

THOUGHTS FROM THE WORD OF GOD.

THE REALITY OF SIN.

Sin is a Reality. History painfully shows this. Experience is forced to confess it. Beyond all, God Himself declares it. Men may dislike the fact, or, at least, its bitter fruits, and call sin by pleasant names, but they cannot make sin cease to be sin. And what is it? Departure from God's standard, and the exaltation of self-will! Sin is selfishness, and selfishness permeates the world. The highway man is not the only robber. The profiteer is not the only thief. If we withhold good, we are cruel. If we slander in the minutest degree, we are verily guilty. If we do not love our neighbour with the same spontaneous, constant and complete care we show to ourselves, we are wrong. Judged by such a standard, the theory "I have done no one any harm" is a hollow boast, a baseless fabric. But to take any other standard is to depreciate the coinage to pay the debt. It is a lie. God allows no robbery before His throne. **SIN IS A REALITY.**

Come with me to a busy city. Let us pass down its streets. We notice a chemist's shop with offers to allay pain. Behold a doctor, a surgical instrument maker, an undertaker, a monumental mason. We pass a prison, and a police station, and a cemetery. Half the world seems busy in attempts to deal with the results of sin, but 'tis unmindful of the CAUSE. Fuel is heaped on the fire with one hand, while the other vainly attempts to put it out.

I do not now refer to the picture theatre, with its morbid craving for sensational pleasure, nor to the gilded public-house, nor to other invitations away from God. Nor do we speak, at length, of that which seems worst of all, a nominal Christianity, dulling the consciences of men by welcoming to a "laughable farce," and a "humorous entertainment." It is monstrous, it is devilish—but, dear reader, do not be misled by these lying vanities to think that hell is only a scare in words. It is REAL. But to return:—The BITTER FRUITS OF SIN, in pain and death, are now before us. Even the florist and printer contribute: the placards often tell of murder and accidents. The outlook is disquieting. There are wars and rumours of wars. **SIN IS A REALITY.** We cannot cope with it: we cannot hinder its effects by vainly denying its reality.

Sin is the most expensive thing in the world, but the idea of many is to have as much as they can of it, without the painful fruits. Many are the efforts to refine iniquity and to neutralize the results, and "because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil"

(Eccl. 8. 11). Not always in the same way: we all have our own way (Isa. 53. 6). And sin may be "arrayed in purple and scarlet and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls" (Rev. 17. 4). But there will be a change "at the last" (Prov. 23. 32), though NOW men may rejoice in the way of their heart (Eccl. 11. 9). Sin may assume the garb of learning, and attack God's rights, and deny His revelation. It may put on the clothing of religion, and boast in human ritual (Col. 2. 23), for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11. 14). But though the raven and the swan were unlike, they were BOTH UNCLEAN TO ISRAEL. The camel does not look like the pig, but both were rejected. Heathen demonism may be modified in a West End séance, but it IS demonism still. Carbon and graphite are the same, though unlike, and if sin appears in an attractive diamond form it still has the same essential character. Let us analyze it, and what shall we learn?—**"THE CARNAL MIND IS ENMITY AGAINST GOD; FOR IT IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE LAW OF GOD, NEITHER INDEED CAN BE; SO THEN THEY THAT ARE IN THE FLESH CANNOT PLEASE GOD"** (Rom. 8. 7, 8).

But is there NO hope? There IS, yet only one. God did not send His Son to die because of an unreality. The fact of sin before God, and its enormity, and its consequences, are shown by His stupendous work of redemption. He gave His Beloved Son to DIE for sinners. Ah, dear reader, will you call sin an unreality in the light of Calvary? It is real. It murders men. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. 5. 12), yet men still go on frowardly in the way of their own hearts. But where sin abounded grace overflowed (Rom. 5. 20), and the sinner who is broken in heart (Isa. 57. 15) is fully welcome to a Saviour Who really took judgment, and felt wrath, and willingly died. 'Twas all because sin is such a reality, but thanks be unto God—oh, hear the message, troubled one, and come to the Saviour now—

SALVATION IS A REALITY TOO.

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1. 15).

If the Lord will, the above will be reprinted, and will be, we hope, the first of a series. But we need prayer. Our desire is to write on "The Reality of Christ," "The Reality of Judgment," "The Reality of Heaven." There are also many other gospel tracts, and we would trust the Lord for His further enabling, since He has proved faithful, and is the Same. How often we all forget the need of souls. There are so many open doors: shall we dwell in our ceiled houses, and neglect worship and witness? Or shall Christ be FIRST in our daily life, and our use of all? Do WE experience the REALITY of which we tell the unsaved?

