

The Priesthood

of the

Son of God

Elder David Bartley

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Tom Adams

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DEDICATION.

TO ALL who feel in their hearts that they “have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,” who reverently confess their righteous accountability to him, yet feel that they have no self-righteousness to plead, but cry, “God be merciful to me a sinner,” this tribute of praise to the Man of the cross, who “came into the world to save sinners,” is earnestly commended, as directing their faith and hope to their Crowned King of Glory, “Jesus Christ the Righteous,” the successful Advocate with the Father, by their equally dependent friend and servant in the Gospel of Christ.

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

“JESUS THE CHRIST” is as well the High Priest of all the true worshippers of the true and living God as he is their Prophet and King, and his priesthood is absolutely essential to his success in his prophetic and kingly offices. As their Prophet, he must open their blind eyes, turn them from darkness to light, and make them wise unto salvation; and as their King, he shall reign over them in righteousness; but he does both only because he has made reconciliation for their sines, and thus brings them nigh unto God as the holy people. And so God has said to his holy Son, “As for thee also, by the blood of the covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.” Zech. ix. 11. The blood of his covenant belongs to his priestly office; therefore without the shedding of his precious blood their sins could not have been remitted, but his prisoners must have remained in the prison-house, the pit of iniquity, and perished in their sins, as guilty, and separated from God and holiness. So the streams of mercy, the wells of salvation, and the river of life flow out from the smitten Rock, “the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus,” to all who worship God the Father in spirit and in truth.

Thus may be seen the great and vital necessity of the abiding priesthood of the holy Son of God, and the deep importance to us of a true understanding of it, as the Holy Spirit has revealed it in the Scriptures, which are able to make the spiritual, and true worshippers wise unto salvation. This Divinely-given and gracious knowledge is essential to our abiding comfort and peace, and to the establishment of our hearts in the full assurance of faith and hope in Jesus, who is our salvation.

In view of all this my mind has been long exercised about the sacred work of writing upon this heavenly and sublime theme, as a work of faith and labor of love, if our Divine Prophet will graciously open my understanding in the Scriptures, and give me a commandment to write “the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ;” for without this preparation and unction from the Holy One the attempt must be futile, but with it the labor will be made a blessing to the household of God, and to all who may read it who feel too sinful to draw near unto him, and know not how to order their cause before him, yet desire to find favor and acceptance with him.

To me it has been a surprise or wonder that the priesthood of Christ has been so little dwelt upon by the able ministers of the New Testament, either in preaching or writing; for in my extended ministry of forty-five years, having heard thousands of sermons, very many of them good gospel sermons, yet in none of them was there more than an incidental allusion to our Lord’s priesthood; neither has it been my privilege to read but little upon it from the pens of our ready writers, with the exception of an able editorial by our beloved Elder Gilbert Beebe, which was recently republished in “The Signs of the Times.” My spirit has yearned for a more perfect understanding of this glorious mystery of the acceptance with God of a sinful people as spotless and holy. For this underlies the entire work of salvation, and without it no sinful being could be sanctified unto the acceptable service of the blessed and Holy Father, nor worship him in the beauty of holiness; for without holiness no one shall see the Lord.

It will not be regarded, therefore, as either needless or presumptuous that now at last, though late in life, my seeking spirit is led to enter into an investigation of the eternal priesthood of the beloved and holy Son of God. Yet it is with profound reverence, fear and trembling that I approach upon this holy ground, and write of those things “which the angels desire to look into.” For the subject includes the fearful temptation in the wilderness, the infinite suffering in the garden, and the awful scene on Calvary. It leads us down to the mournful sepulcher, where they laid the crucified Son of man, “a man

of sorrows, "thence up the peaceful Olivet, where stood the Living Son of God! and still up and away into the glory of "the world to come," the blissful realm of immortality, the eternal home of the Father Almighty, who is Love. O how may one so low rise to a theme so lofty and divine?

It is cause for abounding gratitude to God that, though the priesthood of Christ has not received very special attention from the ministry of our own time, yet in the book of remembrance that was written before the Lord for them that fear him, and that think upon his name, he has given us the Hebrew epistle, which is largely devoted to the wonderful priesthood of our great High Priest, in contrast with the typical Levitical priesthood of Aaron, who stood at the head of that priesthood as the first high priest. Therefore, in entering upon this solemnly wonderful part of revealed truth, it will be in order to first briefly consider the priesthood of Aaron under the old covenant, the dispensation of the law given upon Sinai, before specially dwelling upon the priesthood of Christ under the new and better testament, established upon Sion the mountain of God's holiness, and upon better promises. God himself has in his infinite wisdom and purpose given to his people the dispensation of the law and its ministration first, to convince us of the absolute necessity of a better and perfect way, and to prepare us for it, unto the end that we may offer unto him an offering in righteousness by faith in Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.

May the Spirit of revelation and truth guide both the writer and reader in this humble effort to look into the everlasting priesthood of our Lord.

CHAPTER ONE.

THE NECESSITY OF A PRIESTHOOD.

MAN, sinful and guilty, could not make an acceptable offering for his sins, neither free himself from his guilt; for he had broken the righteous law of his infinitely holy Sovereign, and only a perfect offering and holy service could fulfill the divine law. It is righteous, and hence it requires righteousness from all the children of men. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled," is the word of the King who reigns in righteousness, and who came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them. It is impossible, therefore, for the sinful world to meet and satisfy the outraged law of God, and approach unto him in holiness; yet in no other way can any one come to him and be accepted with him.

This solemn truth was shown by all the sacrifices and offerings under the Levitical dispensation and divine priesthood of Aaron; for all those sacrifices were required to be faultless or without blemish, or else they were rejected. Both the priests and the worshipping people were likewise required to be ceremonially sanctified and holy in all their service and worship, or God would not accept them. All this rigid ceremonial purity enforces the awful fact that sin separates all sinful beings from the presence and worship of God, who is HOLINESS itself; therefore all who enter into his presence must also be holy and without blemish. So, when the high priest of Israel went into the presence of the Lord in the Holy of holies, he was not only sanctified and clothed with the holy vestments, but upon his miter or crown he wore a plate of pure gold engraved with "HOLINESS TO THE LORD," that the people of that priesthood might be accepted before their holy God. It was only as thus ceremonially purified from their sins, by a divine atonement and consecration, that the children of Israel, the people of that priestly covenant, were accepted in their divine service and worship.

From all this we learn the absolute necessity on the part of the children of men, who would come and worship before the Lord, of a mediator between God and men; and he who mediates must be able to put away their sins, purify and make them holy, and thus make them nigh unto God. All this he must do for them by himself, by his own holiness and power; thus making a sinful people a holy priesthood, washed and sanctified and justified in the sight of God; that they may come and worship the Father in spirit and in truth, and in righteousness make their offerings of peace and praise unto him. For both nature and revelation prove, that the bitter fountain cannot make itself sweet, nor the guilty soul make itself righteous. "The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." Ps. i. 5. To Moses, upon the terrible Sinai, the Most High said that he would by no means clear the guilty. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. iii.10. No son of Adam has ever thus continued in righteous obedience, but "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," is the divine testimony of the word. The holy law is the ministration of justice, without mercy; but there is no hope for sinners, only according to the rich mercy of God.

Cain, the first-born of Adam, labored to make an acceptable offering unto God for himself, but sin laid at his door, and he and his offering were justly rejected. So it is with all the offerings that men can make for their sins, or the sins of others. The defect, however, is not in the law of God, but in sinful man, whose unholy sacrifice and selfish service cannot fulfill the righteous law nor please the Holy One.

To the Hebrew people God gave excellent laws, sacred oracles, a priesthood, and sacrifices; but none of these could take away their sins, nor make the worshippers perfect. The Holy One said he had no pleasure in them. All was a woeful failure! All flesh had become corrupt. Man had sinned, hence he was driven out from the presence of the Lord, and Eden was lost to him. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses," and from Moses to Jesus, and the grave boasted of the victory. The religious history of the first four thousand years is God's great object-lesson, as a wonderful panorama, standing out so plain that "he may run that readeth it;" and the lesson is: "By man came death." Hence, sin and death run through all his offerings and works, and they are "dead works." "There is none righteous; no, not one," of all the children of the first man.

How vain, then, are all the expectations and boastings of men, who think to find acceptance with God and obtain his favor and blessing by what they do! This was the fatal error of the Pharisees, a very zealous religious people, the people of God in the old covenant; but they trusted in themselves, depended upon their services and works, and went about to establish their own righteousness. Multiplied thousands are doing the same now. From all these things we must be separated and turned away. For the prophet of God said to his people: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." Isa. lxiv. 6.

Therefore, of all the sons of Eve, the mother of all the children of men, there is only One Righteous Man, and there is no other righteousness save his; and so no man can come unto God, and receive his salvation and blessing, only in this Divine Man and his righteousness. Every spiritual and heavenly blessing is in him, and of his fullness must all we receive, and grace for grace. In him only are we accepted as righteous before God, and for his sake alone are we saved and blessed, both now and forever.

Now, all this presentation of the children of men in their sinful separation and guilty alienation from God, and their utter unrighteousness and hopeless insufficiency, prepares us to see and realize the necessity of the bringing in of a better testament, and a far more perfect priesthood, by which we may draw nigh unto God and be accepted with him.

CHAPTER TWO.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF AARON.

THE first testament had its priesthood; Levi and his sons, one of the twelve tribes of the people of Israel, were set apart to that sacred office, that they should minister about the sanctuary of the Lord for all the people of the covenant, who were their brethren. For the people themselves could not approach unto God in the holy sanctuary, only by their consecrated priests, who represented them and presented their offerings unto the Lord. Those offerings were made for their sins; and the officiating priests were ordained and sanctified of God unto that divine ministry, to stand between him and his people, their brethren. This was therefore known as the Levitical priesthood, in which all the twelve tribes of Israel were equally represented and interested, for they were brethren; therefore all the people of that covenant belonged to that priesthood as a family and kingdom of priests, and as such they were united in the divine worship of the Lord God. They could not otherwise approach unto him in worship; but thus coming by their consecrated priests, their sins being atoned for and themselves ceremonially purified, God accepted them in worship.

Moreover, of the family of Levi, Aaron was called of God and made the high priest of all that priestly people, and his sons after him, to enter alone once every year beyond the second veil into the most holy place of the sanctuary, to make an atonement for all the sins of all the people, his brethren, and then to make intercession for them; for the Lord came down between the cherubim upon the mercy-seat, accepted the atoning blood, heard the intercession, and blessed all the supplicating people who worshipped in the court of Israel without. He saw all their names upon the sacred robe of their high priest, engraved in the twelve precious stones; for they were a people dear to him, and he viewed them in the sacred person and offering of their atoning high priest, and heard, accepted and blessed them in and with him. Thus, as the Lord's covenant people, and for the sake of the atonement which he appointed for them, he accepted and blessed them. No other people on earth were so highly favored and blessed of God, as the Scriptures show. For Abraham alone, the Hebrew, with his sons Isaac and Jacob and the children of Jacob or Israel, did the Lord choose and call out from the nations that they should be a peculiar people unto himself, the children of his covenant, a family of priests, to offer sacrifices unto him, his redeemed and sanctified people. With the one wonderful exception of Melehisedec, this family of Abraham, "the friend of God," was the then only great priesthood unto the Most High, to worship him acceptably as he had ordained; for all other peoples were ignorant of the right worship of the true God, but they offered sacrifices to idols, and worshipped the works of their own hands, for he gave them up to their own evil ways.

A rapid review of this kingdom of priests – from the time Abraham was a stranger in the land of promise, with Isaac and Jacob, until Joseph was sent down into Egypt, followed by all his father's house, and Moses led them out to Sinai, where the law was given, the tabernacle set up, Aaron and his sons consecrated, the solemn worship of the Almighty God established, and the Lord came down between the cherubim and his glory filled the tabernacle – will overwhelm the understanding beholder with awe and wonder, and he will feel his spirit bow low in reverence and worship. Moses, after reviewing all the way the Lord had led his redeemed people out of Egypt to the borders of the good land which he gave them, said: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.

Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.” Deut. xxxiii. 26-29.

All this was typical of “better things to come,” and pointed the true children of Abraham away to “a better testament,” a far more enduring and glorious priesthood, in which the worshippers are verily all righteous, and are called, “The holy people, the redeemed of the Lord.” