu bhì sealltuinn ris, trid creidimh; oir cha 'n 'eìl cothrom againn, anns an t-saoghal a ta làthair, air fhaicinn air doigh sam bith eile. Bha Crìosd, aig aon àm, a gabhail comhnuidh air thalamh, agus aig an àm so, bha cothrom aig daoine air fhaicinn le suilbh an cuirp; ach chunnaic na' mìlte e le 'n suilbh, agus chual iad e le 'n cluasaibh, nach fhac a riamh a ghlòir agus a mhaise spioradail, mar aon-ghin Mhic an Athar, a bha làn gràis agus firinn. Ann an sealladh a luchd-dùtcha féin, anns a choitchionn, bha e mar fhreumh a talamh tioram, gun sgèimh na maise air bith aige gu 'n iarraidh iad e. Ach ged bhiodh daoine a nis a miannachadh Crìosd fhaicinn le suilbh an cuirp, cha 'n 'eìl cothrom aca air a mhiann so a riarachadh, oir dh'fhag e'n saoghal so, chaidh e steach d' a ghlòir, agus " 's eigin do na neamhaibh a chumail gu aimsiribh àisig nan uile nithe;" air an aobhar so, cha 'n fheud neach air bith fhaicinn le suilbh a chuirp ni 's mo, gu là a bhrèitheanas. Ach feudaidh fìor iompachain fhaicinn, eadhon anns an t-saoghal so, le suil a chreidimh. 'S ann trid creidimh

a chunnaic Abraham a là fad as, 's ann trid creidimh a chunnaic na fàidhean, na h-Abstoil agus na Martairich a ghlòir, mar Shlànuighear uil-fhoghainteach, agus tha sinne air ar gairm gu bhi sealltuinn ris trid creidimh mar an ceudna. Ma bha do choguis air a dùsgadh, O a pheacaich, gu mothachadh air do chionta, ma bha t-inntinn air a soillseachadh leis an Spiorad Naomha, ma bha suil a chreidimh air a fosgladh ann a t-anam, thoir oidheirp air an t-suil so thionndadh a dh' ionnsuidh Chrìosd: "Feuch Uan Dè." Thoir fa'near e fosgladh a shul ann am Betlehem, baile Dhaibhidh. Faic an t-Uan naomha, neo-chiontach so, na luidhe 's a phrasaich, agus paisgte le brat spéilidh. Lean e gu bruachan Iordain, agus faic an Spiorad Naomha teachd a nuas mar cholman, agus a gabhail comhnuidh air. Seall ris ann an gàradh Ghetsemane, air a bhruthadh, air a chlaoidh, agus anam ro-bhrònach eadhon gu bàs, fo bhuille trom an smachdachaidh, a thoill do pheacaidh. Lean e fathasd le sùil a chreidimh, gu talla an àrd shagairt, gu cathair breitheanais Philait, gu sliabh Chalbhari. Feuch Uan Dé air a lot, air a chuir gu bàs, agus air iobradh suas air a chrann-cheusaidh, chum peacaidh an t-saoghail a thoirt air falbh.

2. Tha e iomchuidh dhuinn a bhi sealltuinn ri Uan Dè le mòr iongantais. Tha 'n Tighearn Iosa Crìosd air a ghairm, "an t-Iongantach," anns na sgriobtairibh, agus tha e d' a rìreadh, air iomadh doigh, na neach ro iongantach. Mar eadar-mheadhonair, tha e ann an sealbh air dà nàdur eadar-dhealaichte,—nàdur na Diadhachd agus na daonnachd. Tha uile bhuaidhean na Diadhachd, agus uile shubhailcean nàdur na daonnachd, a coinneachadh a cheile, agus a dealradh a mach an cuideachd a cheile, ann an pearsa agus trid obair an Tighearn Iosa Crìosd, agus tha 'n aonachd so a tha eadar an Diadhachd agus an daonnachd, ann am pearsa Chrìosd, ga dheanamh na neach ro-iongantach, na neach gun choimeas air neamh na air tal amh. Tha aobhar iongantais ro mhòr againn, mar an ceudna, ann an irioslachd Chrìosd. Tha e na ni neo-chumanta anns an t-saoghal so, a bhi faicinn daoine a tha ann an àrd inbhe agus urram, gan isleachadh féin, gan cuir féin gu toileach ann an co-inbhe ris na daoine is isle staid, gan toirt féin gu bochdainn, gu bròn, agus péin, agus sin gu h-iomlan air sgàth buannachd muinntir eile. Tha so na ni neo-ghnàthaichte, agus bhiodh e na aobhar iongantais ro mhòr anns an t-saoghal chruaidh, pheacach so. Ach O! faiceamaid an Ti a bha ann an cruth Dhé, agus air a chrùnadh le glòir na Diadhachd o bhith-bhuantachd, a cromadh a nuas o àirde 'mhòrachd, a gabhail nàdur na daonnachd air féin, agus ga dheanamh féin bochd, chum

tre bhochdainn-san, gu 'm biodh a phobull air an deanamh saobhair! O, faiceamaid, le mòr iongantas, Uan Dé air irioslachadh, agus air iobradh chum rèite dheanamh air son peacanna a shluaigh! 'S ann le mòr iongantas a thig-eadh dhuinn, mar an ceudna, bhi toira fa'near ciùneas, macantachd, agus foighidin Chrìosd fo gach masladh agus amhghar a dh' fhuiling e anns an t-saoghal so. 'S ann gun aobhar a dh' fhuiling e géur-leanmhuinn o a luchd dutcha féin, oir cha do thoil e tàir, na masladh, na peanas a riamh, o neach air bith do chloinn nan daoine; gidheadh bha fhulangais gun choimeas, a thaobh lionmhoireachd is meud. Dh' fhuiling e na anam 's na chorp, na bhuill 's na bhuaidhibh, na ainm agus na oifigibh; dh' fhuiling e o cheartas Dé, o naimhdeas dhaoine, agus o shaigheadaibh teinnteach ifrinn; dh' fhuiling e bàs maslach a chroinn-cheusaidh—seadh, chrìochnaich e a thurus air thalamh ann am fuirneis an amhghair. Ach ma bha fhulangas gun choimeas, bha fhoighidin gun choimeas mar an ceudna, Feuch giùlan seimh, agus macanta 'n Uain so, fo gach anacainnt agus aobhar brosnachaidh a fhuair e o a naimh-dibh! “An uair a chàineadh e, cha do chàin a ris, an uair a dh' fhuiling e, cha do bhagair.” “Thug e dhruim do 'n luchd-bualaidh, agus a ghialan dhoibh-san a spion am fionnadh; cha d' fholaich e ghnuis o nàire agus o shìle.”

(Ri leantuin.)

Oh what soul-undoing bargains do some make with the devil! He is a great trader for souls, he hath all sort of commodities to suit all men's humours that will deal with him. He hath profits for the covetous, honours for the ambitious, pleasures for the voluptuous: but a soul is the price at which he sells them: only he will be content to sell at a day and not require present pay—so that he is paid on a death-bed, in a dying hour, he is satisfied.—*John Flavel*.

There are many thousands of souls who had never obtained the hopes of heaven, if they had not been brought thither by the gates of hell. As every mercy is a drop derived from the ocean of God's goodness, so every misery is a dram weighed out by the supreme wisdom of God's providence.—*W. Secker*.

A saving, though unmethodical, knowledge of Christ will bring us to heaven—John iii. 2—but a regular and methodical, as well as a saving knowledge of Him, will bring heaven into us—Col. ii. 2, 3.—*Flavel*.

Notes and Comments.

A Movement Deserving Encouragement.—The Scottish Grocers' Federation are endeavouring to have a bill abolishing Sabbath trading introduced into next session of Parliament. The bill is of a far-reaching nature, and is meant to abolish trading of any kind on the Lord's Day, whether in street or shop. The London correspondent of the "Glasgow Herald" says that the Early Closing Association will endeavour, when the time comes, to have its provisions extended to England. We have not seen the Scottish Bill, and it is possible that it may not be as thoroughgoing as we would like, but from what we have gleaned from the public press, it is a forward step on present legislation.