THOUGHTS FROM THE WORD OF GOD.

THE REALITY OF CHRIST.

Christ is a Reality! Happy are those who know the gospel sound. We write the words without ANY hesitation, for we have **tasted** that "the Lord is gracious" (1 Pet. 2. 3). And there are not a few who, while they criticize, almost "envy" the child of God the

Glorious Certainties of Faith.

Nevertheless to encourage themselves in their own painful **UNCertainty**, many would like to **make others "argue,"** thinking that the arguers show the same "wish" to **TRY** and prove. But the quiet rest of **real knowledge of a Saviour** almost irritates the one who has **no such rest** (Isa. 57. 21). Yet may not this very irritation be used to bring such an one to feel **his need**:—more than myriads of mere arguments, which he "loves" to attack? "Something to attack" makes a man forget his **emptiness**, and intoxicates him mentally, so that he has a temporary delight which is but a stepping-stone to eternal misery! But here I must break off, and, ask,

What is Christ to You?

To me He is not only the Centre of History, but a **personal Saviour**: not only the King of kings, in august majesty high exalted, but **MY Lord**. Ah, dear reader, "the Reality of Christ" must be an **experience**, or you can never fully understand even the title of this leaflet. But when one knows **HIM**, all the scorings and the objections, of those who know **HIM** not, do not weigh one straw against personal acquaintance with **Himself**. The glad declaration of the **positives of the Gospel**, and of the **Reality of Christ**, is a need **TO-DAY**. We know! We have found **HIM**, because He found us.

Do you think of Him only on the pages of history? Even that view is wonderful. No other life is equally attested and emphasized. The man who wants to **explain** history without Christ lacks the historical sense. He dismisses unimpeachable witnesses, glibly asks for others, and then says "Where are they?" **The Reality of Christ** in history is a marvellous fact, affecting **ALL** history. He actually was born in Bethlehem, walked in Palestine, did mighty works, spake like none other man, died at Jerusalem, and was raised from the dead.

BUT the historical knowledge in the brain will never save a soul. **Satan** knows all these **FACTS**. God may use the knowledge to con-

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vict of SIN, as we see our contrast with His purity, and may also unveil His precious work on a sinner's behalf, but head-knowledge alone

Condemns a Man More.

God will judge a man according to his works (Rom. 2. 6), and great knowledge means greater judgment (Rom. 2. 12). Would that some felt this, and cried for mercy NOW, which is so free and mighty. Christ is "mighty to save" to-day.

It is well to notice the Reality of Christ set forth by many lines of prophecy, which existed written plainly long before He came, including the remarkable types, as those of Exodus and Leviticus, of which a fulfilment could not be invented. To attempt to explain these on any theory of "coincidence" is to demand "a faith" without any foundation. Incredulity is credulous, beyond measure. The only key to the Old Testament is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, and He the Seed of the Woman, the Lamb of God's providing, the Shepherd, the Righteous One, the Child Born yet the Mighty God, the Antitype of Ark, Passover, Sheaf of Corn, Smitten Rock, Brazen Serpent—is the Alpha and Omega of prophecy. Without Him all is confusion, and if He is so prominent, must it not be because He is so precious, and because your relation to Him is so important? All the prophecies set forth, with joy, the Reality of Christ.

And this Reality is implied by all the revealed purpose of God. If one soul is to be saved, there must be righteousness. But God clearly sets forth the plan of His love to save a great number. So there must be a Saviour. If, therefore, this Saviour is less than Divine, idolatry will be the fruit: if He is not also a Man, He cannot represent guilty men, and render perfect obedience, and die in their stead. Christ, God over all (Rom. 9. 5), becoming a Man to be the Mediator is the

One Answer to our Need,

and thus a believing heart beats with joy to confess the Reality of Christ.

And there are thousands who have proved His Reality. Saul of Tarsus was transformed from a persecutor, and could say "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1. 21), and again, the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me (Gal. 2. 20). Here is a keen Jewish rabbi, master of logic, brought to own the Reality of Christ, of the One Whom he despised and rejected. And Israel will yet be brought to the same confession (Isa. 53. 3-5). And the Reality of Christ is my need: without Him I am a condemned man, a lost soul, a stranded ship, a hopeless derelict. The world is confusion without Him: its hopes are a mirage. I need Christ,

and so do you, dear reader. Do not make light of this, and lull yourself to sleep, or excite yourself to a false joy, amid

The Cemetery of Earth,

Here is God's one provision that displays His love, honours His law, fulfils His prophecies, guarantees eternal life, and comforts the broken in heart. I deserved judgment, He received it. No other plan is righteous or possible. Mercy and truth are met together: God is Just AND the Justifier of those who believe in this precious Saviour. Thus, rejoicing in His precious blood, we long that others may see their burden, and ALSO see that burden removed, as they behold the Reality of Christ.

Then "if any one is in Christ, there is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5. 17).

"Shall I Keep my Salvation?"

—Yes, because He keeps me. In the strain of home, and workshop, and office, and ALL that is conscientiously possible, Christ is sufficient! He ever lives to intercede (Heb. 7. 25), and the heart that trusts Him TO-DAY finds Him real every day, while looking forward with joy to see Him in His near and personal coming again (Heb. 10. 37). How full are God's encouragements for every need, emphasized by the indwelling Holy Spirit (John 16. 13, 14), Who ever delights to cause saved ones to triumph in

The Reality of Christ.

The shadows deepen, time hurries on, your life is not a freehold. Earnestly, tenderly, urgently we would ask you, dear reader, a precious question. Is this living Saviour yours, because YOU are His, or not? Do you know Him? By grace, He has made Himself Real to us. Can you wonder we long for others to enjoy Him NOW?

The REALITY of SALVATION.

YES, these are not bare words, this is not mere cant, but salvation is real, real before God, real in the experience of myriads, real in the joy of those who have "tasted" that the Lord is gracious. All the arguments, theories, mockery, scorn, laughter, indifference, objections, persecutions;—or whatever you will, of those who have not tasted His mercy, can never change this true and inner knowledge of the Lord Himself (John 17. 3, 1 John 5. 20). "Arguments" may shake "arguments," "theories" may overturn "theories", but only death can deal with life, and the bitterest and strongest enemy cannot kill eternal life! Salvation stands: a fact and an experience. Faith has a foundation, an enjoyment, a history, a future. Many think we believe because we do not know. But that is only the slovenly use (shall I say?) of the English word. We only "IMAGINE" when we do not KNOW, we only "think" when we do not KNOW, but we BELIEVE BECAUSE WE KNOW. 1 John 4. 16 gives the right order: "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." Otherwise "faith" is not worthy of the Name. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11. 1). Faith has a foundation, and only if that foundation can be removed can faith be disappointed. But "God IS," and His Word is true from the beginning (Heb. 11. 6, Ps. 119. 160). We cannot be credulous enough to believe unfounded doubts. Scepticism is too great a strain:—it has nothing proved. What has it seen to justify its boasted claims? It is all negative, and a negative stands ill when we have experienced the contrasted positive. To doubt God would be to doubt a living realization of Himself, and His love. If the agnostic says, "I do not know," the humble believer replies, "I do know, and therefore I believe." Not to believe when one knows would be madness, and a sinful denial of the One known. We dare not be so unreasonable as to doubt the experience of God's love. "Ah," you say, "it is only what you believe." Any one can SAY that. But though it IS what we believe, the ground of objection, leading to the word "only" is not clearly shown.

Do you desire me to "believe" that in a world with so many tokens of a beautiful Creator, there is no further revelation of Himself? Do you expect me to set aside the witness of prophecy strikingly fulfilled, in the birth of Christ, and His death and resurrection according to the Scriptures?—1 Cor. 15. 3, 4. You ask too much. The witness is too conclusive:—and He has met my need. Do not blame me for introducing this personal note. How can I omit to praise my real Saviour?

Moreover, the reality of salvation shines out in that by the work of Christ, there is thus a

RIGHTEOUS deliverance from **RIGHTEOUS** wrath. If there were not so, His death would have been unrighteous. If substitution be set aside, the atonement of Christ becomes a blot in history, and attacks the very character of God. Salvation **MUST** be a **REALITY**, or else everything crumbles. And then to explain the work of Christ apart from the love and righteousness of God would be an impossibility. Thus there is only one alternative: salvation is a reality. Praise be to God for the fact.

Furthermore, the sinner's need makes salvation a reality, or his condemnation a certainty. There is nothing else. Ah, dear reader, if you set aside God's revealed plan, what is there that remains? Only the wrath of God revealed from heaven (Rom. 1. 18).

Moreover, the fruits of salvation show the tree. Grapes are not gathered from thorns. Thanks be unto God for the reality seen in transformed lives. Imitations and emotional imaginations cannot account for these, but the reality of salvation by the blood of Christ can.

I know that these words of themselves will not win a soul, but if one dear reader, truly troubled by his own failure and need, and humbled to see his danger, really desires God's unveiling of His way of grace, such an one will not seek in vain (Isaiah 45. 19, 55. 6). A heart-broken sinner meets a Saviour Whose heart is full of love, and salvation is a reality, not through the work of flesh and blood (Matt. 16. 17), but because God hath shined in the heart. Yes, He hath thus shined to give the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4. 4-6). Wonderful, wonderful indeed is such a salvation, a reality for ever, and a reality to-day.

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4. 12

"FREE."

Phil. 4. 6, 7, Isa. 26. 3, 1 Pet. 5. 7, 1 Cor. 7. 32.

FREED from sin to live for Him, Christ our coming Lord, That we may adore and praise, and His love record: **FREE** from lawlessness, by grace, in a law to Christ, Whose we are in cov'nant love, since His death sufficed.

FREE from worldliness and strife, hating sinful pride, We **WOULD** walk with Christ our Lord, in Himself abide: **FREED** to serve by sovereign grace, saved and blessed for aye, Watching, waiting, now for Christ, and that glorious day.

FREE from restlessness, in Him, all by cov'nant grace, **FREE** from "fellowship" with those still of Adam's race. **FREE** from all distraction, we, with our minds above,— **SHOULD** be praising Him Who died, in His marvellous love.

FREE from worry, anxious care; restful, joyous too, For we have "That Blessed Hope" ever in our view, And our life should be for Him, all our pilgrim days, In the Holy Spirit's power,—just a life of praise.

THE REALITY OF FAITH.

FAITH IS MALIGNED. Men glibly say, "You only believe," and altogether misunderstand what faith is. Strangely they trust to their eyesight, professing to *know* what they see, and nothing else. But Another has true knowledge, and our hearts realize that "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are *vanity*" (Ps. 94. 11). The very persons who depend on their eyes will speak of "optical illusions" the next moment. Earthly powers fail. The deceit of the eyes reminds us of the deceit of the *heart* (Jer. 17. 9). Nevertheless, as to material things an optical illusion often harms us little, though a mirage may disappoint. As to spiritual things, however, misunderstanding is momentous, and we cannot hide the fact that

every man believes.

The solemn question which should sound in our ears and minds, is this—

WHAT do we believe?

There is nothing foolish in faith that has a *foundation*: but faith *without a basis* is madness indeed. You say, "I am an unbeliever." *No, you simply believe yourself.* Are you sure that *this* faith is wise? Have you found *self* so reliable? Have you not often *disbelieved* your previous believings? You *have* faith, but 'tis a faith that *trusts your doubtings* against the testimony of Scripture. You cannot escape from some kind of faith: but is your faith a wise one, or *NOT*? You reply, "I have sought evidence and have not found it." How have you sought? Often has a man objected to the Bible, and I have offered him a copy, and he has answered, "I have not made it my special study, I do not know where to find the place," or words to this effect. Permit plain speaking. You and I live in a world of "change," with death passing our doors daily, and cemeteries on all sides. Few who were living a hundred years ago are living now. And yet we count a year but a brief period. Can you tell me you are honestly concerned about these things, when you have not even searched the Book you set aside? Can you tell me you are concerned to know the truth, when you think of God less than football, or a cinema, or wireless? In a world of mystery and miracle, the man who goes on thus carelessly is not wise to himself, nor serious before others. There is enough in nature to show *One Who is ABLE to reveal Himself beyond nature!*

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11. 1). I accept the reality of faith because God proclaims it. "Ah," you say, "Reasoning in a circle." No,—in one sense, because, by grace,

I know Him. Yes,—in another sense, for *He* has become the Centre of my life-circle. You only accept what you *see*, hence you too must not only deny *all* evolutionary theories, but all the attacks of other sceptics, on the faith of those who believe their God. You have not lived our lives, you have not seen *anything to contradict* our personal experience of His grace and power. You say "Show us." Can you show me your own personal "life"? "He that cometh to God must believe that **HE IS**" (Heb. 11. 6). "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Ps. 19. 1), and it is a privilege to realize this fact. But faith goes beyond the unveiling of a Creator: faith is "*into*" and "*on to*" the Lord Jesus Christ (John 3. 16, Acts 16. 31). There is "*faith in His blood*" (Rom. 3. 25).

We have seen our sins. It would not be right to overlook them. But a way of salvation has been revealed that honours the God against Whom we have sinned, fulfils His law, and satisfies our conscience. "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15. 3). Faith is well, if it has a true foundation. Faith is ill, if it has no true foundation. Do not complain of *faith*. There is no foolishness in believing, but foolishness in believing a lie. In the gift of salvation we have received an understanding to know Him That is true (1 John 5. 20): "*we believe and are sure*" (John 6. 69). You yourself believe concerning unseen lands on the authority of a truthful traveller, and God has convinced and convicted us by His Spirit. We can only praise His Name, and seek to declare His salvation. What manner of persons saved ones "ought to be,"—obeying their Lord!

Remarkably in John 6. 40—"seeing" *leads to* believing. And in 1 John 4. 16 believing is the effect of *knowing*. This is ever a fact. I may *surmise* what I do not know, but I ought not to *believe* unless I do know. *Faith* implies absolute assurance. Hence the only testimony that I can at once rightly believe is the testimony of God. Wondrous fact, He has been pleased to make known Himself, and His way of salvation (John 17. 20, 26), to those who have been brought down to see their iniquities, and their deserved doom, and to cry, from the depths of their heart, "*God, be merciful to me, the sinner*" (Luke 18. 13). Reader, you *do* believe! But **WHOM** do you believe?—

GOD, or YOURSELF?

As, by God's grace, believers feed on His words daily they are blessed. But if we only "read" them, mental profit is not sufficient; it brings responsibilities,—and *loss* if we do not have a spiritual perception, with spiritual fruit. How important not to misuse God's precious gifts

THE REALITY OF HELL.

AN unpopular subject, but not on that account unimportant. *God's warnings are precious.* Eternity is not a bare word. We are not merely like to material things, but accountable before Him. Shall we turn away our eyes from danger as the bird "deprived of wisdom"? An epidemic is unpopular, but, if it *exists*, many are *in earnest* to read about it, and if there is a solemnizing *accident* many wish to read all the circumstances. Nevertheless, few wish to read about hell. They appear to imagine that a place of judgment can be removed by forgetting it, but it cannot be:—"God is not mocked" (Gal. 6. 7)

THERE IS A HELL:—

God says so. The only book that has stood the test of centuries, for entire truthfulness, contains His own unmistakable witness. And hell is a *place*,—into which the wicked shall be cast, (they will not go readily, Ps. 9. 17), nor can any one make an agreement with hell which shall stand (Isa. 28. 18). The gracious Saviour Who said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden," ever spoke unhesitatingly about hell. He asserted the reality again and again, and, if you hint the unreality, *you accuse Christ of falsehood.* Concerning the *poor rich man* of Luke 16 the Lord Jesus said "In hell he lift up his eyes." Plainly there *is* a hell. Aye, and there is *consciousness* in hell, for the Lord added, "Being in torments" (23). Using another word, with remarkable emphasis, He elsewhere spoke of *hell fire* (Matt. 5. 22), and in Matt. 10. 28 of *soul and body* in hell. Observe, there is *always* the thought of a *place*, the definite contrast with His words to His disciples, "I go to prepare a *place for you*" (John 14. 2). *Heaven* is real: *hell* is real. Thus the oft unheeded warning sounded forth from Christ's lips—"How can ye escape *the damnation of hell*?"—Matt. 23. 33. Nor was He speaking to the openly licentious. His sternest rebukes were to the self-righteous. You may go *religiously* to hell, dear reader, as quickly as an atheist or a profligate. Capernaum, where Christ did so many mighty works, was in greater peril than Sodom and Gomorrah. *Before God's Judgment Throne there is no respect of persons.*

THERE IS A HELL:—

History and experience show the marvellous providence of God. His hand is open, and manifold mercies are bestowed. There are wondrous laws fixed upon nature. And yet, *amid* all these bounties, *there is something wrong.* One Able to create so wondrously must be able to punish: One Who has stamped mercy

on providence *will not be unjust*: One Who has given innumerable examples of retribution, (sin often brings a bitter fruit even now), will not deny His own laws.* If there were no hell, there would be eternal *inequality.* How often the ungodly "prosper in the world; they increase in riches" (Ps. 73. 12), and "there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm" (Ps. 73. 4). "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? . . . One dieth in his full strength being wholly at ease and quiet . . . another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure" (Job 21. 7, 23, 25).

But, dear reader, is there a hell FOR YOU? NOT ALL will be cast into hell. God has a way of salvation now, by the precious blood of His dear Son. He *righteously* saves those who are brought to trust in His finished work. The door of heaven is wide open for them, and the welcome of His grace is beyond all human understanding. And though hell is *not yet* filled, heaven also is *not yet* filled, and God, in grace, is *still* bringing "the poor and maimed and halt and blind" to receive the riches of His grace, and to see the beauty of the Lord Jesus. Such will never, NEVER, NEVER be cast into hell fire. Thanks be unto God, *we have* proved His love and we long to rejoice with others in the same free salvation for the lost, for "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1. 15)

* Retribution is ILLUSTRATED even physically. If one eats poison he is affected. God has given many plain lessons, yet most are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear (Ps. 58. 4). But surely some will listen to Him to-day.

THE REALITY OF HEAVEN.

“**H**EAVEN”: how much this word means to some,—far more than mere emotion. To those who are the reverse of sentimental, “Heaven” has oftentimes been “music,” because *Christ* has become the music of their lives. To *others* the word is still as “nothing,”—only two bare English syllables. They are *not concerned* as to heaven or hell;—but they will be concerned one day.

Thus we find *two* contrasted temperaments. Ah, the difference is deeper than temperament; we must say “Two contrasted lives.” Some are “the soas of *this* age,” its treasures and positions and pleasures appeal to them: and others have been begotten to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. *Relationship to Him makes all the difference.* No “reasoning” can shake personal acquaintance with Him.

But none who know Him *always* knew Him. Hence the “*one sided*” party is of those who know Him not. Among the others, who are “in Christ Jesus,” there are men who can speak fervently of their personal experience of *both sides*. Once they *did* not know realities; they *do* now, and they delight to make known the striking change. Ps. 73. 25 has a meaning to such.

“*If* Heaven were not a reality:”—thanks be unto God, there is no room for an “if”—but *if* there were such a possibility, the whole history of the world would need to be re-written,—re-written in terms of ruin and anguish alone. Men speak of miracles, and impossibilities. The state of earth, with *so much* order, and with *so many* proofs of Divine beneficence, and yet with much confusion also, would be a *hopeless enigma*, if Heaven were not real. Unbelief *demand*s more credulity than ought else. Faith is above reason, beyond reason, but not against reason. It fills the gap, where reasoning can only lead to contradiction.

“Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens” cannot contain God (2 Chron. 6. 18), but He is pleased to reveal heaven as His throne (Isa. 66. 1, yet note Ps. 113. 6), and it was from heaven the Lord Jesus came (1 Cor. 15. 47), to die for sinners. A heavenly calling and hope are made the birthright of His people (Col. 1. 5, Heb. 3. 1), and they wait for Him from heaven (1 Thess. 1. 10). But, to those who know Him not, He shall appear from heaven in flaming fire (2 Thess. 1. 7). Now He *appears in heaven interceding for those who are His* (1 Pet. 3. 22, Heb. 7. 25, 9. 24). The last book of Scripture is full of teaching about heaven, and those who set aside the reality *give the lie to Scripture.*

Not that heaven is our only hope. Christ will reign over *this* earth a thousand years (Rev. 20. 4), and His people, who are meek, shall inherit the *earth* too (Matt. 5. 5). Wondrous is the fulness of the plan of grace, and God will not disappoint those that are brought to believe in the One Who poured out His blood *for them.* (Matt. 20. 28). Heaven is a bright prospect for eternity: eternal life will never change. Ah, dear reader, is your hope heavenly and set on the Heavenly One (1 Cor. 15. 49) or not? Can it be that you “mind earthly things” (Phil. 3. 19), and that you have no One to plead your cause before the throne of God?

THE REALITY OF ETERNAL LIFE.

