

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
AND MONTHLY RECORD

Vol. LXX

August, 1965

No. 4

DESIRES NOT GRANTED

The Psalmist records in the 146th Psalm regarding the Lord that, "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him." But the desire which the Lord will fulfil must not only be consistent with His revealed mind in Holy Scripture, but in its fulfilment be the accomplishment of what was the secret will of God. For instance, in the answer in the Shorter Catechism to "What is prayer?" these words occur: "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to His will . . ." And so we discover in the Bible, that even on the part of those who feared God desires and intentions were expressed which were not granted or permitted to be satisfied by God's interposition or over-ruling in the matter.

David fled to King Achish of the Philistines from before Saul for refuge. During his sojourn in the land of the Philistines, David was looked upon with favour by Achish. Then the Philistines prepared to go to war with Israel; and David and his band of men appeared to assist in the battle against Israel. The Lords of the Philistines strongly objected to David's presence among them as they were afraid he would turn against them in the battle. Then King Achish informed David of these objections, while highly commending David for his behaviour since residing with him. He asked David to "return and go in peace." But David expressed himself sincerely and strongly thus. "But what have I done? And what hast thou found in thy servant so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not fight against the enemies of my Lord the king?" No doubt, David felt it to be an obligation and a duty to assist the King in this way for the refuge he had enjoyed in the providence of God. But no! he and his men had to return to their place of residence in the land of the Philistines.

When they did return to Ziklag, David discovered that the Amalekites had invaded the place and had burned it with fire,

and that their women and children had been carried away captive. In due course, these they recovered. But later we find that in the battle that followed between the Philistines and Israel, Saul and also Jonathan, David's beloved friend, were slain in the battle. How significant all this was!

By the providence of God, the desire of David to assist Achish was frustrated. And by reason of this David and his men recovered their women and children. And to us, more wonderful still, David was preserved from having any hand at all in the death of Saul, whom he called the Lord's anointed, and in the death of his friend Jonathan. Surely, David had reason to bless God that his desire to go to battle with the Philistines had not been granted.

Another case comes to mind, when the Lord Jesus "sent messengers before His face; and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for Him." The Samaritans did not receive Jesus, "because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem." When the disciples James and John saw this they were so affected in their minds by this evil attitude to their Master and the dishonour done to Him, that they expressed themselves to Jesus thus: "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" They undoubtedly thought that their desire was a legitimate one under all the circumstances and might well be granted by the Lord Jesus. But it was not only not granted, but they were severely rebuked by Jesus. "... He turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." What James and John considered to be a right spirit and a proper desire, were anything but, in the light of the holy and gracious mind of the divine Redeemer. These two disciples were taught a lesson on this occasion, that there are desires which may seem to be consistent with the mind of the Lord and Saviour, but when brought under the scrutiny of His divine mind as revealed in the Truth, are exposed as evil, unwise and un-Christian.

In turning again to the history of David, there is the outstanding narrative concerning his desire to build a house for the God of Israel. He declared to the people: "As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building: But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an

house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood . . . and He said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father." Here David's desire was to honour God in this public manner and he had made some preparation also to put his desire into effect: It was truly consistent with a gracious and godly concern for the glory of God. Yet his desire was not to be fulfilled as far as he personally was concerned. The Lord had another man, his son Solomon, appointed to fulfil and carry out this God-honouring task, of building the temple at Jerusalem. Yet, the Lord commended David: "And the Lord said unto David . . . Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart."

When adversity and affliction come heavily upon the Lord's people, it is understandable that their desire toward the Lord is, that He succour them and deliver them in His kindness and mercy, and that speedily. The psalmist prayed: "Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O Lord." Yet in many cases, this desire is not granted and those who fear the Lord are left in the midst of troubles for prolonged periods of time and for the accomplishing of divine purposes toward them. The great man of God and prophet Elijah, when his life was threatened by wicked Jezebel, he went for his life, and came to Beersheba, and he sat down under a juniper tree: "And he requested for himself that he might die; and said. It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." But the Lord did not grant his desire to be removed from the world and the vexations he was meeting in it. On the contrary, the Lord sent an angel who directed Elijah to food and drink provided for him. And ultimately "he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Herib the mount of God." Elijah had to witness for the Lord after the afresaid episode in his experience. The Lord's time to bring him to heaven was not when he prayed to be taken away, but later on.

And so, although the Lord will fulfil the desire of those who fear Him; yet this obviously does not mean every desire that may arise in their hearts. The Lord's people constantly require the reign of the Spirit of God in their hearts; that desires agreeable to His holy will would be begotten in them, and that the fulfilment of the same would be to their comfort and joy and profit, for time and in view of eternity. "Lord, all my desire is before Thee." (Ps. 38, v. 9).

SERMON

By the late Rev. Christopher Munro

(The following is one of Mr Munro's earliest sermons, and was written when he was a Probationer in Tobermory)

"We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God."—Acts xiv, 22.

Having for the last two Sabbaths addressed you on the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven, and on the duty of seeking it, it may not be inappropriate to-day to consider the statement in our text, regarding the difficulties attendant on seeking and obtaining it. It may be necessary, however, to mention that the term "Kingdom of God" here refers not only to the state of grace here below, but also to that state of blessedness enjoyed by the saints above, and, taken in both these meanings, the statement made by the Apostle holds true, namely, that through much tribulation one enters it. To some of these tribulations we at present propose to advert, and shall begin with those which commonly befall believers on their entrance into the Kingdom of Grace. Some of these arise from the nature of the kingdom, and from the condition and spirit of man by nature. By nature man is ignorant of this kingdom, and has no disposition to submit to Him who is King, nor has he any capacity for enjoying the liberty and privileges of those who are in a state of grace. His whole nature is regulated by principles which are as opposite to those by which the believer is ruled, as darkness is to light; and as it happens that these principles are not entirely subdued as soon as the soul is awakened out of spiritual death, but, on the contrary, they become more vigorous and active than before, this occasions a struggle in every earnest soul, which may justly be regarded as the beginning of those tribulations through which one must enter the kingdom. The soul has to struggle against the darkness of his own mind with regard to spiritual things. At first his measure of light may serve only to let him feel his utter ignorance of Divine things, and the unspeakable importance of knowing them. In this state his feelings may be similar to those of a man who has been carried in a state of unconsciousness to a situation of which he was entirely ignorant, and who, on recovering consciousness, found himself surrounded by darkness and unknown dangers. We can suppose such a man greatly alarmed, as the cloud-piercing lightning raised the veil of night for a moment, only to show him the danger of his position without affording him sufficient light to enable him to make his escape, and let no one suppose that this is an exaggerated representation of the awakened soul. On the

contrary, it comes far short of being an adequate description of the feelings of many when first awakened to a sense of Divine and eternal realities, and struggling with the natural darkness of the human mind.

But without enlarging on this, let us further observe that the sense of his own wicked and deceitful heart is another source of much tribulation to one pressing into this kingdom. In order to let the sinner see his need of salvation, and of that without which he cannot enter the Kingdom of God, the depravity of his nature must be laid bare. A principal part of this depravity is the native atheism and hostility of the soul to God, which, when stirred up in opposition to the holy law of God in all its authority and spotless purity, puts forth its strength like an overflowing flood, and to resist its power the sinner finds himself as helpless as he would be if he attempted to stem the tides of the ocean. This causes him much soul-conflict and tribulation. He finds in himself no knowledge, no faith, no submission, but only unbelief, rebellion, and a fierce enmity that would, if it could, deprive God of His existence and dethrone Him from His own universe. When conviction comes to that stage at which the soul is fully convinced of the existence of God, and is, in some measure, enlightened as to His character, and he feels himself a sinner exposed to His righteous indignation, and yet he is ignorant of a Saviour, what trouble of soul does he not feel under the apprehensions which take possession of him!

And again, when he is led to think of Christ, and would fain believe in Him, how he finds his sins staring him in the face, and forming an impassable barrier between him and God. In this condition, his own unbelief and his depraved heart may be worked upon by the great enemy of souls, who, if permitted, will endeavour to drive him to despair by representing his sins as too numerous and aggravated for forgiveness, and by suggesting to him that all concern and all endeavours to believe are useless, since he has sinned away the day of grace and has committed the unpardonable sin, that it is now too late to think of repentance, and that it is better to embrace the only opportunity of enjoyment by an unrestrained indulgence in all licentiousness. If the enemy cannot succeed in this, he will try to puzzle the soul by plausible sophistry, the tendency of which is to overthrow in his mind the foundation of all religion and of all hope founded on a revelation of God's will.

In addition to these sources of tribulation, his friends and acquaintances may be a sore trial to him, who, instead of sympathising with his distress, may make it a subject of mockery and

ridicule, and who, instead of directing his anxiety into a proper channel, may, by all means in their power, try to divert his mind from the subject of religion altogether. What must be the feelings of a poor soul thoroughly awakened to the reality and importance of Divine things when, in addition to his own helplessness, he finds the world, the devil, and the flesh combined against him? According to the mental constitution and circumstances in life, one may experience greater difficulties from some one of those than from the others. One person may find his convictions regarding the things of eternity so clear and strong that the ridicule of his fellow-creatures is of no weight whatever with him, but he regards it merely as empty bubbles on the impetuous torrent against which he has to struggle. Another, again, may be so sensitive to the opinion of man that he dreads it more than anything else, whilst another may find it more trying to break the ties which bind him to the pleasures and allurements of the world. But all these difficulties must be encountered and overcome by the conviction of the surpassing excellence of the things of God's Spirit, and by the felt necessity of escaping from the wrath to come, and of possessing eternal life. For, unless they be overcome, they will exclude the immortal soul from life and happiness in time and eternity.

These trials are experienced at the outset of the life of faith and at the entrance into the Kingdom of Grace. They may vanish from view for a season, and the soul may be made to rejoice in the liberty that is in Christ Jesus, and to feel unutterably happy in the sunshine of redeeming love, saying, with the Church in Canticles, "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." The joys of espousals, however, may soon pass away, and the soul may be led into the wilderness, where many trials await him ere he enter the Kingdom above. The tribulations through which one must enter this Kingdom above, have their source in those very things which occasioned trouble at the entrance into the Kingdom of Grace, but now they appear under a different aspect. In the one case, they acted in the way of hindering him from entering into the Kingdom of Grace, but, in the other, they act in the way of disturbing his peace, retarding his progress in knowledge, humility, self-denial, and holiness; and against all these he has to maintain a constant struggle. He has to crucify the flesh with the lusts thereof, the word crucifixion being used figuratively, as it was the most painful and lingering mode of putting to death. It shows here the prolonged process of dying unto sin, which the believer has to undergo in order to enter the Kingdom. The

remains of sin in the believer are called by the Apostle "a body of sin," which must be crucified and put to death, intimating that sin must be opposed in the various ways in which it works, until the life of sin becomes extinct. It will not suffice to oppose and overcome some evil inclinations, for that is only like amputating a limb off a body which continues to possess and to show life notwithstanding; but as the body must be wounded in the vital organs ere it die, so must sin be crucified till it die and is cast out of the soul. This occasions an element in the "much tribulation" here spoken of; this is in accordance with Scripture, and also with all true Christian experience. Paul found this a sore trial, and it would appear that of all the sufferings which he endured, this alone extorted from him that bitter exclamation, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He had to bear infirmities, but in these he rejoiced; he suffered reproach for Christ with gladness and joy; he complained not of the fatigue connected with his long and dangerous voyages and journeys in carrying the glad tidings to his perishing fellow-men: not on account of any of these did he reckon himself "wretched," but because he found a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin and death. This was not peculiar to Paul, but is common to all believers, without exception.

They have likewise to fight against the world, of which the alluring pleasures are apt to engage their affection and to interfere with their growth in grace. But this is not the only way in which it occasions trouble to them: they have to endure the opposition, the hatred, the malice of the men of the world, for it is said that, if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, that he must suffer persecution. In our time, persecution in the form in which the Church encountered it in former ages, is not attempted, though, no doubt, did circumstances permit, this spirit would show itself as it did formerly; but whilst it cannot take the faggot and stake, the scaffold and the sword as its instruments of cruelty, it attempts, in various ways, to vilify and to misrepresent godliness. How often are the doctrines of Christianity made the subject of polished satire, and its professors held up as objects of mockery, their motives misconstrued, and their Christian life and practice caricatured. Even in society, where such weapons are not used, the cold and scornful look, the ear that greedily listens to every circumstance prejudicial to Christian character, and the tongue that is ready to propagate scandal—all those show the deep root of enmity to godliness which dwells in the unrenewed heart. As God accomplishes gracious purposes by permitting the

world to persecute His people, and as He makes those persecutions means to try their faith, and to promote their holiness of heart and life, He may also cause these manifestations of enmity to be as keenly felt as the fiercest persecution; as the forsaking of all things, nay, even as the laying down of one's life. That is, it may be as trying for one so tempted to maintain a Christian frame of mind, as it would be for him in different circumstances to exhibit a Christian spirit in the midst of the flames. The light of the Gospel, when it illuminates the soul, shows in distinct and clear outlines what the Christian spirit is, and how it ought to manifest itself in every conceivable circumstance, and every deviation from it serves to try the nature of his faith, and to show him of what spirit he is. Where there is, therefore, this light in the soul, it shows the spirit of the world, and how opposed it is to God; and also, it shows the believer his own need of Divine grace to enable him to bear the persecutions of that spirit in Gospel meekness.

But besides these troubles, they have to bear the afflictions which God uses as chastisements to correct them for their faults and their wanderings from the paths of righteousness. Of such chastisements the Apostle says, "all are partakers." They are, whilst here, in an imperfect state, liable to err, to provoke God, to grieve His spirit, and to wound their own consciences; and for these things He must reprove them and correct them, for, "though He pardoneth their sins, He taketh vengeance on their inventions." This He does in various ways. He hides His face, or denies them tokens of His favour and love, and leaves them to feel the bitterness of sin, and the misery of departing from Him. This is peculiarly trying to a soul on whom the candle of the Lord was accustomed at one time to shine, and who was enabled to rejoice in God as his Saviour, and as his satisfying Portion. The persuasion that he is guilty of dishonouring God, and of provoking Him to anger, cuts the soul to the very quick; and if he apprehends that the Divine wrath may break forth against him, how this overwhelms his spirit! This is a state not uncommon with the believer, and oh, how burdened he is, how heavily he goes, mourning all day long, while it lasts! What bitter reproaches and humiliating confessions he utters regarding his folly! When the end of this chastisement is accomplished, however, then He restores to them the light of His countenance and causes them to rejoice anew in His salvation; and He gives them cause to say that it was good for them that they were chastised, since, before then, they went astray, but now they keep His law. All these afflictions and tribulations God uses as a furnace, wherein He

purifies His people as the goldsmith purifies the gold, and keeps it in the furnace, until the dross is separated from the genuine metal, and it then reflects the refiner's image as a mirror does. This is an apt illustration of the process of sanctification, which, when perfected, causes the soul to reflect the image of God, into which he is changed from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of God.

In conclusion, this teaches us that the way to heaven is through many trials; that it is an established principle in the Divine proceedings to bring men to heaven through a series of tribulations. And if this is so, let not believers feel discouraged at their various troubles, and at their chequered lot. Since this is the Divine appointment, it must be submitted to by every expectant of heaven; but there is in it such a display of wisdom, mercy, and love as ought to gain man's approval and induce him cheerfully to bear and to endure. His kingdom of light and glory is worth enduring any tribulation for. And as it appears from this and other passages of Scripture that this is the only way to the kingdom, the toil, struggle, and conflict should be more than compensated by the peace, rest, and enjoyment that await them when the warfare is finished. Do you aspire after a glorious immortality and a crown of righteousness? The path to these is through the Cross, which every candidate must take up while following the Captain of Salvation. The bearing of it may often prove trying to flesh and blood, but for those who have made choice of Christ, there is no alternative. No trial can induce such deliberately to renounce Christ, and through Him they shall be enabled to exclaim triumphantly, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

Let no sense of darkness, of corruption, and unbelief, let no force of temptations, discourage the believer in his attempts to persevere. If exposed to the scorn of the godless world, instead of being cast down, let him rather rejoice that he is thought worthy to bear reproach for the sake of Christ. If chastised, let him not think that anything strange has happened to him, for "whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth," and He will cause all things to work together for their good. The description given of those troubles through which there is entrance to the Kingdom of Heaven will, I doubt not, be regarded by those who know anything of them experimentally, as very meagre and inadequate. But in every audience, however small, there may be some who give no heed whatever to statements made in reference to these matters, and who never exercise their understandings on any point of doctrine which is brought before them. To such, all that has

been said is an empty sound; but let them rest assured, that if ever they are brought into the kingdom of grace and glory, what is now disregarded by them must become an actual reality. There may be others who regard the faint representation given of those difficulties as exaggerated, and who may fondly persuade themselves that there is nothing easier than to believe in Christ and obtain an interest in His salvation, and that no path is smoother than that which leads to life and glory. But let them remember that their views cannot change or subvert what is Divinely established. What human nature in its fallen state would choose is to enjoy carnal ease and pleasure here, and when life terminated, then to enter a rest suited to its tastes and capacity. But there is no rest promised for those who lead such a life below, and the door of heaven shall remain closed against all except those who have come through great tribulations, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For those who made the world their portion, and who cared only for its pleasures and enjoyments, there shall be reserved only the blackness of darkness for ever. Let such be persuaded to lay this to heart, and prayerfully meditate on it as a truth spoken by God, and not by man, a truth which He did not speak to serve merely as a bugbear to restrain man from immorality, but a truth according to which He shall act towards all Christless souls, and which He now declares, not to torment men before the time, but to induce them to flee from the wrath to come, while He waits to be gracious. He declares that the sinner, though he should be the chief, is cordially welcome to come and partake of salvation, and that the grace and strength necessary to bring him through every trial are made sure to him in Christ Jesus.

Tobermory, 6th November, 1856.

THE PSALMS AND UNINSPIRED HYMNS *

By Rev. Dr. Hugh Martin, D.D. (1872)

First of all, then, on behalf of human hymns, it has been said, "We live now under a better and brighter dispensation than that of the Old Testament, therefore the inspired Psalms of David, and other Psalms in Holy Scripture, are insufficient." But the question is not whether the dispensation under which we now live is better and brighter than that which preceded it; but whether, under this better and brighter dispensation, there is any security for better and brighter hymns than the Psalms of David, and

* Extracts from a speech by Dr. Hugh Martin, in the General Assembly of the Free Church, 3rd June, 1872.

whether there is a promise given to any man, or any body of men, of a richer unction of the Spirit—and not a richer unction only, but a specifically inspiring action of the Spirit—for the purpose of composing hymns for the public worship of God in the Church than was given to him, of whom it is written, that in his blessed swan song he spoke as follows:—"David, the son of Jesse, said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel, said, The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His Word was in my tongue." Is there any modern hymnologist in circumstances to say that? Dr. Adam must tell us who he is, before his argument from the greater brightness of the New Testament dispensation is of any worth, otherwise it is an argument not only on behalf of hymns, but against the Book of Psalms.

Further, we are told that "it would be strange if we were never to rise in this respect above the dispensation which had passed away." Yes, no doubt, when the fulness of the times was come, the Church rose above the dispensation which had passed away. But the question is not whether we are to rise above the Old Testament dispensation, but whether we are, by the help of uninspired hymnologists, to rise above the Spirit and Word of God in the mouth of "David, the son of Jesse, the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet Psalmist of Israel." Is it modest to talk of rising above the height to which he who was "raised up on high" was raised? Still further, it has been said, "It would be strange if we were always to walk in the morning dawn, and never pass into the sunshine of the perfect day." Sir, who can fail to admire the ingenuity which has discovered the resplendent fulness of noon-tide glory in uninspired songs, and nothing but twilight in the Psalms of David? Was it an uninspired modern hymnologist whose pen produced the following, or was it the Psalmist of Israel?—

" Because of life the fountain pure
Remains alone with thee,
And in that purest light of thine
We clearly light shall see."

If the Psalms are but twilight, and human hymns the sunshine of the perfect day, then walk always in the perfect light. . . . Sing nothing but human hymns, for that is perfect sunshine; and sing no Psalms of David, for that is going back to the twilight. Excuse me, however, if I think that this argument of our friends is moonshine, and the logic of it is the logic of the twilight, and suited for these only who are of weaker vision. I

say the Psalms are the full noonday light of Messianic glory, and the hymns are but the twilight—likely, if you trust to them, or put them on a level with the Word of God, to prove an evening and not a morning twilight, and you know the fatal difference there.

Again, it has been said that because a crowd at our Lord's entry into Jerusalem sang a quotation from the 118th Psalm, slightly modified, therefore human hymns are lawful. It is a marvellous argument, and branches out into several very marvellous syllogisms. Because an inspired psalm was sung long ago, therefore uninspired hymns should be sung now! Because a crowd, at their own instance, and not assembled for public instituted worship, chanted a quotation from a psalm, therefore Free Church ministers should give out human hymns to be sung by their people in the divinely instituted ordinance of congregational song! Because an inspired psalm was sung on a weekday in Jerusalem, therefore uninspired hymns should be sung in Scotland on the Sabbath! . . .

Then again, we have had an argument from Scripture, from the text, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." But first, let it be inquired how the Word of Christ—the Word of God—is to dwell in us richly by singing the word of man? That is a strange idea to extract from the writings of a well-regulated intellect like that of Paul—not to speak of their being written under the inspiration of the Spirit. I can understand how the Word of God should dwell in us richly by singing the Word of God—dwelling on it in solemn, meditative, grave, sweet singing of it, till—to use a Scotch phrase—it *seeps* into the soul and takes its dwelling there, while in warm emotion of faith the worshipper's spirit in believing song dwells deliberately upon it. Thus it may come to dwell richly in us. But how is God's Word to dwell in us by singing man's word? How is the Divine Word to dwell in us by singing human hymns? . . . But even though it were granted that this verse refers to uninspired hymns, and though the strange problem could be solved of how God's Word is to dwell in you by singing the words of man, how are you to prove that this text refers to public worship? Paul is not speaking in this connection of believers in their Church capacity, or in their action in public, divinely instituted, worship. I defy any man to show that the apostle is here referring to public worship at all.

But it has been asked in this house, "Are we always to sing predictions and never sing fulfilments?" But do you need to go outside the Psalms to get the language of fulfilment? Shall

we sing of the Incarnation? Psalm xl: 6—"Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not; mine ears hast thou bored." Or, as in Heb. x: 5—"A body hast thou prepared me." Is that the future tense? Is that mere prediction? Shall we sing of Christ's faithfulness and zeal in duty? Psalm lxi: 9—"The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Is that prediction, or is it the language of fulfilment? Shall we sing of the sufferings of our dying Redeemer? Psalm lxi: 20—"I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." If that is prophecy, is it not the language of history? And is not the spirit of prophecy the historic testimony of Jesus? Shall we praise Christ for His ascension? "Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men." Is that the language of mere prediction, as contra-distinguished from that of fulfilment? Sing we Christ's reward in glory? "He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it to him, even length of days for ever and ever." Is that prophetic merely? Is it not historic? Shall we sing of Christ's intercession, and of His mediation generally. "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, whom thou madest strong for thyself." Of Christ's action in His prophetic office? "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation." What about the language of prediction, and the absence of the language of fulfilment, there? Shall we adore Christ in His priestly office? "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." His kingly office? "The Lord said unto my lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." What is there, sir, concerning Christ's kingdom that is not celebrated in the Psalms in the language of fulfilment? I say that even when the mystery of God shall have been finished, and both the fulness of Israel and the fulness of the Gentiles shall have been brought in, the Church may celebrate her millennial glory in the language of fulfilment from the Psalms of David.

"He mindful of his grace and truth
To Israel's house hath been;
And the salvation of our God
All ends of the earth have seen."

All the ends of the earth that have seen the salvation of our God, know the Psalms of David. The Psalms are the grand catholic hymnal, and the singing of them provides for Christian union and for perfect catholicity. One more *primâ facie* principle, and I am almost done. The great, primary, responsible leader of all worship in the Church is our blessed Lord Himself—the minister of the true sanctuary which the Lord pitched, and not man. In this capacity He is pleased to say in the 22nd Psalm—

and it is quoted in the New Testament too—"I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." On this verse Calvin has this beautiful comment: "It thus appears that our Lord is the leader of our songs and chief composer of our hymns." Are they uninspired hymns which Christ composes, and leads us in singing in the great congregation? He is spiritually present with His people in their worship in the sanctuary. But were He bodily present, as in the synagogue of Nazareth, where there was given to Him the book of the prophet Isaiah, would you give Him any other book of song than the book of the Psalms of David, or other inspired songs of Scripture? Would you give Him other than His own Psalms to lead you in singing?—His own Psalms, in that they are composed by Himself; and His own Psalms, in that His soul sang them, with grace in His heart unto the Lord, in the days of His flesh. You maintain communion with Him, and He with you, when, in the praises of the sanctuary, you sing His Psalms. You may think your hymns are in accordance with His Word, but the Psalms are His very Word itself. You can sing them in faith untainted with doubt, in the full assurance of faith, unshackled from the spirit of criticism which man's word continually provokes, yea, demands—in that faith which cometh by hearing, when the hearing is the hearing of the Word of God, and which goeth forth in songs of faith, when the songs are the songs of the Spirit of God.

A SOLDIER'S LETTER

FRANCE, *Friday, 21st July, 1916.*

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

It is with tears in my eyes that I commence to pencil this note, realising that owing to the uncertainty of time and that which is ahead of us on the morrow, there is the probability that I may not see you again in time. Oh, may God grant if it is His Will that I should fall that we may meet at the Great Assembly at His right hand, arrayed in the spotless garment of Immanuel's righteousness. That is what should be my chief concern now, but I have to confess alas my proneness to be more concerned with the things of time. Oh, that He would make me truly penitent and that I might have that repentance which needeth not to be repented of. Dear Mother, I am going forward into the uncertainty of to-morrow desiring to put my trust for time and eternity upon Christ who is the alone sure foundation, praying that not for any merits in me, for I am of all creatures the most miserable, but for His own name's sake He would take saving

dealings with me and deliver me from this body of sin and death; that He would make me a fit subject for the kingdom of glory. Oh, if that be in accordance with His blessed will, may He answer your prayers and that of all the kind friends that He would be with me and cover my head in the day of battle and keep me from all harm and bring me through in safety the terrible ordeal through which I am likely to pass. What I ask for myself—oh, how selfish we are! I would desire grace to seek at all times that it might be the portion of all who are with me. Oh, that He would pour out a spirit of repentance upon us, that we as a company, a battalion, a brigade, a division (and divisions all over) would confess our great transgressions and seek even at the eleventh hour His forgiveness and His help, rather there would be success upon success attending on our efforts. As for myself may He help me to go forward having no great reliance on man or his weapons of destruction but having my whole confidence in the God of battle. If God be for me what might I care though thousands ten should round encompass me? I have been reading now and for some time Psalms 32 and 91, 94, 9, 17, 20, 23, 27, 34, 46, 51, 62, 103, 121, 149, from particular verses which are marked in my pocket Selected Psalm Book. In each of which I am not deceived I hope, I derived ground for hope and confidence in the saving mercy of God. My battle cry will be that of the godly of Old Testament times “the sword of the Lord and Gideon.” Into thy hand O God do I commit all my concerns. Remember my beloved Mother, spare, strengthen and help her to endure whatsoever in Thine all-seeing providences Thou mayest have in store for her. I thank Thee now for the greatest of all temporal and human gifts, a godly Mother. Hear her prayer on behalf of us, her unworthy children, and may we turn unto Thee while we are still on mercy's ground and in the place of hope. If it be Thy blessed will O God, take me back in safety to see and enjoy the fellowship of my dear Mother and grant that at all times I may do and act according to the godly example which she has set before me. Hitherto, O Lord, Thou hast helped me, continue Thy favour for Christ's sake toward me and carry me through this battle, covering me under Thy wings if it be Thy blessed will. Now, dear Mother, my thoughts are and will be with you and all the dear friends. If I die in a foreign country, I will seek to do so trusting in the merits of Jesus, that we may meet again on that bright shore where sin and sorrow and pain will be unknown. God have mercy on us all. Goodbye Mother, Alick and Ewen. Love from Angus.

In God have I put my trust. I will not fear what man can do

unto me. Keep me as the apple of the eye. Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings. Some trust in chariots and some in horses but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. All my belongings and what may fall to me will be my Mother's property.

A. M. CATTANACH.

Footnote.—This young man was killed in France in the First World War. He at times attended the services of the late Rev. James S. Sinclair, Glasgow, who held him in high esteem as a godly young man.—Editor.

LADY ANN AGNES ERSKINE — THE LADY SOLD BY AUCTION

By Rev. D. M. Macdonald

Before dealing with the manner of Lady Ann's conversion, I shall give a brief sketch of the minister who was instrumental in leading her to a saving knowledge of Christ. The Rev. Rowland Hill belonged to a titled family in the west of England and, when quite young, was sent to Oxford University. It seems that he experienced the saving power of the Gospel there and soon began to preach it in outlying villages. His father disapproved of this and refused to help him unless he would stop preaching. He had a good friend in Lady Huntingdon who valued evangelical preaching and she supported him when no one else would. She was much concerned for the salvation of her fellow-sinners and eager to help all who were endeavouring to advance the Kingdom of Christ in the nation.

In due course Mr Hill's father relented and gave his son an ample allowance to support him. As he was heir to the title, he renounced it in favour of his brother so that he would devote his life wholly to the service of his Saviour by preaching the Gospel to his fellow-sinners. He had a large congregation in London but spent the summer months conducting services in different parts of the country. He was of commanding presence with a powerful voice, and his preaching was both evangelical and original so that he became very popular.

It was when he was preaching in Moorfields in London to a vast company of people in the open air that the following incident took place. It concerns Lady Ann Agnes Erskine, who was a daughter of the Earl of Buchan and came of a distinguished family. Her grandfather suffered severely in the persecuting days of Charles the Second. The famous preachers Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine were also of the same family. As a child of seven or eight years, her mind received a deep impression of religion when her nurse read certain books to her. She early learned the value of prayer

but found like many others that early impressions of religion often wear off. She mixed much with the world and went into pleasure as far as she could.

When Mr Hill was preaching he saw a carriage approaching with a stylishly-dressed lady in it. His text was "I am black but comely"—Song of Solomon ch. 1, v. 5, and he was stating that he regarded it to mean that the Church was "black as the tents of Kedar" in the estimation of the world but "comely as the curtains of Solomon" in the eyes of her Bridegroom. As he was proceeding with his sermon, Lady Ann, for it was she, left her attendants and took a position at the back of Mr Hill, and by so doing drew considerable attention to herself. Noticing that the eyes of his audience were turned towards the newcomer, he paused in his discourse and, leaving the subject upon which he was engaged, entered upon a fresh one which drew the undivided attention of his hearers.

To the wonder of the people he imagined an auction sale. There were three bidders—the world, the Devil and the Lord Jesus Christ—the article offered was the soul of Lady Ann. The world offered "riches, honours and pleasure," the Devil "all the Kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them," and the Lord Jesus Christ "grace and glory hereafter."

This appears to have had a very solemn effect upon Lady Ann and led her to see her need of Christ as a Saviour and to look to Him for the grace that would in the end bring her to glory. Some might think that Mr Hill was making too much use of his imagination at this time but what he said is in accordance with the analogy of Scripture, as the Saviour shows in some of His sayings how the world and Satan mislead souls and lure them to destruction. For the love of worldly gain Judas sold his Master and perished. Paul said "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." Satan had the audacity to tempt Christ by showing Him the Kingdoms of the world in a moment of time and offered them to Him if He would worship him, but Jesus answered and said unto him, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve.' " Many in this generation are wholly given to the pleasures of sin and ruin their souls by indulging in them. False religions abound and are increasing so that we are living in perilous times and have need of Habbakuk's prayer, "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy."

Lady Ann's family removed to Bath and there they met the good Lady Huntingdon who was destined to be a generous friend

to her. The Countess invited her at once to remain with her as a companion and from that time they were most intimate and constant friends. The Countess consulted her on most of her projects and when she died, Lady Ann became a very prominent person as she was appointed one of the trustees and executors of the will. The trustees arranged that Lady Ann should occupy part of Lady Huntingdon's house and carry on the good work her friend had been doing. At length her health began to fail and she was troubled with asthma. Her spirits were bright and cheerful, however, and her mind seemed quite prepared to meet death. Two or three mornings before her departure she came much refreshed from her room and said to a friend, "The Lord has met me with so much sweetness of mind this morning that I seemed as if surrounded by God." She went out for a drive the day before her death, conversing as usual, and in the evening when a friend visited her she said, "I have no presentiment of death upon my mind," but she also added, "Be that as it may, God is faithful and I feel unshaken confidence in Him." On retiring to rest she said to her maid, "The Lord will reveal Himself to Me to-morrow." When asked if there were any outward matters to make her uneasy, she replied, "No, in those respects I am perfectly easy." Her voice was never heard again by any human ear, for when her attendant went to her room at six o'clock next morning, she found her mistress in the sleep of death. Of her sixty-five years more than forty had been spent in the works of faith and labours of love. The day of her death was Friday, October 5th, 1804, and she was buried in Bunhill Fields Cemetery, London, in which rest many of Christ's faithful witnesses, among them being that great Puritan theologian, Dr. John Owen, and the famous John Bunyan, whose writings have been blessed to many sinners.

Part of the epitaph on Lady Ann's tombstone is as follows:—

"She was affable and condescending in her deportment, kind and generous to the poor and compassionate to the afflicted. Her piety was sincere and unaffected, her life honourably useful and her death easy and happy."

We may close this brief sketch with these consoling and magnificent verses. "O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. ch. 15, v. 55).

"These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the

Lamb . . . They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat.

“ For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

EXTRACTS FROM A DIARY

By Rev. Christopher Munro

(Continued from page 81)

6th May.—Felt little inclination to meditate; visited some of the people, whom I may never see again, for they appear to be in a dying state. The Lord be near them and save them! Spoke to several others of the importance of preparation for death; spent part of the evening with one of the elders, and conversed on various subjects, but, alas! how I come short of God's glory in everything! Shall I ever attain to the Spirit of Jesus? Oh, my need of wisdom, to improve every hour and every company. How apt I am to carry on a train of thought and conversation that is not profitable! Lord, prepare me for the work of to-morrow; give direction and light, that I may prepare in the fear of the Lord, and be denied to my own wisdom. Bless the passage of Thy Word read by me this night, and keep me by Thy Almighty Power.

8th May, Saturday.—Felt dark and confused in meditating on the truth, and could find no liberty in prayer. Felt destitute of compassion for sinners and for believers. How can I, if I remain in this frame, go to-morrow and occupy the place of an ambassador for Christ? The Lord take pity and deal graciously; give a word in season, and fill me with the Holy Ghost, for Jesus' sake.

9th May, Sabbath.—Felt little liberty in the public service; the Lord bless His own truth. I know that I was enabled to speak some of His truth, though with unbecoming feelings. The Lord fit me for His service and empty me of self! He may be doing this, and let Him do it in the way He pleaseth. He has no need of me unless He chooses; my place is the dust, to feel my utter weakness and inability to do anything as of myself. May I have this deeply impressed upon me. Give me to feel aright my own place, and let me not seek to usurp Thine; let me not fret because I cannot do that which is Thy prerogative, which Thou claimest as Thine own, and of which all the glory is Thine.

10th May.—Felt wearied and unfit for much thought, my mind wandering and unfixed. Thus I get daily proof of the natural want of relish for Divine things, and of the natural aversion of the heart to spiritual things. Lord, leave me not in this state, but revive me each day.

11th May.—This day has been spent to little purpose. I have been in some degree sensible of my ignorance, my deadness, and my distance from God; felt as if I had never understood any of the truth. Read, prayed, and meditated as one entirely dead and in the dark. Lord, remove this darkness and this disrelish of Thy Word. Why is it thus with me? There must be a reason. There is no such indisposition felt regarding any other book except the Bible, no such aversion except to meditating on God and His works. This evidently arises from the enmity of the carnal mind. O Lord, visit my desolate and barren soul this night, and give me life and light.

14th May.—Was from home yesterday, visiting a family in a distant part of the parish. Felt tired after coming home, and unable to begin preparation for the Sabbath. Had some unbecoming feelings towards Divine providence; nothing but Divine power can overcome sin; no hatred in me, no struggle against it. No sorrow can accomplish this; it is the Lord who can cleanse away my transgressions that prevail against me.

15th May, Saturday.—Felt depressed with worldly carnal feelings, ignorance of the truth, and want of faith. How shall I get through to-morrow's work? He may do more than my present state of feelings can lead me to hope for. O Lord, give light, and give a word in season; give utterance and faithfulness; edify Thine own people, and reprove the erring; comfort those that are cast down, and direct any inquiring sinners; save me from perplexing such, and from being a stumbling-block to any. The Lord, the Spirit anoint me, and fill me with Himself.

16th May, Sabbath.—I felt dead in all the duties of this day, both private and public. Can the Lord ever countenance me in the office of the ministry? I know that I stated some of His truth, but with what want of tenderness, faith and zeal! Do Thou, Lord, bless what is Thy truth, and give me pardon and peace through Christ.

13th June, Sabbath.—Since I last wrote here, I have been in Edinburgh at the meeting of the General Assembly. Did not receive a favourable impression of the spirit that seemed to prevail

there. How strange to see how ministers of the same Church can behave towards one another! But the fault may be in myself. Felt weary and fatigued since I came home, and little fitted for mental work. I endeavoured to preach last Sabbath, but felt very dead. During the week, but especially Friday and Saturday, my old malady returned. What can I do? Shall I any longer continue to preach? The people seem to be hardening more and more every day, getting more careless, more indifferent to their salvation. Am I the cause of this? If it is so, I pray that the Lord may remove me or make me useful. Oh, baptize me with fire, and furnish me for the work of the Gospel. May I see fruit of my labours there.

THE ATONEMENT

By Rev. William Symington

It is impossible to peruse the Scriptures attentively and not perceive that a special importance attaches to the sufferings of Christ's soul, and of the concluding period of His life. We are not to confine the matter of the atonement to any one kind or degree of suffering; but as little are we at liberty to overlook the speciality that attaches to those sufferings to which we now refer. His bodily pains were of consequence, but the agonies of His holy soul were of more consequence. The suffering of infancy and childhood and youth are not to be lost sight of, but those of the final conflict call for particular notice.

The soul is often spoken of with particular emphasis. "Thou shalt make his *soul* an offering for sin—The waters are come in unto my *soul*—My *soul* is full of troubles and my life draweth nigh to the grave—My *soul* is exceeding sorrowful even unto death—Now is my *soul* troubled, and what shall I say?" What our divine surety suffered in His soul must ever surpass all our powers of description or conception. The language used by the inspired writers denotes the highest pitch of intensity, while we have the best reason to suppose that every variety of inward agony which a sinless spirit can possibly feel was experienced by Him. *His soul was exceeding sorrowful*; the most pungent sorrow filled His bosom; His heart was pierced through with many sorrows; He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. *He began to be very heavy*; an unutterable load of dejection, an overpowering weight of consternation pressed down His spirits to the lowest depths of depression. *He was sore amazed*—filled with inexpressible wonder and horrific terror at the evil of sin, and the magnitude of the curse to be endured for

its expiation. *His soul was troubled*—agitated with alarm, filled with apprehension, overwhelmed with anguish, at thought of that awful wrath which He had to endure; at sight of that thick darkness, that midnight gloom of hell which He had to approach and to dissipate; at experience of that condemnation which now weighed Him down under its mountain load; at taste of that cup of gall which had to be drunk with all its wormwood bitterness. Well might He take up the complaint, “My soul is full of troubles; the waters are come in unto my soul.” And this was it that “He made His soul an offering for sin.”

Nor can it be doubted that the sufferings of the latter period of His life possess a speciality of interest. The period of His mysterious agony, His awful desertion, and His actual death calls for particular notice. This is what is emphatically called “his hour—the hour and the power of darkness—the hour that He should depart out of this world.” It was now that He was subjected to that inexplicable agony which, in the absence of every adequate external cause, covered Him over with a copious sweat of blood. It was now that He was cruelly deserted by all His former friends, there not being among the whole multitude of those whom He had cured of their sicknesses, to whom He had preached the gospel of salvation, and whom He had chosen as His disciples, one to abide with Him in His dire extremity, but being left to utter the heavy complaint, “I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.” It was now that He suffered the withdrawal of all sensible tokens of His Father’s love; the suspension of every kind of sensible support, of every display of divine complacency; the felt manifestation of God’s righteous displeasure at sin; the total eclipse of the hallowed light which had formerly cheered Him amid the deepest gloom; the paternal desertion which drew from Him the deep groan of bereavement, “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me.” It was now that He suffered the pains of actual dissolution; He died the death of the cross; He bowed the head and gave up the ghost. It was no faint, no swoon, no temporary suspension of the vital functions. It was death—a complete separation of the soul and body; the heart having been pierced by the soldier’s spear, and His enemies themselves bearing witness to the reality of His departure. “Then came the soldiers and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him: but when they came to Jesus and saw that *He was dead already*, they brake not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.” This was the period when

emphatically the Son of God made atonement for sin; when the tide of suffering rose to its height; when the dregs of the bitter cup of anguish were wrung out; when the sentence of woe reached its climax. A period, into which whatever is painful in torture, ignominious in shame, distressing in privation, terrific in satanic assault, and overwhelming in experienced wrath, was, as it were, compressed!—a period, whether to the Sufferer Himself or to the guilty world whose cause He undertook, the most awfully momentous that had ever occurred since the commencement of time.

Such, then, is what constitutes the matter or substance of Christ's atonement—His sufferings, all His sufferings, and the sufferings of His soul and of the concluding period of His life in particular. It is not necessary to suppose that the sufferings which Christ endured on our behalf were precisely the same in kind and degree which are experienced by the wicked in the place of final woe. There are, on the one hand, ingredients in *their* misery which *He* could not feel, as remorse, despair, and the fury of evil passions. Remorse He could not feel, for His soul was a stranger to personal guilt. Despair He could not feel, for He had full assurance of deliverance from the bondage of death and the prison of the grave. And as for sinful passions, they had at no time a seat in His breast. On the other hand, there were ingredients in the sufferings of Christ, arising from the repugnance of His pure soul at moral defilement, which those who go down to the pit are incapable of feeling.

“It is, I humbly conceive,” says Dr. Pye Smith, “worse than improper to represent the sufferings of Jesus Christ, in their last and most terrible extremity, as the same with those of condemned sinners in the state of punishment. In the case of such incorrigible and wretched criminals, there is a leading circumstance which could not, by any possibility, exist in the suffering Saviour. *They eat of the fruit of their own way, and are filled with their own devices.* A most material part of their misery consists in the unrestrained power of sinful passions, for ever raging but for ever ungratified. Their minds are constantly torn with the racking consciousness of personal guilt; with mutual aggravations and insults; with the remorse of despair: with malice, fury, and blasphemy against the Holy and Blessed God Himself; and with an indubitable sense of Jehovah's righteous abhorrence and rejection of them. No such passions as these, not the slightest tincture of them, could have place in the breast of the holy Jesus. That meek and purest Lamb offered Himself without spot. His heart, though broken and bleeding with

agonies to us unknown, ever felt a perfect resignation to the hand that smote Him, and a full acquiescence in all the bitterness of the cup which was appointed Him to drink: the resignation and acquiescence of love and conviction. He suffered in such a manner as a being perfectly holy could suffer. Though animated by the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross and despised the shame; yet there appear to have been seasons in the hour of His deepest extremity, in which He underwent the entire absence of divine joy and every kind of comfort or sensible support. What but the total eclipse of the sun of consolation could have wrung from Him that exceedingly bitter and piercing cry, My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me? The fire of Heaven consumed the sacrifice. The tremendous manifestations of God's displeasure against sin He endured, though in Him was no sin: and He endured them in a manner of which even those unhappy spirits who shall drink the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God, will never be able to form an adequate idea! They know not the HOLY and EXQUISITE SENSIBILITY which belonged to this immaculate sacrifice. That clear sight of the transgressions of His people in all their heinousness and atrocity, and that acute sense of the infinite vileness of sin, its baseness, ingratitude, and evil in every respect which He possessed, must have produced, *in Him*, a feeling of extreme distress, of a kind and to a degree which no creature, whose moral sense is impaired by personal sin, can justly conceive. As such a feeling would accrue from the purity and ardour of His love to God and holiness, acting in His perfectly peculiar circumstances; so it would be increased by the pity and tenderness which He ever felt towards the objects of His redeeming love. A wise and good father is more deeply distressed by a crime which his beloved child has perpetrated than by the same offence if committed by an indifferent person."

GLEIDHEADH A CHRIDHE

Leis an Urr. Iain Flavel

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 92)

Ceisd 4. An ann mar so a rinn Iosa Criosd riumsa 'n uair, air mo shon-sa, a dh'fhosgail Se E Fein do fhulungasaibh fada ni's motha na's urrain a bhi air thoiseach ormsa? Bha fhulungasaibh mòr da-rìreadh, dh'fhuiling E air gach laimh, 'n a dhreuchdan uile, anns gach ball, cha'n ann a mhàin 'n a chorp, ach mar an ceudna 'n a anam; seadh, b'e fulungais anama, dearbh anam na fulungais Aige. Gabh beachd air fhallus fola anns an lios; gabh

beachd air an àrd-ghlaodh a bha leaghadh a chridhe agus a reubadh neamh, air a chrann-cheusaidh, “ Mo Dhia, mo Dhia, c’ar son a threig thu mi? ” Agus gidheadh cha do phill E air ais, “ ghiulain e’n crann-ceusaidh, a cur ’n a nàire an neo-shuim.” Mo thruaigh, ciod e m’fhulungais-sa an coimeas ri fulungais Chrìosd? Dh’òl E suas am fion-geur agus an dombhlas sin a dheanadh m’fhulungais-sa searbh. ’N uair a bha e air fheorach de aon de na martairich, c’ar son a bha e cho subhach aig a bhàs? “ O,” a deir e, “ ’s ann do bhrìgh gu’n robh anam Chrìosd cho brònach aig a bhàs-san. An do ghiulain Crìosd a leithid de dh’eallach air mo shon-sa, le foghaidean gun bhriseadh agus gu seasmhach; agus an tarraig mise air ais bho àmhghairean aotrom agus re sealain air a shon-san? ”

Ceisd 5. Nach fhiach beatha shìorruidh mòran de chràdh fhulung air a son? Ma dh’fhuilingeas mi maille Ris, rioghaichidh mi maille Ris. O! cia mar a chuireas daoine an cunnart am beatha agus am buill air son crùn a tha seargadh, cia mar a shnàmhaid tre chuaintean fola a dh’ionnsuidh rìgh-chathair, agus nach cuir mise nì air bith an cunnart? nach fhuiling mi nì air bith air son an crùn glòir nach searg as? Leanaidh mo chù sàiltean m’eich bho mhaduinn gu oidhche, gabhaidh e iomadh ceum sgith tre pholl ’s tre shalchar, a roghainn air nach fàgadh e mì, ged, ’n uair a thig an oidhche, ’s e na h-uile a gheibh e, cnàmhnan ’us buillean: ’n am biodh fìor mhòrachd, ’n am anam, sradagan idir de fhialaidheachd ann, cia mar a dheanadh e dìmeas air fulungais na slighe air son glòir na crìche. Cia mar a bhriseadh e sìos roimh gach duilgheadas, am feadh, le sìil creidimh, a tha e faicinn an Roimh-ruithear, a tha cheana air a dhol a stigh, ’n a sheasamh, mar gu’m b’eadh, air ballachan neamh, leis a’ chrùn ’n a laimh, ag ràdh, “ Ge b’e neach a bheir buaidh seilbhichidh e ’n a h-uile nithean.” Thig air adhart, uime sin, m’anam, thig air adhart, tha beatha shìorruidh air a tasgadh suas air an son-san le buannachadh gu foghaideanach ann an deanamh maith, a tha’g iarraidh glòir, urram agus neo-bhàsmhorachd. Rom. ii: 7.

Ceisd 6. An urrain dhomh cho furasda a bhi tilgeadh dhìom cuideachd agus co-chomunn nan naomh, agus deas-lamh a chomuinn a thoirt do na h-aingidh? Cia mar is urrain dhomh dealachadh ri leithid de chompanaich ghràdhach agus a thuair mi iadsan a bhi? Cia cho tric agus a thuair mi buannachd dhe’n comhairlean. Esra x: 3. Cia cho tric ’s a bha mi air m’ùrachadh, air mo bhlàthachadh, agus air mo bheothachadh le’n cuideachd. Eccles. iv: 10, 11. Cia cho tric agus a rinn mi trasg agus ùrnuigh maille riutha. Ciod i chomhairle mhilis a ghabh mi maille riutha, agus ’n an cuideachd a chaidh mi do thigh Dhé?

Agus am beir mi air laimh orra nis, agus an abair mi, Slàn leibh a naoimh uile gu bràth; cha bhi mi gu bràth tuilleadh 'n ar measg: thigeamh a mhisgeirean, a luchd mionnan, a luchd toibheum, a luchd geur-leanmhuinn, bithidh sibhse agam mar mo chompanaich shiorruidh? A roghainn air a sin biodh mo chorp agus m'anam air a reubadh bho cheile, na gu'n abrainn gu bràth mar sin riutha-san is iad oirdheirceas na talmhuinn, anns am bheil mo thlachd uile.

Ceisd 7. An d'thug mi riamh fa'n ear gu suidhichte bagraidhean-uamhasach nan Sgriobturan an aghaidh luchd cùl-sleamhnachaidh? O, mo chridhe, An dàna leat do chùl a thionndadh fodh chomhair a leithid sin de bhagraidhean? " Mar so deir an Tighearna, Is mallaichte an neach a chuireas a dhòchas ann an duine, agus a nì feoil 'n a gairdean dà, agus aig am bheil cridhe tha claonadh air falbh o an Tighearna: Oir bidh e mar phreas seargta 's an ionad sgaoilte, nach mothaich am maith 'n uair a thig e; ach a tha'g àiteachadh ionada loisgte an fhàsaich, fearainn gun toradh agus gun chòmhnuidh." Ier. vii: 5, 6. 'S sin, seargaidh mallachd Dhé e araon freumh agus meanglan. " Oir ma pheacaicheas sinn de ar toil fein an deigh dhùinn eolas na firinn fhaotainn, cha'n fhàgar tuilleadh dhuinn iobairt air son peacaidh, ach dùil eagalach ri breitheanas agus feirg theinntich, a sgriosas na h-eascairdean." Eabh. x: 26, 27. Agus a ris, " Ma philleas neach sam bith air ais, cha bhi aig m'anam-sa tlachd ann." rann 38. Mar gu'n abradh E, " Gabh e, a shaoghail, gabh e, a dhiabhail, mar do chuid fein, cha'n eil tlachd Agam-sa ann." O, co leis an dàna tarruig air ais 'n uair a dhruid Dia mar so suas a shlighe le leithid de bhagraidhean cho uamhasach.

Ceisd 8. An urrain dhomh amharc air Crìosd anns an aodann aig làtha bhreitheanais ma threigeas mi nis E?

" Oir ge b'e neach a ghabhas nàire dhiomsa, agus de m' bhriathran, anns a'ghinealach adhaltranach agus olc so, dhethsan gabhaidh Mac an duine nàire, 'n uair a thig e ann an glòir Athar, maille ris na h-ainglean naomha." Marc. viii: 38. Fathasd tamull beag, agus chl sibh comharradh Mhic an duine a tighinn ann a' neulaibh neamh, le cumhachd agus glòir ro mhòr; seididh an trùmpaid dheireannach, daisgidh eadhon iadsan uile tha'n an cadal anns an duslaich, agus thig iad fodh chomhair na rìgh-chathair mhòr gheal, air an suidh Crìosd air an làtha sin. Agus a nis, dean ach smuainteachadh gu'm faca tù na glùinean critheanach agus na bilean gluasadach aig peacaich chiontach; smuaintich gu'n cuala to binn eagalach a Bheitheamh orra, " Imichibh uam a shluagh mhallaichte," agus an sin an glaoth,

O! an gul, an caoidh, agus am fàsgadh làmh, a bhitheas an sin. An treigeadh tù Criosd a nis gu bhì sineadh a mach beatha bho chd, thruagh, air an talamh? Ma tha focal Dhé 'n a fhìrinn, ma tha briathran Chriosd air an seulachadh agus dìleas, 's e so a chuibhrionn a bhios aig fear-treigsinn a chreidimh. 'S e nì furasda th'ann beul na coguis a dhùnadh a nis, ach am bi e furasda beul a Bhreitheamh a dhùnadh an sin? Mar sin gleidh do chridhe a chum agus nach treigh e'n Dia beo.

Am 12. 'S e'n dara h-àm deug gu bhì'g amharc gu dìchiollach ri ar cridheachan agus ga'n cumail leis a chùram is motha àm an tinneis. 'N uair a tha leanabh Dhé a tighinn dlùth air an t-siorruidheachd, 'n uair nach eil ach beagan ghràinneanan de ghainmhich ann an cuid uachdrach na gloine gun ruith; an sin gluaisidh Satan e fein gu dìchiollach: ma thimchioll faodaidh e bhì air a ràdh, mar a tha e air a ràdh thaobh na nathrach gu litireil; "cha'n eil i air a faicinn aig a làn fhaide gus am bheil i bàsachadh." Agus a nis, 's e a rùn mòr, bho nach urrain e 'n t-anam a chosnadh bho Dhia, a mhì-mhisneachadh agus a dheanamh neo-thoileach a dhol a dh'ionnsuidh Dhé, ged a bu chòr do'n anam ghràs-mhor, maille ri Iacob, e fein a dùsgadh suas bho leabaidh bàis, agus aoibhneas a dheanamh gu'm bheil làtha pòsaidh an Uain aig laimh; ged a bu chòr dhà ràdh maille ri *Austin* agus e bàsachadh, "Tha mi deanamh dìmeas air beatha a chum a bhì maille ri Criosd." Na mar a bhà *Milius* agus e bàsachadh, 'n uair a dh'fheoirich neach dheth an robh e toileach bàsachadh, "O," a deir e, "biodh e neo-thoileach a bhì bàsachadh a thà neo-thoileach a dhol a dh'ionnsuidh Chriosd. "Ach O, ciod an teicheadh bho'n a bhàs. Ciod e'n leisg a bhì falbh, a dh'fhaodas air uairibh,, dà-rìreadh tuilleadh 'us tric, a bhì air fhaicinn ann an sluagh Dhé. Cia cho leisg 's a thà cuid aca gu bhì gabhail a bhàis air a laimh fhuar. 'N an robh a leithid de shaorsa air a dheonachadh dhuinn nach biodh-mid a siubhal gus an siubhladh-mid dhà'r deoin; cuin a theireadh-mid maille ri Pol, "Tha miann orm a bhì siubhal?" Seadh, uime sin, 's e chùis mu dheireadh so.

Cuis 12. Cia mar a dh'fhaodas sluagh Dhé, ann an àm tinneis, an cridheachan fhuasgladh bho gach ceangal saoghalta, agus an co-eigneachadh gu bhì toileach gu bàsachadh.

Agus thà seachd argumaideam ann, a dhian-chuireas mi air sluagh Dhé aig a leithid so de dh'àm, a chum an deanamh aoidheil gu bhì gabhail ri teachdairean a bhàis, a chum agus gu'm bàsaicheadh iad cho math 's a bha iad beo mar naoimh.

(R'a leantuinn)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Sabbath Train Excursions to West and North

Following upon the introduction of ferry services on the Lord's Day to the Isle of Skye in face of public protests by many of the people of Skye and others, the British Railways have commenced the running of cheap excursion trains on the Lord's Day from the Inverness area to Wick and Thurso in the North of Scotland, and are to run similar trains to Kyle of Lochalsh in the West. The trains will have a cocktail bar. It seems those who have no religion and no regard for God and His Day, must have drink to assist them to "enjoy" the Scottish scenery in the North and West. Those who manage and organise these excursions as officials of the British Railways have much to answer for before God. We do not accept that there was an active demand on the part of the public, in the first instance, for these excursions. But an irreligious section of the public are being encouraged and afforded the means to further the elimination of Sabbath observance in the Northern parts of Scotland. This, undoubtedly, is an endeavour to bring cash to the coffers of British Railways. Religion and morals do not come into the thinking of those responsible. The enemy of religion and morals then comes in like a flood. Those who fear God must do what they can to protest against the enemy; and look to the Lord to lift up a standard against the enemy.

Viet-Nam

Conflict between North Viet-Nam and South Viet-Nam continues. Lives are being lost in battle daily and destruction of property and homes goes on apace. It might be asserted by some that we are prejudiced, if we state that we are critical of the war activities emanating from North Viet-Nam against South Viet-Nam. We have carefully considered statements by the present Foreign Secretary, Mr Michael Stewart, who firmly avers that North Viet-Nam has been harassing the South for a period of five years and that it is only recently that America has come in to assist the South against plain, open aggression. Mr Stewart also stated that it was the declared policy of the North Viet-Nam Communists to use South Viet-Nam as a springboard for the greater extension of Communism. The Chinese, 650 million people, have pledged themselves to back the North Viet-Nam people to the hilt. Communism in theory and in many of its practices is an evil thing on the earth today. Atheism and Communism go hand in hand. A God-less creed and an anti-God political system can never be the means of bringing true peace

and prosperity to any of the Nations of the World. Although men's bodies would be sustained by an abundance of temporal things, if their minds are all the while kept in bondage, there can be no peace or desirable prosperity in such a case. The Americans and President Johnson have their critics because of their intervention on behalf of South Viet-Nam. Do these political critics really believe that America wishes to take over that part of the world for *material* gain? Is it not the case that America, humanly speaking, is self-sufficient as far as material things are concerned? As far as our limited judgment goes, America is in South Viet-Nam purely as an anti-Communist power. Therefore pro-Communists everywhere cry aloud against America. After all is said about such terrible, although localised, conflicts, the Gospel of Christ, the Prince of peace applied by the power of the Holy Spirit to the hearts of men, is the only remedy for men and nations, "hateful and hating one another."

Southern Rhodesia

Southern Rhodesia is that part of Africa where our Church's mission is situated; and during the last few years Southern Rhodesia has felt the impact of political unrest. At the time of writing another Commonwealth Premiers' Conference has been sitting in London. The political situation in S. Rhodesia was discussed and some severe criticism was levelled at the British Prime Minister, Mr Harold Wilson, and Mr Arthur Bottomley, Commonwealth Relations Secretary, by several African Prime Ministers, for not calling a constitutional conference with a view to hastening on majority rule in S. Rhodesia, by the introduction of one man, one vote. One African Prime Minister was more moderate in his speech. This was Sir Abubakar Tafama Balewa, of Nigeria. He made the point that the white people of S. Rhodesia had lived in Africa for many years and that it was their home as well as the traditional home of the Africans. He also agreed that the white minority must continue to have a say in Rhodesian affairs. Of course he asserted that the African majority must rule; and black and white learn to live together. From these brief notes, it can be seen that matters political, in S. Rhodesia, are not to be allowed to settle as they are at present. It is to be hoped that the work of the Gospel of Christ in this part of Africa will not be interfered with or eliminated by conflict or strife; and that whatever the political situation may at any time be, that the Church's efforts to educate the young Africans will not require to cease. The God of this world is active through many agencies and seems to be raging in these times against all the fundamental truths and practices of the faith once

delivered to the saints. Satan would like nothing better in S. Rhodesia than that those who maintain and preach and teach the doctrines of the pure Gospel of Christ would have their mouths closed and their Scriptural activities brought to an end. The cause of truth in S. Rhodesia calls for the concern and prayers of the Lord's people at home. The Lord alone can be as a wall of fire around the Church in S. Rhodesia.

CHURCH NOTES

Communion

January—Fifth Sabbath, Inverness. *February*—First Sabbath, Dingwall; third, Stornoway; fourth, North Uist, Kyle of Lochalsh. *March*—First Sabbath, Ullapool; second, Ness, Portree and Tarbert; third, Finsbay, Lochinver; fourth, Kinlochbervie and North Tolsta. *April*—First Sabbath, Breasclate, Portnalong and Fort-William; second, Gisborne, N.Z.; third, London and Greenock; fourth, Glasgow, Wick. *May*—First Sabbath, Kames and Oban; second, Scourie; third, Edinburgh and Broadford. *June*—First Sabbath, Applecross; second, Shieldaig; third, Lochcarron, Glendale, Helmsdale, Dornoch and Uig; fourth, Gairloch and Inverness. *July*—First Sabbath, Lairg, Raasay and Beaul; second, Staffin, Tomatin and Tain; third, Halkirk, Rogart, Flashadder and Daviot; fourth, Achmore, Bracadale, North Uist and Plockton. *August*—First Sabbath, Dingwall; second, Portree and Stratherrick; third, Bonar, Finsbay and Laide; fourth, Thurso, Vatten; fifth, Stornoway. *September*—First Sabbath, Ullapool, Breasclate; second, Strathy; third, Tarbert, Stoer and Vancouver (Canada); fourth, Applecross. *October*—First Sabbath, Tolsta, Lochcarron, Fort-William; second, Gairloch and Ness; third, Halkirk; fourth, Gisborne, N.Z., Greenock, Lochinver and Wick. *November*—First Sabbath, Oban and Raasay; second, Glasgow; third, Edinburgh, Dornoch, Staffin and Uig. *December*—First Sabbath, London.

Grafton Communion

Rev. Wm. MacLean expects (D.V.) to hold Communion services in Grafton congregation, Australia, on 5th Sabbath of August.

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund

The Synod appointed this collection to be taken up in *August*, and we, once more, approach our loyal people, soliciting their help for this most deserving cause. From a very small beginning the Mission has grown so much that there are now three main centres, Ingwenya, Zenka and Mbuma, each with an ordained minister. There is also a native student of Divinity who (D.V.) will be ready for license next year. We consider education as a handmaid to religion and there are about 5,000 children who are being taught to read the Word of God, and provision is made for training some of these as teachers. There is also a well-equipped hospital, and the many patients who visit it are brought in touch with the Gospel. All this involves expense and, though our friends in Holland help nobly, yet the Mission Funds, as a whole, show a deficit for the year of over £500. We feel it right to bring this

item and the other needs of the Mission before our people, confident that it will not fall on deaf ears. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Colossians iii: 23).

John Colquhoun, *Convener*.

July, 1965.

Day of Prayer in October

The Synod resolved that a day of Prayer be held by the Congregations of the Church on Tuesday, the 12th or Wednesday, the 13th October (D.V.) for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in view of increasing immorality and the widespread forsaking of the Word of God.—Robert R. Sinclair, Clerk of Synod.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DONATIONS

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, 20 Daleview Avenue, Kelvindale, Glasgow, W.2, sincerely acknowledges receipt of the following donations:—

Sustentation Fund.—T. MacDonald, Eston, £30; Anon, U.S.A., £20; Morrison Sons, Harris, per Mr J. G., £5.

Home Mission Fund.—T. MacDonald, Eston, £30; Anon, U.S.A., £10; Morrison Sons, Harris, per Mr J. G., £5.

Foreign Mission Fund.—Sister P. MacLeod, Edin., £1; A. Forgie, Redding, £10; Aberdeen F.P. Service Collection, £1 6s 9d; Friend, Water-nish, £5 for Hospital; T. MacDonald, Eston, £50; Anon, U.S.A., £10; Morrison Sons, Harris, per Mr J. G., £5; Interested, per Mr J. G., £2.

Aged and Infirm Ministers', etc., Fund.—M.S.K.D., £3.

College and Library Fund.—Friend, Skye, £1, and Friend, North Coast, Applecross, £1 10/-, both per Rev. D. MacL.; Anon, U.S.A., £10.

Organisation Fund.—M.S.K.D., £3.

Dominions and Colonial Missions Fund.—T. MacDonald, Eston, £30.

Mission to the Jews Fund.—Friend, Gourrock postmark, £2.

Home of Rest Fund.—Anon, Halkirk, per Rev. W. G., £5; T. MacDonald, Eston, £24 14s 8d; Mrs MacRae, Shieldaig, per Rev. A. MacA., £2; Anon, U.S.A., £30.

Mr J. Grant, Publications Treasurer, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness, acknowledges with grateful thanks:—

Publications Fund.—Anon, 4/5; R. McK., Ballifeary, Inverness, £3; J. McL., Holmisdale, 7/-.

On behalf of the Trinitarian Bible Society.—H. McR., Kelwood, Manitoba, £6 11/-; Gisborne Congregation, £7; C. M. for New Building, £10, and for distribution of Bibles, £10.

Free Distribution Magazine Fund.—A. R., Balintore, £1; C. H., Lancaster, 2/6; Mrs A. McG., Kishorn, 10/-; M. G., Stornoway, £1 5/-.

The following lists sent in for publication:—

Shieldaig Congregation.—Mr N. MacPherson, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks, £2 from Friend, Inverness, and £2 from Miss D. Campbell, Glasgow, both for Communion expenses.

Broadford Manse Building Fund.—Mr J. MacLean, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks: Miss F. MacKinnon, Flashadder, per General

Treasurer, £2; Raasay Friend, £1; Lochcarron Friend, £2, both per Mr R. MacLeod; Mrs Robertson, Elgol, £10, and Well-wisher, Elgol, £1 10/-, both per Mr L. MacKinnon; Friend at Communion, £2; Mr R. D. Nicolson, Penifiler, £2 10/-, both per Mr D. MacKay; Nurse C. MacKinnon, Luib, £10; Friend at Communion, £1; A Friend, £5.

Staffin Congregation.—Mr D. Gordon, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks, £10 from Edward Morrison, Tarbert, Harris, in memory of the late Rev. John Martin, and £5 from Misses Mackenzie, Union Road, Inverness, both for Sustentation Fund.

North Uist Congregation.—Mr M. J. Macdonald, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks, £10 from Mrs Saitterthwaite, Vancouver; £5 from Capt. Angus MacLennan, Cheesebay, Lochportan, both for Sustentation Fund.

St. Jude's Ladies Organisation in Aid of S. African Mission.—The Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks, £7 1s 8d (20 dollars), from Mrs Graham, Montana, and 10/- from C. F., Ardrishaig; Collection at Meeting, £21 14s 6d.

Lochbroom Congregation.—Mr A. Corbett acknowledges with sincere thanks, £3 from Mr and Mrs MacLeod, Achnahaird, Achiltibuie, for Congregational Fund.

Stornoway Congregation.—Mr D. J. MacLeod, Treasurer, thankfully acknowledges £6 from Two Friends, Stornoway Congregation, and £2 from North Tolsta Friend, both per Dr. P. A. MacLeod, for Church Hall Fund. A sum of £2 for Car maintenance is also thankfully acknowledged from A Friend, per Rev. D. M. MacLeod.

Inverness Ladies' Southern Rhodesian Mission Fund.—Mrs MacKay, F.P. Manse, Inverness, acknowledges with sincere thanks, Collection at Meeting, £64 0s 7d.

St. Jude's Congregation.—Mr J. Gillies, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks: Harris Friend, £2 for Library Fund and £1 for Foreign Mission; J. N., Glasgow, £1 for Library Fund; Mrs MacC., Glasgow, £1 for Sustentation and 10/- for Library Fund; Anon, £3 10/- for Sustentation; Mr and Mrs M., Paisley, £1 for Sustentation and £2 for Library Fund; Anon, £1 for Library Fund; Anon, £5 for Aged and Infirm, etc., Fund; M. S., Glasgow, £1 for Communion Expenses; Mrs and Miss C., Glasgow, £5 for Sustentation, £2 10/- for Home Mission and £2 10/- for Foreign Mission; Mr and Mrs J. MacL., Paisley, £1 each for Sustentation, Home and Foreign Mission, 10/- each for College and General Building Fund.

Glendale Congregation.—Mr A. MacLean, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks, £1 from Mrs Rattray, for Car Park.

Applecross Congregation.—Mr C. Gillies, Treasurer, acknowledges with grateful thanks: Inverness postmark, £5, and Friend, Applecross, £2, both for Sustentation Fund; Friend, Applecross, £1 11/-; Friend, Glenelg, £1; Friend, Kyle, £2, per Mrs MacIver, all three for Car Park; Friend, Applecross, £1, and Friend, Glenelg, £1, both for new heaters in Church.

London Church Building and Manse Purchase Fund.—Mr J. Campbell acknowledges with grateful thanks: Inverness postmark, per Rev. D. B. MacL., £5; A Skye Friend, £5.

Greenock Manse Purchase Fund.—Mr A. Y. Cameron, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks: Friend, Gairloch, £1, per Rev. L. MacL.; Anon, Glasgow postmark, Psalm 50: v. 14, 15, £5.

Lairg Church Renovation Fund.—Mr Wm. Sim, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks: Friend, Glasgow, £2; Friend, Lairg, £2; Miss D. Neilson, Grafton Sq., London, £3; Mrs Wilson, Migdale Hospital, £5; Jas. MacLeod, Achness, £5; Anon, £5; M.S.K.D., £3; Anon, Raasay Friend, per Rev. D. J. MacA., £2; Friend, £5.

Lochinver Congregation.—Rev. A. Macaskill acknowledges with sincere thanks, £10 from A Friend, for Door Collections.

Ingwenya Mission.—Mr Jas. Tallach acknowledges with sincere thanks, £49 17s 6d from St. Jude's Ladies Organisation for Transport, and £20 from Wick Sabbath School per Miss J. Nicolson.