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CLEANSE ME, KEEP ME

As a preliminary to this brief article we would quote a few statements from the Apostle Paul as to indwelling sin: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: But the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man . . . O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans Ch. 7). And now let us consider a little concerning the exercise of David, the Old Testament man of God.

David, in many of his psalms, has been led by the Spirit of God to place on record much of his very varied spiritual experiences. And in his recorded prayers these experiences are conspicuously revealed for the instruction, edification and encouragement of the exercised Christian.

In the 19th psalm, he admires the heavens as they declare the Glory of God and indicates his deep regard for the doctrine of God. But when he comes to consider his own spiritual case and concerns at this time, he turns to prayer to the Lord, in these words ". . . cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back also thy servant from presumptuous sins."

This prayer with its two distinct petitions is indeed the prayer of the believer time and time again; thus they follow in the spiritual footsteps of those of the flock of God as far back as David's day.

The secret faults of the Christian are principally to be considered as heart sins: sins of thought, of desire and of the imagination. The Christian at times is made keenly sensible of his secret faults

and grieves over them as sin against his Lord. He believes that God searches the heart and that his own heart is well known to the Lord. The fear of cherishing any sin in his heart affects him seriously, in the light of what is written elsewhere : " If I regard sin in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." This has been a sad and a trying experience. And thus the believer's desire is that the Lord would cleanse him from secret faults ; nothing but the Lord's cleansing will do.

Therefore the believer prays for cleansing, renewed cleansing, from the guilt of his secret heart sins, by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, which cleanseth us from all sin. He also prays for cleansing or deliverance from the power of secret faults, and that the Lord would do this through His Word and by the power of His Holy Spirit.

The Lord in His love and mercy does afford this cleansing to His people in answer to their cries. But secret faults will arise again and again in the life of the living soul throughout their journey here, so that they are kept turning to the Lord in prayer continually.

Now presumptuous sin is open, practical and heinous sins of which the ungodly are guilty ; and into which some of the godly have fallen to their great grief, the dishonour of Christ and the hurt of His cause in the World. David himself of course was a sad case of this nature.

The prayer of the Lord's people should be continually " Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sin." And indeed this will be the burden of their prayer often times. They hear the Word of truth speaking to them in these solemn terms : " Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall." And they accept the warnings of the Word of God regarding the power and animus of the devil as the adversary that goeth about seeking whom he may devour. And some of the Lord's people know, some more, some less, what influence the carnal and vain world can exercise, when they look back to the days of their ignorance. Being still in the world, although not of it, by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, they feel and recognise their great need of being kept back from falling into some actual and grievous sin. This felt need is a blessed frame of heart and mind.

It is made known in the Scriptures that God's people " are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." And so they require the trust of faith in the power of God's Spirit and in the power of their Mediator's intercession for them within the veil ; that they may enjoy divine keeping and a conscience void of offence toward God and men. What a mercy for the Christian to be thus kept throughout their sojourn in this evil world !

These two petitions as coming sincerely and genuinely from one's heart in the exercise of prayer to God, in the name of Christ, are evidently "marks of grace." They were truly marks of grace in David's case and they are so in the believer's experience today.

When the people of God will be brought out of this World, they will be perfectly and fully cleansed from every fault, and will be presented faultless before their Saviour with exceeding joy. And they will be kept for ever, clothed in white robes before the throne of God and of the Lamb. And all the praise will be to God and His sovereign grace.

A SERMON

Preached by Rev. Alfred Macdonald, M.A., Gairloch, at
the Induction of Rev. F. Macdonald, M.A., at Portree,
on 21st June 1966, taken down by a hearer.

Acts Chapter 16 v. 9. "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night ; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us."

The first observation that we would bring to your notice from these words in the incident is that the servants of God and the messengers of the Gospel of Christ are led and directed by the Holy Spirit. You have read how Paul and Silas, having now with them Timotheous, and also having in their company the one who wrote this book, Luke, intended to go and visit the various churches as he tells us in the previous chapter, "Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord, and see how they do." We find that they accomplished this mission, and when they finished it and established the churches in the faith, and had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, we find they were forbidden by the Holy Ghost to go to preach the Word in Asia, thus showing us that the servants of God, the messengers of the Gospel, are not free persons but are altogether under the command and power of their Master and their Lord. It did not lie even with the Apostle, and how much less with those who profess to be called to the ministry of the Gospel, to choose the sphere where they will labour in the world.

Then the Apostle assayed or tried to go into Bithynia for the same purpose, no doubt, even to bring the news of salvation to the people in that region. Again we read that the Holy Spirit suffered them not. Possibly there is a meaning in the distinction of these two — the forbidding on the one hand and not being suffered on the other, but sufficient for our present purpose is this brought before us throughout, that the servants of the Lord are

under the direct government of the Lord Jesus Christ who is now in heaven. This is something we would do well to lay to heart, that it is not of man, and not even of the will of the preacher of the Gospel, to say where he shall labour, to say what field he is going into, but he must wait, as we see here, the guidance and direction of God the Holy Spirit by the Lord Jesus. He has ascended to God's right hand and is at God's right hand now and for evermore. He is still directing and He is still governing; He is the governor of the nations; He is the head of His body the Church, and He is still governing the church of God in this world. In that connection He is still leading His servants and directing them as to the place where He will have them deliver the message which He will give them to deliver.

Now, more positively then, that brings us to notice the Holy Spirit's intention. The Holy Spirit told them to go to this place, Macedonia. It is abundantly plain that the direction which Paul and his associates received to go to Macedonia was a message from heaven, a message from the Lord Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. If you are to enquire — 'how did the Holy Spirit and how does the Holy Spirit lead and guide the ministers of the Gospel?' The answer before you here is, that while they were in Troas a vision appeared to Paul in the night. Here you have the fact of a vision appearing to Paul and by that, vision is not meant a dream, although it says it was a vision by night. Paul was not asleep and a-dreaming when he received this direction from the Lord, but he is presented to you here as a man greatly exercised, deeply concerned with what path the Lord would have him to take, so that even in the night when he would expect him to be resting and enjoying the peace and the rest of body which, no doubt, he greatly needed, we find him crying to the Lord of heaven, his beloved Master, and asking the Lord to send him direction and guidance because he had just been directed by the Lord through the Holy Spirit not to go to one place, not to go to Asia and, therefore, he is undoubtedly in some distress as to where the Lord would have him go. The Lord appears, then, in the night in a vision and we are not given the details of this vision or how it operates, but we are informed that he saw a man from Macedonia. You may say, 'how did the Apostle know that the man was from Macedonia?' Macedonia, as you probably know, is the northern division of Greece, in Europe, and up to this time the Apostle had not preached on the continent of Europe. He had not travelled to that part, but we may assume that he had recognised and seen people from Greece and that he would know a Macedonian. Whatever the answer be, the fact is that the Lord made known to the Apostle by clear means that this was a man belonging to Macedonia, to Greece.

Now, if you ask, 'how does the Lord direct His servants today?' 'Do they wait for visions?' 'Does the Lord appear in the watches of the night to His servants, the ministers of the Gospel, and does He direct them by some such thing as this — where they are to go and where they are to preach the Word of God?' The answer is that the Lord in heaven is still concerned with His Church on earth. The Lord Jesus Christ has not grown weary of watching the movements and directing the movements of His Church in this world and the Lord still has a way whereby He leads His servants, the messengers of the Gospel, as clearly as in the Apostle's day. The Lord does not leave His ministers and messengers in the dark as to where they have to go and what they have to do. If you inquire as to the means whereby the Lord reveals to a servant of His where he is to labour, then the means are (1) the Spirit of God working in that person leading that person to wherever the Lord is going to lead him to labour, and (2) the Lord is still speaking through His Word. The Lord is still speaking through this Book, the Word of God. He uses it to direct the minister of Christ where he shall go with His message and surely we have much food for thought in that very consideration.

You probably read a sermon on this passage some time ago in the Magazine from Dr Owen, and his main point in this passage was the great and wonderful grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in sending the Gospel and sending the Ministry of the Gospel to one place and denying it to another. The Holy Ghost, he points out, forbidding them to preach the Word in Asia suffered them not to go to Bithynia and now sending them to Macedonia to preach the Word of God in Macedonia. Many thoughts might follow upon your reflection on this fact.

That, then, is the first observation we would leave with you — that the ministers of Christ in our day and in every day are not moving hither and thither at the will and caprice of men. It is by the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit in their soul that they believe and are persuaded of their duty when they move from one place to another place to preach the Word.

Paul did not dare go into Asia when he felt the Holy Spirit did not want him to go, nor did he go to Bithynia, but, on the other hand, he dare not keep away from Macedonia when he is persuaded that the Lord has spoken to him, and that the Lord has directed him to go to Macedonia. It is no idle matter for a minister of the Gospel to be persuaded that he is where the Lord has put him, and surely among other things this is great strength and great encouragement whatever else will lie before him when he comes to Macedonia. Men and women can do as they please, and devils in hell can rage, but the Lord has put me to Macedonia and when a true servant of the Lord fixes upon a place where he is going to

labour, it is the same persuasion that is needed in his mind, the same persuasion must occupy his heart that it is of the Lord that he is going there and that balances all objections. No one can answer the question, 'Why Paul are you not going to Asia, why are you not going to Bithynia, why are you going across the sea to Macedonia?' It may look very unreasonable, it may look very questionable in the eyes of men and women who know nothing and understand nothing of the working of the Holy Spirit, but it is according to the government of the Lord Jesus Christ who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever.

Now, we pass on to notice secondly from the point of view of Macedonia that it was a call — "come over and help us." This brings before us the reason why Macedonia should be calling to Paul. It is plain that they were in need and that there was a need felt in Macedonia. Even if we suppose the need was not felt, even if you ask me how can I prove that the Macedonians felt the need of the Apostle and of the ministry of the truth and we say we cannot prove that they felt their need; the point is this, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who is on High well knew the need of the people in Macedonia. The Lord will not send His servants where there is no need for them. That follows from being sent to a place by the Lord, you may know that there is need for you. Whether the Macedonians felt that need or not, we may leave as an open question, but the truth is there was a need in Macedonia for the Gospel; and alas, alas, how very few in this day and generation have the least understanding of their need of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

You may say — 'surely we know our need of a minister' — but I call you to examine what you mean when you say that you need the ministry of the Word of God. What is in your mind? What view do you have of your own need of a minister or the ministry of God's Word? Few, we say, very few at all are sensible of their need of the ministry of the Gospel, because by reason of sin we do not and we cannot know nor feel our need of the Gospel. It is impossible for man in his natural condition to know and feel his great need as a sinner going to an endless eternity. I put it to your own conscience — Can you appeal to the omniscient God, can you appeal to the Lord Jesus Christ and can you say, I feel, I know, I experience a need in my soul, a need which nothing but the Gospel, nothing but the ministry of Christ can fulfil? Can you say — I, by the power, by the teaching, by the preaching, by the light and understanding of God the Holy Spirit have felt my need? The Word of God sets forth your spiritual needs in the most awful and solemn terms. We may use that expression — it is the one thing that is needful. The needs of your soul, what are they? You need pardon, you need peace with God, you need salvation,

you need deliverance from hell, and from the wrath to come. You need deliverance from the burning lake of brimstone and where are you to get that need supplied. Are you not in need of a Gospel ministry? That is only one view of the needs which sinners have of a Gospel ministry. You need to be saved. It matters not what else you have ; you need to be saved ere you leave this world or you will perish in hell for ever and ever.

In calling Paul to Macedonia there was this need surely in Macedonia. Souls were perishing there. There was a need in Macedonia for the Word of God and for the Worship of God but, furthermore, it is not only that. What I mean is, that many people think that the reason for a Gospel ministry is the conversion of sinners. That is one need, and an extraordinary need it is, that sinners would be converted, that is, turned spiritually and born again, by the power of the Holy Ghost, "For except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Not only does the Lord Jesus set up His ministry in this world for the conversion of His people, but also those who are converted need the ministry of the Word of God. Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Feed my sheep," "feed my lambs," "feed my sheep," so that each man may be presented at last perfect before the presence of the Lord. It is no small thing and no small matter to present men perfect. The late Rev. J. P. MacQueen, London, often came out with the expression regarding some Christians who were converted but who never grew ; he compared them to and used to term them 'spiritual dwarfs'. O what a generation of spiritual dwarfs we are, and why? Because we do not feel the need for the ministry of God's Word. Suppose we are converted and we have a hope that we shall be saved for eternity, we still need the Word of God and the preaching of the everlasting Gospel. It is to meet the many needs, the many trials, temptations and difficulties in the Christian life that the Lord has set up on earth the preaching of the Word. Therefore, is it not plain that you need the Word of God? You need the ministry of the Gospel and, therefore, this cry "come over and help us" is a cry professing this — "we need you."

When you call a minister, when you ask a minister to come to you, you are making this profession that you need the ministry of the Word of God. This is your profession that you are not merely calling on Paul to visit Macedonia, not merely asking him to come and see the city and see this wonderful place, Europe, and to see the glories of Greece (and it had plenty of glories), but that you are asking him on one score alone and that is this, "we are needing your ministry Paul." Let this be the motive urging you to get a minister settled over you in the Gospel. "What shall it profit a man though he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

That brings us to consider how Paul interpreted this cry, "Come over and help us." Paul knew and Paul believed that he **could** help the people of Macedonia. The Gospel is a message which brings help with it. It is a message of help to helpless needy sinners and Paul was persuaded that if he did go to Macedonia, he would be a help to the people of Macedonia and that he would be able in some measure to answer their needs, to respond to their cry which was "come over and help us." Paul, we see, knew that he would be able and that he was going there to be a help — certainly not in his own strength. He did not go to Macedonia feeling that he himself, because of who he was, could help the Macedonians, but he felt persuaded and assured of this that if the Lord was sending him to Macedonia the Lord would enable him to answer the need of the Macedonians. Paul by the grace of God and by the power of the Holy Spirit was, as we see from the subsequent events, enabled to be a helper to the people, at least to some of them in this colony, in this place called Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia and elsewhere throughout that region. He was a helper to them, a helper to their souls so that we find in this very chapter the greatest example you have possible in the Word of God revealing plainly the need of a sinner in the case of the jailer at Philippi. There you have that memorable cry, that soul-wrenching cry, "What must I do to be saved?" Can the Apostle give any assistance to such a one as this? The Greeks with all their wisdom, with all their learning, with all their culture, with all their arts and with their science, what could they do for this man in answer to his cry, "What must I do to be saved?" Might he not say with the Psalmist :

"I looked on my right hand and viewed,
But none to know me were,
All refuge failed me, no man
Did for my soul take care."

And, remember, the world with all its glory, with all its splendour, with all its beauty, with all its learning, education and erudition of the day cannot help a sinner who has this cry, "What must I do to be saved?" But blessed be the Lord, the Apostle could help him. That is the help that is to be found in Christ, the help that is in the Saviour of sinners, and the help which the Gospel ministry brings into your midst, and would that you would understand it and appreciate it. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." If you were to feel that help, can you imagine, can you conceive anything so wonderful as this? You may point to help you have received, and you may be looking to a minister to help you here and there in your families, in your homes, to help to bury the dead, baptize children and so forth, but this is where the help of Paul

was and this is where the help of the ministry of the Gospel is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Can you imagine what comfort and what an answer to his needs this man received from the Word of God by the Apostle in that hour of the night, and what help he was by the grace of God enabled to give to this poor, perishing sinner? It is help for eternity, help for your immortal souls, help that will stand you through death, through the grave and to an endless world. It will stand you when you come to the judgment seat of Christ.

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here is the help of the Gospel ministry, and if you can point to the ministry of the Church of God, of the Word of God, and say in truth that you have been helped, then, where that is true, where that is sincere, where that is according to the Word of Truth, then your help will be a help unto eternity.

"Come over and help us." Help us by giving us a view of the Saviour. I heard of a preacher in Oban, a godly man, who was dying. His last words to some who saw him were these, "Keep a crucified Christ before perishing men." That, friend, is the help which the ministry of the Gospel shall give to you and may you not rest satisfied till each one of you, young and old, on your way to an endless eternity can say that you have received this help; and what will it do for you otherwise?

Paul came to Macedonia at the bidding of the Spirit of the Lord. He came to Macedonia because he knew the need and was persuaded of the needs of that place and of that people. He came to Macedonia because he believed he would be able to help the Macedonians. He could answer their cry, "come over and help us." How did he answer it? He tells us, "immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them." This is the Gospel that is preached in this place, that will be preached from Sabbath to Sabbath, from week to week. There is help for the lost, for the condemned, for you on your way to a never-ending eternity. May you never rest until you can say you have received that help.

"What must I do to be saved?" Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved; to all eternity with Christ in heaven. When you get to heaven, you will see there the Lord in all His glory who by the Holy Spirit gave this vision to Paul in Troas to come to Macedonia and who had this in view in sending him to Troas that he would go over and help helpless, perishing sinners.

May the Lord bless His Truth.

THE FINGER OF GOD

by J. C. Ryle

This is an extract from a Tract by Bishop Ryle, written during a cattle plague in 1865 : reprinted by Banner of Truth Trust.
— Editor.

Why has the cattle plague come upon us ?

I answer that question without hesitation. It has come upon us because of our national sins. God has a controversy with England, because of many things among us which are displeasing in His sight. He would fain awaken us to a sense of our iniquities. This cattle plague is a message from heaven.

The sins of individual men and women are often not reckoned for while they live ; but this is because there is a judgment day yet to come. In that day "every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. xiv. 12). For nations there can be no future judgment day. The sins of nations are reckoned for in time. Special sins and corruptions in a nation call for special chastisements. I believe that this cattle plague is a special national chastisement on England, because of our special national sins.

The teaching of the Bible on this point is to my mind plain, distinct, and unmistakable. Let any one who doubts it read what God says about Babylon, Tyre, Egypt, Damascus, Moab, Edom, Ammon, and Nineveh. (Isaiah xiii. 1 ; xv. 1 ; xvii. 1 ; xix. 1 : Jerem. xlvi. 2 ; xlviii. 1 ; xlix. 1, 7 ; l. 1 : Nahum iii. 1). Let him read such texts as these "The eyes of the Lord God are upon thee sinful nation, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth." (Amos. ix. 8). "He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them : He enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again." (Job. xii. 23, and xxxiv. 29). Let them study such chapters as Daniel iv. and v. Surely, if a man believes the Bible, these passages should set him thinking. The God of the Bible is still the same — He never changes.

Does any one ask what the special national sins of England are? I will mention some which appear to my eyes to stand out prominently in this country at the present time. I may be quite wrong. I only give my judgment as one who looks on attentively, and marks the signs of the times.

(1) The first national sin I will name is **covetousness**. The excessive love of money, and the desire to be rich in this world, are what I mean. Never, surely, was there such a race for riches as at the present day. To make money and die rich seems to be thought the highest virtue, and the greatest wisdom. Yet God has said "Covetousness is idolatry," and "The love of money is the root of all evil." (Col. iii. 5 : 1 Tim. vi. 10).

(2) The second national sin I will name is **luxury and love of**

pleasure. Never, surely, was there a time when people ran so greedily after excitement, amusement, and gratification of their senses. The many are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." (2 Tim. iii. 4).

(3) The third national sin I will name is **neglect of the Lord's day.** That blessed day is rapidly becoming in many quarters the day for visiting and pleasure, and not the day of God. Yet Sabbath-desecration was specially one of the sins which brought down God's judgments on the Jews: "My sabbaths they greatly polluted." (Ezek. xx. 13 : Nehem. xiii. 18).

(4) The fourth national sin I will name is **drunkenness.** The quantity of intoxicating drink needlessly consumed every year in England is something frightful. The number of public-houses, gin-palaces and beer-shops, in our large towns, is a standing proof that we are an intemperate people. There are more people, every Sunday night, in some London parishes, in gin-shops, than there are in churches and chapels. We are worse in this respect than either France or Italy. Yet God has said, "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. vi. 10).

(5) The fifth national sin I will name is **contempt of the seventh commandment.** In town and in country among rich and among poor, the tone of feeling about purity among the young, is at the lowest ebb. Yet God has said, "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God." (Ephes. v. 6).

(6) The sixth national sin I will name is a growing tendency to **look favourably on the Roman Catholic Church.** The very Church which burned our martyrs three hundred years ago, withheld the Bible from our people, trampled on our liberties, and to this very day puts the Virgin Mary, practically in the place of Christ, is favoured and trifled with by thousands! A judicial blindness seems coming over us. The line between toleration and favour appears clean blotted out. The great desire of many is to "go back to Egypt."

(7) The last national sin I will name is the growing disposition to **scepticism and infidelity.** Little by little, men in high places are ceasing to honour God. Year after year the Bible is more openly impugned, and its authority impaired. To believe the Bible was once a mark of a Christian. In the present day an English divine dares to call himself a Christian, and yet boasts that he thinks much of the Bible is not true. Nothing, I am thoroughly persuaded, is so offensive to God as to dishonour His written Word.

I believe firmly that these things are crying to God against England. They are an offence against the King of kings, for which He is punishing us at this very day. And the rod He is using is the cattle plague. **The finger of God,** I believe, is pointing at our

seven great national sins.

To say that we are not so bad as some nations, and that the sins I have named are far more abundant in other countries than in England, is no argument at all. We have had more privileges than other countries, and therefore God may justly expect more at our hands. "To whomsoever much is given, of them shall much be required." "You only have I known of all the inhabitants of the earth, therefore will I punish you for your iniquities." (Luke xii. 48 ; Amos iii. 2).

I might easily enlarge on the points that I have mentioned. I purposely abstain from doing so. I am anxious to make this booklet as short as possible. To effect this, I content myself with supplying little more than seeds of thought, which I hope may spring up and bear fruit in many minds. It only remains to offer a few practical conclusions.

What does the cattle plague summon every one to do ?

In answering that question, the reader will distinctly understand that I only write as a Christian minister. Let politicians make the best laws they can to meet the present emergency. Let medical men use every possible means to arrest the disease, and patiently try every remedy. Let practical agriculturists neglect nothing that may be available to prevent contagion, to diminish liability to infection, and to "stamp out" the plague when it arises. But my stand-point is that of the Bible. In the light of that book I raise my concluding question. What shall we all do?

For one thing, let us all **consider our ways**. It is an age of hurry, bustle, restlessness, and fast living. Railways and telegraphs keep everyone in a state of unhealthy excitement. Now surely it would be well, when the hand of God is stretched out against us, if we were all to sit down, and think a little. Are we not all over England living too fast? Would it not be well if there was more Bible-reading, more Sunday-keeping, more calm quiet effort to serve God and honour Him? Happy is that man, and happy is that nation, that begins to think !

For another thing, let us all **humble ourselves before God**, and acknowledge His hand. Alas, we are a proud, self-conceited nation ! We are too apt to think that we English people are the wisest, and greatest, and richest, and bravest people in the world. We are sadly blind to our many faults and sins. Surely when God's hand is so plainly stretched out against us, it is high time to give up this boastful spirit. If there is anything that God hates, it is pride. It is written — "Pride do I hate." — "Pride goeth before destruction." — "I am against thee, O thou most proud." — "This was the iniquity of Sodom, pride and fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness." — "Those that walk in pride He is able to abase." — "He that exalteth himself shall be abased and he

that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Prov. ciii. 13 ; xvi. 18 ; Jer. l. 31 ; Ezek. xvi. 49 ; Daniel iv. 37 ; Matt. xxiii. 12).

For another thing, **let us each individually endeavour to break off our own besetting sins**, and to amend our ways. It is easy work to find fault with Government, and to blame others when we are in trouble. The better course is to look within ourselves, and try to do our own part to make things better. The sins of a nation are made up of the sins of a great number of individuals. Now, if every individual tries to amend his own life, and to do better, the whole nation will soon improve. The city is soon clean when every man sweeps opposite his own door.

For another thing, let us each **use any influence we have to check sin in others**. The power that parents, masters, mistresses, and employers have in this respect is very great. If all such would exert themselves to check Sabbath-breaking, excess of dress, idleness, drunkenness, and breaches of the seventh commandment, it would be an immense gain to the general condition of the nation. Influence over others, we must never forget, is a talent for which we must one day give account. There are thousands of parents and employers, I fear, who completely bury this talent in the ground. They allow those under them to run into sin, and, like Eli, never reprove them. It is written, "His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." (1 Sam. iii. 13).

For another thing, **let us each lay ourselves out more heartily to do some good in the world**. It is a melancholy fact, that the increase of alms-giving in England of late bears no proportion whatever to the increase of wealth. The trade and commerce of the country have probably doubled within the last twenty-five years. Yet the incomes of most of our large religious societies are almost at a stand still. If English people will not remember that their gold and silver is only a loan from God, and intended to be used for Him, they cannot be surprised if God reminds them of it, by such visitations as the cattle plague. The hand that gives a nation wealth is the hand that can take it away.

Last of all, but not least, let us each resolve to **offer special prayer to God** for the removal of the judgment now upon us. Whatever else we do, let us pray. The Word of God encourages us to it. "In everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known to God." — "Is any afflicted, let him pray." — "If I send pestilence among my people ; if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (Phil. iv. 6 ; James v. 13 ; 2 Chron. vii. 13, 14). — The presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven at God's right hand invites us to it. He that died for sinners on the cross is sitting

there to be the sinners' Advocate and Friend. He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and knows the trials of our earthly condition. — The examples of Scripture warrant us. The men of Nineveh humbled themselves, and cried mightily to God, and God heard their cry. "Shall I not spare Nineveh that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left ; and also MUCH CATTLE." (Jonah iv. 11). — The character of God Himself makes it folly not to pray. "He does not afflict willingly." He is the Lord God, "merciful and gracious, shewing mercy unto thousands." "Call upon Me," He says, "in the time of trouble, and I will deliver thee." (Lam. iii. 33 ; Ex. xxxiv. 6 ; Psalm l. 15). Then LET US PRAY.

THE ONLY REMEDY

by Rev. D. A. Maclean, M.A.

Sin is loathsome and abominable in the sight of God. It is also harmful and destructive to men. But God in His kindness hath not left sinners without hope. Immediately man sinned God appeared and made known the way of salvation. Animals were slain and our first parents covered and clothed with the skins of the slain animals. More important was the promise of the coming Saviour. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Gen. 3 v. 15). Here we have "good news" for the lost and made known to man in the very beginning of his history and immediately after his downfall.

God would have been just in leaving all men to perish in their sins and guilt. But this He did not do. In the Truth, the Covenant of Grace is brought before us and the design of that Covenant was to deliver elect sinners from the original state brought upon them by the Fall. They were to be brought into a state of complete redemption. But — how could this be done by a just and holy God? Our answer must be found in the Truth. In the Person of the Son we have the Great Deliverer. "I have laid help upon One that is mighty ; I have exalted One chosen out of the people." (Ps. 89 v. 19). He is God's only begotten and well beloved Son and with Him God entered into a Covenant of Grace for the elect. This covenant was framed and founded upon nothing but the mere good pleasure of God.

God was dishonoured and offended by the sin of man. God and man were at variance and man was alienated from God and subject to God's displeasure. Now, God provides in His own Son the Mediator. The work of the Mediator was to procure a recon-

ciliation. What amazing love and sovereign Grace on the part of our God! Let us follow with heart interest the work of the Mediator.

Sin must be punished, and punished in the nature that sinned, so it was necessary for the Son of God to take our nature to Himself. This He did. The Holy Ghost miraculously framed His body in the womb of the virgin and He was born of her without sin. He did not come into the world by ordinary generation but in an extraordinary way. So He was not a Son of the fallen Adam. He was made manifest in the flesh and at the same time He was "even the Son of Man which is in Heaven." (John 3, v. 13). See, reader, He took bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh — how near allied to us He became when He assumed our nature. He was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure for it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell in Him.

From the first pages of Genesis to the last pages in Revelation we have Christ as the centre theme of all Truth. This is the subject matter of all the Scriptures and the importance of this glorious subject is obvious to all serious students of the Bible. It is a sad reflection upon the careless and indifferent who do not pay due attention to it. Of the prophets Peter wrote, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the Grace that should come unto you. Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." (1 Peter v's. 10 and 11). The sufferings of Christ shine throughout the pages of the Bible as clear as the sun in the sky. The perfection of His nature and the obedience of His life could not bring about reconciliation and forgiveness. He must die.

The word 'atonement' is an English word and means nothing more than being 'at one' or 'to harmonise'. In Scripture we use the word with an implied reference to a previous alienation. In the Old Testament the word is used often — "making atonement" for a person or object. That is, giving that whereby a source of estrangement is removed and reconciliation brought about. In the New Testament the word is used only once by our translators, namely, "by whom we have received the atonement." (Rom. 5, v. 11). Other passages can be quoted but the translators have rendered the word 'reconcile' and 'reconciliation'. The word 'propitiation' is also used in our English Bibles and this again is in reference to the Person and work of the High Priest of the church.

When we turn to the history of God's ancient people — the Jews — we find the doctrine of the atonement brought clearly before us. This must have been precious to the faithful in Israel. In the types and shadows of the Ceremonial Law they would get

a glimpse by faith of the day of reformation. The day when the promised Messiah would come and give Himself as a ransom for many.

On the Great Day of Atonement the High Priest came with offerings of blood "to make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and for the holy tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar and he shall make atonement for the priests and for the people of the congregation." (Leviticus 16, v. 33). The sanctuary and all the furniture thereof, having been defiled by the sins of the priest and the people, were rendered unfit for the in-dwelling of the Holy God. For this reason it was still the people's guilt that was catered for. The sacrificed animal suffers death, that is, the guiltless blood shed in order to cover or atone for the sins of the person who brought the sacrifice. Reader, whether under the Old Testament or under the New Testament, every pardon is at the price of blood. We must never lose sight of the fact that the wages of sin is death. As the sacrifice of the Old Testament dispensation were only "a shadow of good things to come" the eye of every faithful and truly devout Israelite went forth in faith to view the Son of God's willingness to give Himself as a sacrifice on the Cross. It is in Christ's death alone that the only real atonement can be found.

We see this in the clearer light of the New Testament. Here we are told why He came into the world. He died in our nature. "He suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God." (1 Peter 3.18). "He is the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 2.2). These passages and many more show that the death of the Lord of Glory in our nature was vicarious and sacrificial. The rank modernist would desire to take away Christ's priestly office. — May I ask, what is left if His priestly office is taken away? The spirit taught believer cannot live without daily calling in prayer to God to be washed from sin and it is the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin. The remedy proceeds from His priestly Office.

The striking proof of the love of Father and Son is found in the Scriptures. The Father sanctified the Son and the Son sanctified Himself. This happened in the transaction between all parties in the Covenant of Grace. Christ Jesus was set apart for the office of Mediator and this He voluntarily took. He was not only the Mediator but also the surety. A surety engages to pay the debts incurred by another. All men by nature have proved unfaithful and insolvent. The term 'surety' is expressly applied to Christ in Hebrews 7, v. 22, "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." And in His sufferings the sins of His people were imputed to Him. But, He continued to be holy in a perfect way, although He appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh. How glorious the work of the Saviour is from the beginning to the end!

It gives food for thought and if we are rightly exercised we cannot but benefit. Without Christ there is no salvation for us, for we — all men — have sinned against God and He is justly angry with us.

The sacrifices offered under the Legal Dispensation were typical of the death of Christ. The guilt of the sinner was transferred to the sin offering. We see this when the hands of the sinner were laid upon the head of the victim. Christ had no sin of His own but of Him we read, "who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." 1 Peter 2, v.24. He was made under the law, not because He was a debtor to the law but as the surety substitute of His people. In His life he fulfilled every precept of the law and in His death He suffered the penalty of the law. Death was the penalty of the law and the just wages of sin. "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. 15, v. 3). The death He died was the death on the Cross — the most painful, lingering and ignominious. For a season, in His soul, he lost the sensible presence of His Father's love and the Father's judicial displeasure was His portion. The cup He was given to drink was a bitter one. His cry on the Cross was, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me." (Ps. 22, v. 1). In His death He satisfied the justice of the Father as the Great Judge. "He finished transgression, made an end of sins and made reconciliation for iniquity." (Daniel 9, v. 24). Did He not say on the Cross, "It is finished" (John 19, v. 30), and it was finished for there in His death He gave satisfaction to law and to justice. God's displeasure was turned away and reconciliation was purchased for His people. As a direct result of His finished work His blood bought heritage can say, "But we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement." (Rom. 5, v. 11). Those regenerated rely entirely on the blood and righteousness of Christ for peace and reconciliation. Reader, this is what you should seek — to have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Many, yea, multitudes have a kind of peace but their peace is not the peace of the Gospel. It is not the knowledge of their safety that gives them this peace but the ignorance of their danger. And the danger to which the unconverted sinner is exposed to is truly beyond any words that can be spoken or written. If the stroke of death takes him away his lot throughout Eternity will be in the place of the lost.

The "second Adam" rendered obedience in order to secure for His people remission of sins and the promised reward of life everlasting in heaven. In view of what the Lord and Saviour did, we can say that there is balm in Gilead and there is a physician there. We need salvation and this salvation is brought before us in the Truth. This word we read and the Word is declared to us. Those called to preach the Gospel to their fellow-men are to bring nothing

before men but Christ and Him crucified as the only remedy for sin and sinners. And this Gospel is faithfully declared to us from Sabbath to Sabbath. What, then, is our duty — it is to close in with Christ in the strength of Grace, embrace Him and look to Him alone for righteousness and salvation.

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him.” (Heb. 2, v. 3).

NOTES ON THE LATE ALEXANDER MPOFU, SHANGANI MISSION

by Mr N. Miller, London

The late Alexander Mpofo was a most likeable and highly intelligent travelling companion, greatly admired and loved by all the Missionaries for whom he acted as interpreter and guide — from the days of the Rev. John Tallach and Dr Macdonald until he was taken to be with the Master he so faithfully served.

On one occasion Alexander Mpofo was passing through a very remote part of the Shangani Reserve, travelling in the “Ingwenya” truck with one of his European colleagues, when there came into view a group of Africans who had been ordered by their local Headman to repair the rough road or track in the vicinity of their homes. This work consisted in cutting down elephant grass which had grown to a height of three or four feet and in removing tree stumps against which the sump or other underneath part of a truck could so easily strike. The truck came to a halt and about fifty of the men gathered round to exchange greetings with the two missionaries who eventually offered to each man a gospel according to John, written in Sindebele. They were delighted to accept the gift because, although only a few of them could read or write, probably all of them had children at a Kraal School who would be able to read aloud to the whole family at home. Then, using the truck as a platform, Alexander spoke to the assembled crowd of men explaining the way of salvation “through the only Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” He also took the opportunity to tell them what a remarkable thing it was that this good news had been brought to them there in the midst of the bush.

Seated around a camp fire while on trek he often spoke of his long journeys to Ingwenya, from his home at Nkai, a distance of about sixty miles, taking short cuts through the forest. In the early days Alexander had to accomplish this journey by bicycle. The

purpose of these visits was to obtain supplies of school books for his Kraal School, to collect teachers' salaries, and to report on many matters relating to the church at Nkai. On one such journey he was laboriously cycling along a sandy track in the forest when he suddenly came within sight of a lion lying across his path. Hastily dismounting, he turned round and made off in the direction from which he had come. Soon it came into his mind that surely the Lord would take care of him and he therefore decided to make a detour of a mile or two and continue on his way. This he did "praying without ceasing" and reached the Ingwenya Mission safely and with a thankful heart.

Alexander Mpofu was particularly concerned about the backwardness of his fellow Africans both from a spiritual and from an educational point of view and he met with much opposition from those who resented the intrusion of Christianity into the life of the community. He was a man of God whose going about amongst the heathen revealed to them that he was no longer a partaker of their idolatry and witchcraft. These snares, which are so prevalent in the hearts of most Africans even today, had been expelled in Alexander's case by the power of love to Christ. In this latter connection, there is a very interesting narrative in the book of Alexander McPherson entitled JAMES FRASER, A record of Missionary Endeavour in Rhodesia in the Twentieth Century, part of which is as follows: 'Some time ago one of our elders, in the course of his travels, came across a great gathering of people assembled under the shade of trees by the wayside. A man, who turned out to be a witch-doctor, was addressing the crowd with great fervour, but our elder did not know him, neither did the witch-doctor know the elder. Being curious to know what the meeting was about, our elder joined the crowd, but he had no sooner done so than the witch-doctor became confused and embarrassed and stopped speaking. After an awkward pause, during which the witch-doctor gazed fixedly at the newcomer, the witch-doctor at length appealed to him to leave the meeting. "Why should I leave the meeting?" asked our elder. "Because I feel and know that you are a Christian. You have nothing to do with us, and if you remain you will only spoil our meeting. Please go away." It is encouraging to find that Satan sometimes dispels any doubts which we may have regarding the reality of the Christian profession of our people!' Alexander Mpofu was the elder here referred to.

The removal of such an African as Alexander Mpofu from our Mission is a sad and humbling Providence, and we should endeavour to pray that the Lord of the Vineyard would particularly raise up other Africans to labour among their own people in the

spreading of the good news that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Note : These notes are by Mr Norman Miller, who knew Mr Mpofu while in Rhodesia. — Editor.

ARE YOU BORN AGAIN ?

by J. C. Ryle

This is one of the most important questions anyone can be asked. Jesus Christ says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." (John 3. 3).

It is not enough to reply, "You have been baptised, and go to church, and you suppose you are." Thousands of baptised people have none of the marks and signs of being born again which the Scripture has given us.

Would you like to know the marks and signs of being born again? Give me your attention and I will show them to you out of the First Epistle of St. John.

First of all, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin" ; and again, "Whosoever is born of God sinneth not." (1 John 3. 9 ; v. 18).

A man born again, or regenerate, **does not commit sin as a habit.** He no longer sins with his heart, and will, and whole inclination, as an unregenerate man does. There was probably a time when he did not think whether his actions were sinful or not, and never felt grieved after doing evil.

In one word, sin no longer pleases him, nor is even a matter of indifference : it has become the abominable thing which he hates. He cannot prevent it dwelling within him. If he said he had no sin, there would be no truth in him (1 John 1. 8). But he can say that he cordially abhors it, and the great desire of his soul is not to commit sin at all.

Secondly, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." (1 John 5. 1).

A man born again, or regenerate, **believes that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour by whom his soul can be pardoned ;** that He is the Divine Person appointed by God the Father for this very purpose, and that beside Him there is no Saviour at all. In himself he sees nothing but unworthiness, but in Christ he sees ground for the fullest confidence, and trusting in Him, he believes that his sins are all forgiven. He believes that for the sake of Christ's finished work and death upon the Cross he is reckoned righteous in God's sight, and may look forward to death and judgment without alarm. Ask him whether he will rest his hopes of eternal life on his own goodness, his own amendments, his prayers, his

almsgiving, or his church — and see what he will reply. Ask him whether he will give up Christ, and place his confidence in any other way of salvation. Depend upon it, he would say, that though he does feel weak and bad, **he would not give up Christ for all the world.** Depend upon it, he would say he found a preciousness in Christ a suitableness to his own soul in Christ, that he found nowhere else, and that he must cling to Him.

Thirdly, "Every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him." (1 John 2. 29). The man born again, or regenerate, is a **righteous man.** He endeavours to live according to God's will, to do things that please God, to avoid things that God hates. His aim and desire is to love God with heart and soul, and mind and strength, and to love his neighbour as himself. His wish is to be continually looking to Christ as his Example as well as his Saviour, and to show himself Christ's friend, by doing whatsoever Christ commands. No doubt he is not perfect : none will tell you that sooner than himself. He groans under the burden of indwelling corruption cleaving to him ; he finds an evil principle within him constantly warring against grace, and trying to draw him away from God ; but he does not consent to it, though he cannot prevent its presence. In spite of all shortcomings, the average bent and bias of his own is holy, his doings holy, his tastes holy, and his habits holy. In spite of all his swerving and turning aside, like a ship beating up against a contrary wind, the general course of his life is in one direction — towards God and for God. And though he may sometimes feel so low that he questions whether he is a Christian at all, he will generally be able to say, with old John Newton, "I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world ; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am."

Now, what shall we say to these things? What they can say who hold that Regeneration is only an admission to outward Church privileges, I am sure I do not know. For myself, I say boldly, I can come only to one conclusion. That conclusion is, that those persons only **are born again** who have these marks about them, and that all **men and women** who have not these marks, **are not born again.** And I firmly believe that this is the conclusion to which the Apostle wished us to come.

Have you these marks ? ARE YOU BORN AGAIN ?

POOR JIM

The late Mr Warburton, when on a preaching tour, called on a week-evening to preach in the country. After the service was over he adjourned to his lodgings but had not been long seated before

in came a labouring man without any hat, his hair on end, and an expression of deep horror on his countenance. He fell down on the floor before Mr Warburton, and, clasping him by the knees, exclaimed, "Oh, I'm lost! I'm lost! I'm a dying man, going into eternity without any hope! Oh, can you do me any good? I've ruined my soul, and am lost and undone for ever." He hardly had time to give expression to his feelings before in came a tall, country-looking woman, and, approaching Mr Warburton, said, "Oh, bless God, Jim! This is what I have prayed for many years. Thousands of prayers have I put up that you might be brought to this. Oh, bless God, Jim! He's done it."

This was poor Jims' wife, a truly godly woman, who believed he was one of the Lord's, and could not cease praying for him, though he had often knocked her about, was a drunken, profligate character, and persecuted her much concerning her religion. Mr Warburton wished the poor fellow to get up, but he said, "No! If I do I shall be swallowed up"; but after a time he persuaded him to get up and sit upon a chair, and tried to encourage him by speaking to him of the love and mercy of God to poor, feelingly-lost sinners through Jesus Christ, who "came to seek and to save that which was lost." Some of those present questioned as to the mans 'sanity, but Mr Warburton assured them he would be better by-and-bye. Mr Warburton left the next morning.

Twelve months after, he was going the same route again, and sent to say he should be glad to preach to the people on his way if they thought well, and he wanted also to hear how poor Jim was getting on. When he arrived there he found Jim was and had been in, more or less, the same state as when he left him, for the whole twelve months, feeling deeply his sinnership but realizing no mercy to his soul. But the time had come to make free, and the Word went forth, "Loose him, and let him go." Mr Warburton's discourse at that time was made the means of liberating his soul, and he rejoiced in the full and complete pardon of all his sins. He accompanied Mr Warburton to his lodgings, and begged him to sit up all night to speak to him of the goodness, mercy, and love of God. He said, "You will be leaving in the morning, and it is wasting time to go to bed. What! can't you sit up one night with me?"

Twelve months more rolled away, and the same visit was to be repeated, as he felt very anxious to hear again how poor Jim was. When he arrived, he was surprised to hear that he was in Heaven. "What! is he dead?" said Mr Warburton. "Yes, he died three weeks since, and his last words were 'Tell that dear man, John Warburton, when he comes, that I'm gone home first, but it won't be long before we shall meet again in glory,' and, falling back upon his bed, expired."

Is not this "a brand plucked out of the fire?" to the praise and glory of God's sovereign and discriminating grace.

A CRUISE WITH A DIFFERENCE

by Rev. Alfred E. W. MacDonald, M.A., Gairloch

"Cruising with a difference," is the title of a brochure issued by the B.I. Steam Navigation Company. What is the difference? It is the inclusion of separate accommodation for children under eighteen together with 'lectures in Assembly Hall, classroom periods, organised deck games, visits to the Bridge and Engine Room, History, Geography, modern languages . . .' 'Sporting activities include deck tennis, quoits, hockey, tug of war, table tennis, swimming, boat regattas and athletic and football matches ashore. Evening entertainment, dances, film shows, concerts, sing songs, debates and quizzes are organised for students in the evenings. Foreign students are often invited on board for social activities. Demonstrations of dancing and singing are given at many ports.'

But what about the young person who has been taught that it is wrong to spend his leisure in many of these ways? I suppose that no-one would compel him to take part in the activities yet he would be sure to feel the odd person among such a crowd! And, is it right to mix thus? Thomas Watson in his book on 'The Lord's Prayer,' page 87, says, "there is a necessary commerce with men in buying and selling, or, otherwise as the apostle says, "For these must ye needs go out of the world, but do not voluntarily choose the company of the wicked; for such as have had religious education and have some inclination to good, by mixing with the wicked are apt to receive hurt. The bad will sooner corrupt the good than the good will convert the bad . . . Such as were once soberly inclined, by coming among the profane, grow familiar, till at last they keep one another company in hell."

And what about the Lord's Day? Do these activities cease on the Lord's Day? There are no regular school classes but the children may be gathered together to hear a lecture on the geography of the next port of call. And what about the Tuck Shop, the swimming pool, the deck games, and such things? The answer is that on a Cruising Liner there is no law against these being carried on, on the Day of God. There is a short voluntary religious service, and there may be Bible classes for part of the day, but there is no guarantee that these will be conducted on Calvinistic lines.

On many of these cruises the ship is scheduled to arrive at a foreign port on the Lord's Day. Think of the excitement this must

naturally give rise to ! I quote again, " At each port (except where shown on the programme) there is a comprehensive free shore excursion with English-speaking guides. These tours are carefully planned to take students to places of outstanding interest, leaving ample time for them to explore in groups of their own."

Should the ship be at sea on the Lord's Day it is very difficult to see how the movement of the ship at all on the Lord's Day can be justified. The Word of God does not justify any unnecessary travelling on His Day.

A Plea to Parents

Some of you will have to meet the problem in your families. You may find it difficult to explain to them the dangers involved in the Cruise. The young too may find it difficult to realise that you sincerely desire their happiness. What are you to do? You may be disposed to think that the young must mix sometime and why not now? The Lord Jesus has taught us to pray, 'Lead us not into temptation,' and should the providence of the Lord take us into temptation we may rely upon Him to protect us; but if we venture ourselves upon a situation of temptation, can we rely on His protection?

I hope that when you are discussing the matter with your families, you will be able to show them that, when you are denying them a pleasurable trip, you do so, because you seek to honour the Lord and not to fall under the same judgment as Eli fell under when he honoured his sons above the Lord. "Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." See 1 Samuel 2, verses 29 and 30).

The Synod of the Church at its meeting in May 1967, resolved —

"The Synod of the Church would draw the attention of all parents to the fact that Cruises operate from various ports of the country carrying school children on educational tours of other lands. There is a grave danger therefore that the Day of God be misspent and the children thus bring guilt upon their souls while they harden themselves in the sin of sabbath breaking."

POSADH AN ANAMA RI CRIOSD

Leis an Urr. Eideard Pearce (A.D. 1672)

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 277)

3. Gníomh stríochdaidh agus ùmhlachaidh. Mar ann an obair creidimh tha'n t-anam mar so a roghnachadh Chrìosd agus a taiceachadh Air, mar so mar an ceudna tha e le Spiorad Dhé air a dheanamh gu toileach agus gun agadh air bith, a bhi dha liubhruigeadh fein Dhà, gu bhi air a riaghladh, air a stiùradh, agus air a chleachdadh Leis mar is àill Leis. Tha'n t-anam a nis

dha chur fhein a mach as a chùmhachd agus a sheilbh fein, tha e dha chur fein thairis bh'uaithe fein, agus tha e dha thoirt fein suas do chùmhachd agus do sheilbh Iosa Criosd, a chùm a bhi air a riaghladh, air a stiùradh, agus air a thearnadh Leis mar a chì E gu h-ìomchuidh ; nì is e gu ceart an gnìomh creidimh sin ris an abair sinn strìocadh, agus sin tha'n a Sgrìobturan gu tric a togail ; " Their am fear so, Is leis an Tighearn mise ; agus ainmichear fear eile air ainm Iacoib ; agus sgrìobhaidh fear eile le a laimh do an Tighearna, agus sloinnidh se e fein air ainm Israeil." Isaiah xlv.5. 's e sin, bheir se e fein, na strìocaidh se e fein do'n Tighearna gu bhi Aige gu bràth, a chum a bhi dha'n cleachdadh. Mar sin, " Thug siad iad fein air tùs do an Tighearna, agus 'n a dheigh sin dhuinne a reir toile Dhé." II. Cor. vii. 5. Agus ann an Ephes. v. 24. tha e air a ràdh mu'n eaglais gu bheil i umhail do Chrìosd. Tha chùis coltach ri bhi mar so — Air do iomadh cùmhnanta a dhol seachad gu bhi toirt air adhart a phòsaidh so eadar Criosd agus an t-anam, tha'n t-anam mu dheireadh, tre chòmhnadh an Spioraid Naoimh, air a thoirt gu saor gu bhi'g aontachadh a bhi gabhail Chrìosd mar aon Cheann agus Fhear-pòsda, agus a bhi umhail Dhà anns na h-uile nì, gu bhi gu h-ìomlan agus gu sìorruidh a deanamh a thoile. Ie e chainnte a nis ri Criosd, a nì a labhair Ahab ri Benhadad, " A reir t-fhocail mo Tighearn a Rìgh, is leat mise, agus gach nì a tha agam." I Rìgh xx. 4. A Thighearn Iosa, tha'n t-anam ag ràdh. Cha bhi mi beo air mo shon fein, agus chaith mi mo bheatha air mo shon fein, agus a chùm mo chrìochan fein ; ach a nis tha mì miannachadh a bhi leat-sa agus a bhi beo ann a'd' thoil-sa, agus a chùm do chrìochan-sa ; gabh seilbh orm, saor mi, bi riaghladh thairis orm, treoirich mi, dean rium mar is àill leat ; dean do thoil uile annam, tarruig sios mì agus cuir suas a' nì is àill leat, bithidh mi, agus nì mi, agus fuilingidh mi a' nì is àill leat mi bhi, agus a nì is aill leat mi dh'fhulang. Agus is e so gu ceart an gnìomh creidimh sin, leis am bheil, sinn a dùnadh ri Criosd mar Thighearn agus mar Rìgh, oir is e so gu cinnteach fianuis na firinn a th'anns na dhà a tha dol air thoiseach ; oir feumaidh sibh a thuigsinn ged tha ceud shealladh creidimh ag amharc ri Criosd mar Shlànuighear, gidheadh tha e tighinn gu bhi'g amharc Air mar Tighearn agus mar Rìgh mar an ceudna. Mar a tha creidimh gu h-uile a taiceachadh air riarachadh Chrìosd, mar sin tha e gu saor a cromadh do shlàit rioghail Chrìosd ; seadh, 'n uair nach urrain creidimh còir agradh ann an Criosd mar Shlànuighear, gideadh aidichidh e Criosd mar Thighearn. Tha fhios agaibh mar a labhair Laban ri seirbhiseach Abraham 'n uair a chunnaic e sealladh air na cluas-fhàinneanan agus na seudan a thug e da phiuthar, Rebecca, agus air cluinntean dha a chòmhradh rithe bh'uaithe fein, thubhairt e, " Thig a steach, thusa a tha beannaichte o'n Tighearna ; c'ùime a sheasas tu a

muigh ? Oir dh'ullaich mise an tigh, agus àite do na càmhail." Gen. xxiv. 31. Anns an doigh cheudna tha'n t-anam a labhairt ri Criosd, 'n uair a gheibh e sealladh air an luachmhorachd a th' Ann, agus am feum sin a tha aige-san Air. Thig a stigh, Aon bheannaichte an Tighearna, thig a stigh Aon bheannaichte an Tighearna, c'ar son a sheasas tu muigh ? Tha àite agam Dhuit ann a'm' thuigse, agus ann am thoile agus ann am aignuidhean ; agus 's e mo mhiann gu'n sealbhaicheadh Tù na h-uile, agus gu'n riaghladh Tù na h-uile. Ann am focal, tha'n t-anam gu saor dha thoirt fein suas do riaghladh naomh agus spioradail Chrìosd. Is e Criosd naomh a tha annad, tha e'g ràdh, a tha dol a riaghladh, agus tha mi dha mo liubhraigeadh fein suas Dhuit, cha bhi tighearna eil agam ach Thusa ; gabh an rìgh-chathair uile a tha'n taobh a stigh dhìom Dhuit Fein, tha fios agam gu'm bheil do chuing na cuing a tha so-iomchair, agus tha mi miannachadh a bhi dha giùlain ; is slat ro-chothromach slat do rioghachd-sa, agus tha mi miannachadh a bhi cromadh dhi ; 's e do rioghachd-sa rioghachd fireantachd, sìth, agus aobhneas anns an Spiorad Naomh, agus tha mi bho mo chridhe a miannachadh a bhi tighinn fodh a cumhachd. Bu mhiann leam a bhi air mo naomhachadh cho math ri bhi air m'fhìreanachadh ; tha mi miannachadh gu'm biodh do Spiorad a ceannsachadh mo thruaillidheachdan air mo shon, agus dha mo naomhachadh cho math ri t-fhuil gu bhi glanadh air falbh mo chionta air mo shon, agus dha mo dheanamh taingeil dhuit Fein. Agus is e so fosgladh nan geatachan agus togail suas nan dorsan sìorruidh, gu bhi leigeil a stigh Chrìosd Rìgh na Gloire. Salm xxiv. 7. Mar so, leis na trì sin, nithean da-rìreadh is iad gnìomharan aonaidh mòr a chreidimh leis am bheil an Spiorad Naomh a deanamh an anam comasach air a bhi dùnadh a stigh ri Criosd ann an daimh agus ann an cumhnant pòsaidh.

V. Air bhi do'n anam mar so air a dheanamh comasach air a bhi creidsinn, agus mar sin a bhi dùnadh a stigh ri Criosd ann an cùmhnanta posaidh, an sin, mar chrùn agus iomlanachd na h-uile, tha Spiorad beannaichte Dhé a togail aite còmhnuidh, agus a fuireach gu bràth anns an anam sin mar gheall agus ceangal sìorruidh an aonaidh agus an daimh pòsaidh a tha eatorra. Cha'n e mhàin gu'n tig an Spiorad milis mar charaid gu bhi reiteachadh air son a phòsaidh, agus mar an ceudna gu bhi ceangal an snaim phòsaidh eadar Criosd agus sinne ; ach a thuilleadh air sin, air dha so a bhi air a dheanamh, tha e Fein a fuireach anns an anam mar chomharradh gràidh bho Chrìosd Dhà, mar earlas air a phòsadh so, agus mar an geall sìorruidh agus an daingneachadh air an aonadh phòsaidh agus an daimh so. Bh'uaithe so tha'n nì a tha aig an Abstol, " Ach an tì a tha ceangailte ris an Tighearna, is aon spiorad ris e." I. Cor. vi. 17. Aon spiorad ris an Tighearna

tha e ceangailte Ris ; an Spiorad sin a cheangail e ri Criosd, tha e fuireach araon annsan agus ann an Criosd, air a leithid de dhòigh agus gu'm bheil Aige-san agus aca-san an aon Spiorad a gabhail còmhnuidh annta ; gidheadh leis an cadar-dhealachadh so, tha E gabhail còmhnuidh ann an Criosda gun tomhas, annaine ann an tomhas ; ann an Criosd, do-bhrìgh an aonaidh phearsanta, annaine le a thiodhlacan agus a ghràsan ; ann an Criosd mar an Ceann, annaine mar na buill, agus so, gu dearbh, a nì a tha deanamh an aonaidh so cho laidir agus cho eucomasach a bhi air a bhriseadh, agus nach gabh e gu bràth a bhi air a bhriseadh : seadh, cha'n e mhàin gu'm bheil e fantuinn anns an anam mar gheall agus mar bhann an aonaidh so, ach mar an ceudna gu bhi'g uidheamachadh agus a sgeadachadh an anama le gràs, agus dha dheanamh ullamh gu bhi coilionadh a phòsaidh shuas. Tha fhios agaibh 'n uair a chunnaic seirbhiseach Abraham gu'n d'aontaich Rebecca a bhi 'n a bean do Isaac, ann an sin thug e dhi "seudan airgid agus seudan òir, agus aodach," Gen. xxiv. 53. Mar sin air do Spiorad beannaichte Dhé aonta an anama a chosnadh gu bhi pòsda ri Criosd, agus an snaim pòsaidh a bhi air a cheangal eatorra, a nis tha e gabhail còmhnuidh anns an anam gu bhi dha uidheamachadh agus dha sgeadachadh ; nis tha E toirt dha seudan òir agus airgid, dha uidheamachadh agus dha dheanamh mais each leis gach uile ghràs diadhaidh agus neamhaidh. Tha E gabhail còmhnuidh ann mar thobar agus mar fhuaran nach gabh a bhi air a thraoghadh de gach gràs agus gach togradh gràsmhor, gus an cuir e gu sàbhailte ann an gairdeanan agus am broilleach Fhear-pòsda shuas. Mar so, tha mu dheireadh, an daimh pòsaidh air a dheanamh suas eadar Criosd agus an t-anam. Agus, O ! cia cho beannaichte agus a tha'n t-anam a tha mar so air a phòsadh Ris. Faodaidh mi ràdh r'a leithid sin a dh'anam, Beannaichte gu'n robh 'n latha air an d'rugadh thu ; beannaichte gu'n robh a bhrù a ghiùlain thu agus na ciochan a dheothail thu : an soisgeul beannaichte a dh'fhoillsich an Criosd milis so dhuit, agus an Spiorad beannaichte a cheangail an snaim sona so eadar Esan agus thusa.