TH**ERE** are some who tell us that none can know whether they are saved or not. But the Scriptures do not speak thus. They are very plain, for it is clearly written concerning believers, in 1 John 3. 14, "WE KNOW that we have passed FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE." The two words "we know" are often together in this epistle. In the gospel of John we are told that the things written therein were recorded that we MIGHT BELIEVE. The whole verse is impressive: "These things are written that ye might BELIEVE that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might HAVE LIFE through His Name" (John 20. 31). All, *without exception*, are, at first, said by God Himself to be dead in sins. What a contrast with physical life is physical death. But the contrast between spiritual death and life is *greater*, yet so few, are troubled as to *deadness in sins*. Why? Because Satan has so blinded both the eyes and the minds of sinners (2 Cor. 4. 3, 4) so that they neither see nor feel their *sinful deadness and darkness*. What wonderful words are found in John 3. 16,—often repeated even by those who are unsaved, yet without any *feeling* of concern about *themselves and salvation*. Though this verse is often quoted, we will not omit it here. God may, in His mercy, speak, at least to some, thereby. For God so loved the world (Jews and Gentiles), that WHO-SOEVER BELIEVETH in Him should not perish, but have EVERLASTING LIFE" (see verse 15). Then in John 10. 28 Christ says, "I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE, and they shall never perish." How blessed to *know* that one is saved and safe for ever. Natural life is very wonderful, and no one can explain fully *what it is*. But the Bible says, "The life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev. 17. 11). If the natural life is so wonderful, how much more wonderful is the spiritual life, which cannot be understood by man. Nevertheless, as the result of the natural life is *manifest*, so is the spiritual. *Real life cannot be hidden*. John 3. 8 helps to make this clear, "The wind bloweth where it listeth ('The Spirit breatheth where He willeth'), and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." We see the *effects* of the wind, and so those who possess ETERNAL LIFE are to show this. ETERNAL LIFE is a *marvellous gift*, and God is the Giver of all good (Jas. 1. 17). How gracious that He should give ETERNAL LIFE to those who were, *even as others* "dead in sins" (Eph. 2. 3). In Rom. 6.

23 we read, "The wages of sin is death, but *THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE* through Jesus Christ our Lord." What a difference between wages and a gift. Even little ones know the difference. What a sad end for those who are unsaved, when they pass away from this earth. James 1. 15 is definite, "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." We dare not hide any of the truth, not even from the younger ones, nor from those older. If LIFE ETERNAL is real, through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus,—and it *is* blessedly real,—how real and solemn also is the SECOND DEATH for those who continue "dead in sins." Over those who possess eternal life the second death will have no power (Rev. 20. 6, 14). Two remarkable verses in John 17 will apply here. In verse 2 we have "give" or "given" three times, "That He (the Lord Jesus) should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him." Then come the words, "And this is LIFE ETERNAL, in order that they might know Thee." So we see that those to whom eternal life is given *know God AS THEIR FATHER*, and the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. (See 1 John 5. 11, 13, 20). What a contrast is given in Matt. 25. 46, "EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT," "LIFE ETERNAL." Oh that God by His Spirit may speak to many through His own words, and bring some, who read these messages of mercy, to see their sad condition if unsaved, and to trust in Him the Saviour of sinners, even to-day.

HOW REAL IS LIFE ETERNAL, the precious gift of God, Through Him Who came from glory to shed His priceless Yet many are so heedless of God's eternal grace, [blood, To save and rescue many out from a fallen race.

HOW REAL IS LIFE ETERNAL, and God's unchanging love, To those who now in mercy are born from heaven above; God's love and tender pity, to sinners lost and dead, Is seen in what it cost Him, Whose precious blood was shed.

HOW REAL IS LIFE ETERNAL, and truly blest are they, Whose sins are all forgiven, for ever put away; [cost, How real are all God's blessings, but yet how great the To save rebellious sinners, when dead in sins and lost.

HOW REAL IS LIFE ETERNAL, and yet how few possess The knowledge of salvation, and all their sins confess; Yet God, in mercy welcomes all those who now repent, And trust in all the merits of Him the Father sent.

HOW REAL IS LIFE ETERNAL, which is so freely giv'n To sinners saved in mercy, and born again from heaven; How blessed to know Christ Jesus, Whose love will never end.

As one's own precious Saviour, and everlasting Friend.

HOW REAL IS FUTURE SORROW, for those who, in this life, Despise God's great salvation, and live in sin and strife, Who will not heed His warnings, but scorn His words of truth,

Not only in their manhood, but in their early youth.

HOW REAL IS LIFE ETERNAL, HOW REAL THE SECOND DEATH,

For those who now despise Him, the Holy Scripture saith; Yet God still draws poor sinners their evil to confess, And to be broken-hearted, then deigns to heal and bless.