Palestine and the Arabs.—The condition of things in Palestine is far from reassuring. The Arab population is strongly opposed to the influx of the Jews to their ancestral home. One bad feature is that the Turks and Arabs, who were bitterly opposed, have recently drawn closer to each other. Following the delegation of Arabs to London, there has been another of Syrians to Angora, to discuss matters with the Kemalist Government. Some English papers are advocating the discontinuance of the British mandate over Palestine, but the Government have not given any indication that it is influenced by this newspaper propaganda. What the outcome of the Arab opposition will be it is difficult to say, but if the Turk can cause trouble in that part of the world we may rest assured he will not hesitate a moment to foment it.

Communism and the Children.—Of late much attention has been directed to the efforts of the Communists to capture the young. Schools are conducted on the Sabbath Day in imitation of Sabbath Schools, and the children are taught the revolutionary doctrines of Bolshevism. Such teaching is not only a menace to the State, but strikes directly at the very existence of religion. The Labour correspondent of the "Times" gives the following words of a Communist oath:—"I . . . do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to my Class, their heirs and successors, according to the Class Struggle without any God." The last three words show plainly the source whence this teaching comes. It is well that all should realise what is going on in this country, and alas! at our very doors in Scotland.

Roman Catholic Members of Parliament.—According to the "Churchman's Magazine," there are twenty Roman Catholics in the new House of Commons. The names of these, with their constituencies, are:—Lieutenant-Colonel Archer-Shee, Finsbury; F. N. Blundell, Ormskirk; P. Collins, Walsall; Lord Colum Crichton-Stuart, Northwich; N. Gratton Doyle, Newcastle-on-Tyne; T. Gavan Duffy, Whitehaven; P. J. Hannan, Birmingham (Moseley); E. A. Harney, K.C., South Shields; Major G. R. J. Hennessy, Winchester; James Hope, Sheffield (Central); Major P. B. Malone, Tottenham; R. Mitchell-Banks, K.C., Swindon; Major L. J. Molloy, Blackpool; H. Murrin, Stirling and Falkirk; T. P. O'Connor, Liverpool (Scotland); J. O'Grady, Leeds, S.E.; J. Sexton, St Helens; J. Sullivan, Lanark (North); J. Wheatley, Glasgow (Shettleston).

Protest Against Games on the Lord's Day.—A public meeting has been called for Tuesday, 23rd January, to protest against the London County Council's permission to allow games in the London parks and open spaces on the Sabbath Day. It gives us pleasure to notice that one of the law officers of the Crown—Sir Thomas Inskip, Solicitor-General, is to preside. We trust a united front will be presented to the enemy, and that a clear, definite challenge against him will go forth from the meeting. The "Lord's Day Quarterly" says:—"Prayer is asked for to the end that this effort may be wholly directed by God, and may result in helping to bring about a reversal of the decision of the London County Council." This strikes the true key-note, and if Sabbath desecration in our day is to be brought to an end, while doing our duty, we must ever look to the Lord of the Sabbath for His strong and effectual help.

The Church of Rome Said to be Losing its Hold in Southern Ireland.—A well-informed writer has recently been contributing a series of articles to the "Spectator" on the state of Ireland. He makes no hiding that he recognises the Church of Rome as a great moral force in Ireland, and he somewhat ruefully comes to the conclusion that Rome is slowly but surely losing its influence in Roman Catholic Ireland. "The insults," he says, "publicly offered recently by the 'wild women' to the Cardinal and Bishops at a meeting of the Catholic Truth Society were symbolical of a sinister change in public feeling; a few years ago such a scene would have been impossible. More coldly significant is the failure to nominate a single Bishop, either [Roman] Catholic or Protestant, to serve in the Senate of the Free State. In

short, from all I hear, the Church has lost its ancient hold on the unquestioning allegiance of the Southern Irish." If such be the case, we may rest assured every effort will be put forth by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy to regain what has for the time apparently slipped through their fingers: It will be a great day of deliverance when Rome's power is broken for ever in that unhappy land.

Sovereign Grace Union Booklets—This Union, which exists for the proclamation and defence of the doctrines of free and sovereign grace, carries out its object, among other ways, by the publication of books and booklets in which these doctrines are clearly set forth. Among the more recent issues is the Rev. Joseph Iron's "The Body of Christ," in which we are presented with a clear Scriptural definition of the term "church." Those of our readers who are familiar with this excellent minister's sermons can well understand that they will find in the above booklet good, substantial, Scriptural fare. The other booklet—"Stones that Speak"—is by the late Rev. James Ormiston, at one time editor of "The Gospel Magazine" and "English Churchman." Mr Ormiston's sermons and writings were highly appreciated by the Lord's people, and in the above booklet he describes a visit paid by him to the site of the Temple. He makes a very interesting and instructive spiritual use of what he saw in the immense quarries from which the Temple stones were taken. These publications may be had from Rev. Henry Atherton, The Parsonage, 100 Camberwell Grove, London, S.E. 5, or E. J. Peacock, Esq. Price 3d each, or 100 for 20s.

The Bible and Archæology.—The wonderful discoveries made by archæologists in Egypt, Babylonia, and Palestine, have done much to overturn the cherished theories of the Higher Critics. Professors Sir William Ramsay and Sayce felt that they must give up the higher critical positions once held by them, and do battle against them, because of the convincing evidence of archæology against them. In a recently published pamphlet by Miss A. M. Hodgkin on "The Witness of Archæology to the Bible" (Morgan and Scott, London, price 4d net), there is an excellent summary of the important developments of these discoveries in Bible lands and their bearing on the authenticity of the Bible. Evangelical Christendom must sooner or later face the question whether it is to support those who hold higher critical views of the Bible or not. This is the issue that has split up the Church Missionary Society. It is to be

hoped that believers in the infallibility of God's Word in other Missionary Societies and Churches will make it clear to all who hold higher critical views of the Scriptures, that they need no longer look for their support financially or otherwise.

A Sign of the Times.—Recently a large and representative gathering met at the Old Dock, Leith, for the ceremony of naming the drill ship provided for the Edinburgh Sub-Divisions of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. The Marchioness of Graham named the vessel "Claverhouse." The Marquis of Graham, in his speech, remarked that it was appropriate that they should have a ship of the name of Claverhouse. "It would be hard," he said, "to find a more fearless or ardent spirit than breathed in the breast of Claverhouse." Scotland has good reason to wish that Claverhouse's name would perish. "No feat of prowess," says Dr King Hewison, in his "Covenanters," "is recorded to the credit of this untiring and merciless executer of the orders of his superiors, and of the cruel decrees he assisted in framing. No attractive ordinances displays the prudence and kindness of a counsellor who understood his fellow-citizens. On the contrary, there abide reminiscences of a martinet, a mercenary, a miserable clamourer for spoil, and a ruthless reveller in the blood of his countrymen." This witness is true. There has been too much vapid sentiment spent on this ruthless slayer of the saints. "He has left a name," according to Macaulay, "wherever the Scottish race is settled on the face of the globe, which is mentioned with a peculiar energy of hatred."

Church Notes.

Communion.—Dingwall, first Sabbath of February; Breasclete, second; Stornoway, third; Ullapool, first Sabbath of March; Portree, second; Lochinver, third; Kinlochbervie, fourth.

Death of Mr Donald Sinclair, Elder, Brawlbin, Halkirk.—It is with the sincerest regret that we record the passing away of this worthy Christian office-bearer, in whom the character of Nathaniel was so beautifully exemplified—an Israelite, indeed, in whom was no guile. Rarely did we ever meet with one of the Lord's people that had such an intense longing desire to leave this world and be with Christ, and now he has passed into the presence of Him whom he loved with the simple confidence of a child. We extend our sympathy to all his relatives, and especially those who tended him in his declining years,

and to the congregation of Halkirk, for another of the Lord's praying people has gone home to his everlasting rest, and we and our congregations are the poorer. A more extended notice will appear later on.

The late Mr Murdo Urquhart, Elder, Dingwall.—We regret to learn that Mr Murdo Urquhart passed away on 12th January. Mr Urquhart was long connected with our congregation in Dingwall, and was very helpful to our cause there. He was predeceased by his wife only by a few months. The kind hospitality extended by husband and wife, and the unaffected cordiality shown to the Lord's people, will be remembered by many when they learn the sad news that our note communicates.

Appeal by the Oban Congregation.—The Oban Free Presbyterian congregation got a house for their minister last June, on the condition that they would buy it before the month of March, or leave it at Whitsunday. At present the difficulty of getting a house is almost insurmountable, so the congregation have done their utmost to raise a fund for purchasing a house. They have got £370 on hand, but will require £800 by the month of May. They appeal to outside friends to come charitably to their aid in their present difficulty.

The Southern Presbytery strongly and unanimously recommend the above appeal.

(Signed) NEIL CAMERON, Clerk.

Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Rev. D. A. Macfarlane, 7 Strathnaven Terrace, Oban; or by Mr Alexander Fraser, 15 Stafford Street, Oban.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

Alexander Macgillivray, General Treasurer, Woodbine Cottage, Glen-Urquhart Road, Inverness, acknowledges, with grateful thanks, the following donations up to the 10th January:—

SUSTENTATION FUND.—Miss M. Fraser, Allean Cottage, Pitlochry, £1; J. Ross, Loans of Barichie, Fearn, Ross-shire, 12s; Nurse J. Morrison, Ballantrushal, Barvas, Stornoway, 10s.

HOME MISSION FUND.—"N. and M. S.," 10s.

JEWISH AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.—Per Miss M. Macallum, Kames Sabbath School, for Kaffir Bibles (for Kaffir children), £1; per Rev. Neil Cameron—"A Friend," 5s; "A Friend," St Jude's (for Jews), 10s;

Another Friend, St Jude's, 40s—£2 15s; Mrs C. Macdonald, 585 Logan Avenue, Toronto, Canada, for Rev. J. B. Radasi, Bembesi, South Africa, £2 3s 7d; Nurse J. Morrison, Ballantrushal, Baryas, Stornoway, 5s; per Rev. Neil Cameron, for Foreign Missions Schools, 10s; N. and M. S., 5s; Anon, London post-mark, £1; per Mr W. Grant, from Mr A. M., of Brora, £3, for South African Mission, and £2, for the Mission to Jews—£5.

ORGANISATION FUND.—Per Rev. Neil Cameron, Capt. Finlayson, Glasgow, £4.

The following lists have been sent to the Editor:—

NORTH TOLSTA BUILDING FUND.—Per Rev. N. Macintyre—Hector Morrison, Scourie, 10s; Mrs Alex. Kerr, Clashmessie, Lochinver, 20s.

KYLE CHURCH BUILDING FUND.—Mr Angus Fraser begs to thankfully acknowledge, on behalf of the Plockton and Kyle Congregations, the following subscriptions to the above Fund:—Per M. Stewart, Kyle—Two Friends, Drumbuie, 5s 6d; per Mr A. Mackay, Staffin, 20s (card); per Mr Angus Fraser—Mr A. Crawford, 10s; Mr Auld, 5s; Sir K. Mackenzie, 10s; M. C., Ltd., 5s; Mr A. C., 2s 6d; Mr McF., 2s 6d; Cooper and Co., 10s 6d; Lipton, Ltd., 10s; J. R. S., 10s; Mr B., 5s—all in Glasgow.

EDINBURGH CHURCH PURCHASE FUND.—Mr Maclean, 16 Marchmont Crescent, Edinburgh, begs to acknowledge, with sincere thanks, the following donations:—Misses Fraser, St Giles', Kingussie, 80s; per S. M. Nisbet, Glasgow—Capt. D. Macmillan, 20s; per Mr James Mackay—Miss Mackinnon, 20s; Well-wisher, Edinburgh, 20s.

BEMBESI FAMINE FUND.—The Rev. J. B. Radasi, and all his people in the Bembesi Mission, desire to thank their friends in Scotland, and elsewhere, for the great kindness shown them in their time of need, and for the timely arrival of pecuniary assistance, more than over which they say they can never forget.—N. C.

FAMINE FUND.—Rev. N. Cameron desires to acknowledge, with sincere thanks, the undernoted donations in aid of Matabele Famine Fund:—Friend, Detroit, 43s 6d; J. McK., Laide, 5s; "Canadian Well-wishers," £21 14s 7d; H. McK., Brooklyn, £1 0s 8d; Black Young Girl, 8s 4d.

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The Magazine.

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