(R'a leantuinn)

LITERARY NOTICES

Between Mizpeh and Shen, by Pastor G. J. Collier, price 4/- and to be had from the author at 29 Lime Grove, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. This booklet extends to 54 pages. The print is clear and the paper of excellent quality. There is a portrait of Mr Collier at the beginning and photographs of his Chapel at the middle of the booklet. But what we may read in this booklet is the real matter of interest, and we are sure this will be so to those

who truly fear the Lord and read it. Mr Collier to begin with devotes three chapters to his experiences from the time the Lord called him to minister in the Gospel at Bethel Chapel, Linslade. He relates spiritual and interesting experiences as to that call and how he was exercised as to the Word of God in relation to it. During 25 years' ministry in the congregation, and part of it during the last war, he was not without burdens of a spiritual and temporal nature. Yet he records humbly that precious souls were brought out of darkness into the liberty that is in Christ, by the Holy Spirit, through his ministry. The booklet chiefly consists of five sermons preached by Mr Collier. One is on "And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, etc."; another upon "Truth shall spring out of the earth, etc."; and another from "Rejoice the soul of thy servant, etc." None of the sermons are long. Mr Collier does give a clear exposition of the essential meaning of his texts, and enlarges thereupon in a gracious, gospel and enlightened manner. We were interested to read Mr Collier's explanation of Israel as "a backsliding heifer." This heifer was one **in decline** for want of good pasture and food. The believer "as a backsliding heifer" is in **spiritual decline** in soul, by neglect of the Word of God and the Throne of Grace and for other reasons. We are sure the Lord's people who read this booklet will find truth to feed upon.

The Finger of God : by J. C. Ryle : reprinted by The Banner of Truth Trust : small attractively printed booklet of 15 pages : intended to be sold in quantities : 10 for 3/- ; 50 for 12/6 ; 100 for 20/- ; postage free on all orders. This booklet deals with the outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease in England in 1865, from a Scriptural and practical point of view. Elsewhere in this issue we print an extract from this booklet. A more excellent commentary on the present outbreak in England could not be published.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Women Ministers for the Church of Scotland

Final results have been issued as to how all the Presbyteries of the Church of Scotland, in Scotland, voted and decided as to admitting women to the Christian ministry on the same terms as men. There were 40 Presbyteries who voted in favour and 18 against, and two Presbyteries were equally divided. The actual voting figures per head of members of Presbyteries were 1,760 in favour and against 1,043. Although the majority for this unscriptural innovation is large ; yet it does appear from the figures that quite a substantial body of opinion in the Church of Scotland is definitely against the proposal. But the tide is running strongly against any semblance of a stand for Apostolic doctrine and

practice, in the said Church. Charity, tolerance and expediency are the elements operating in these matters, to the exclusion of 'What saith the Scriptures?' The charity and tolerance are of a dubious nature.

Tolerance and Intolerance

Last month we made a comment on the heresy of Rev. Dr Edmund Jones, of the Church of Scotland, Aberdeen. Since then there appeared a letter in a Scottish daily paper by a supporter of Dr Jones. Twice in this letter, the writer maintains that "The Church of Scotland has an excellent record of tolerance and magnanimity." He maintains that Dr Jones was courageous, deeply informed and a man of integrity, actuated by straightforward sincerity. But when he deals with those in Aberdeen who 'dared' to expose Dr Innes's heretical views and to call him to resign from the ministry, he reveals his personal and unseemly intolerance with those who would defend the vital truths of the Christian faith. In regard to such he employs the following terms: "A kettle of fish," "effrontery," "obscurantist," "agressive," "self-righteousness," "comical." And finally he writes of them, "Their belief in the supra-natural is, at its worst, astrological and, at its best, sophisticated superstition." Where now is the tolerance he maintained existed, presumably in the Church he adheres to? There exists today also such an enmity to the truth of God, even within the professed Christian Church, that it goes hand in hand with bitter intolerance for those who love and defend the truth.

An Evil Society in Holland

In a recent special article to "The Scotsman," Edinburgh, that paper's special correspondent at the Hague, tells of the existence in Holland of a Society called the Netherland Society for Sexual Reform. We give the following quotation from the President of the Society: "Sexuality must be seen apart from the morality of marriage. It is a private area of human behaviour over which the community has no authority. Sexuality ought to be a normal part of life needing no special justification, excuse or special restriction." There is no God nor seventh commandment in the evil outlook of this Dutch Society. If God prevent not, it will be a instrument to bring about in the case of many, confusion and misery. Doubtless, there are many of the same mind in Britain and elsewhere. Without the divine light of the law of God and the gospel of the Lord Jesus, the blind are leading the blind and both will fall into the ditch.

President Visits Pope

On the 23rd of December 1967, the President of the United States of America visited the Pope at the Vatican, Rome, on his

way back from Australia. It was said that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss peace in Vietnam and how to proceed to attain this. Mr Johnson, the President, has made his mind crystal clear repeatedly, that American troops are fighting in Vietnam to prevent the Communists in the North from taking over South Vietnam and going further afield after that: What assistance the Pope could give the President to bring this war to an end, we just do not know. The spread of Communism all over Italy and to the gates of the Vatican, is an evil which the Pope has been absolutely helpless to prevent. The Roman Church has boasted of being the great bulwark against Communism. What could the Pope contribute to bringing the North Vietnam Communists to discuss ending the war? In our opinion this meeting will prove fruitless as far as the Vietnam war is concerned. It has been propaganda for the Vatican, when the head of the greatest nation in the world, at the present time, comes to consult the Pope.

CHURCH NOTES

The Blythwood Tract Society and Open-Air Religious Services

With respect to a letter, dated September 21st 1967, from the above Society, enquiring whether the Southern Presbytery would have any objections to their holding open-air religious services, the Southern Presbytery unanimously approved of the proposal, at the same time emphasising to the Society the necessity of the worship being in accordance with the standards of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

— M. MacSween, Clerk.

Bracadale Manse Appeal

At a meeting of the Bracadale Kirk-session on 24th November 1967, a tender was accepted for renovating and repairing the Bracadale Manse. Work on this project, at a cost of close on £5,000 is about to commence (D.V.). The Kirk-session would appeal to friends throughout the Church to help the people of Bracadale by contributing to the Manse Repair Fund. Donations will be gratefully received by Mr Donald Morrison, 5 Satran, Carbost, by Portree, or Mr Duncan Y. MacKinnon, Struan Mor, Struan, by Portree.

— Fraser MacDonald, Interim Moderator of the Congregation.

This appeal is cordially endorsed by the Western Presbytery.

Alfred MacDonald, Moderator *pro tem*.

John Colquhoun, Clerk.

Deputy for Rhodesia

The last Deputy who visited the Mission in Rhodesia recommended that a Deputy should be sent every five years. The Com-

mittee in discussing this recommendation, however, decided that every three years would be the better period.

The Committee approached the Rev. A. F. MacKay, M.A., Inverness, and he has agreed to pay a visit to the various Mission Stations for three months' duration. Mr MacKay will leave by air on 1st February (D.V.) and is booked to leave Cape Town on the journey home on 1st May, on the "Edinburgh Castle."

The Committee hope this visit will be beneficial to the Mission and look forward with interest to Mr MacKay's report in due course. The Lord's people are asked to remember him in their prayers.

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Stornoway — C.M., per Dr P. A. McL., £5 for the South African Mission and £5 for the Trinitarian Bible Society; Two Inverness Friends, per Dr H.G., £10 for Stornoway Church Repairs.

London Manse and Church Building Fund — Anon., £20; T. Macdonald, Eston, Canada, per Rev. D. B. Macleod, £6.12.6; M.D., Sydney, per Rev. D. B. Macleod, £4. Foreign Mission Fund — Mr and Mrs H. MacDougall, £10.

Dumbarton F.P. Manse Fund — Harris Friend, per Captain R. MacCuish, £7.10/-; Anon., 15/-.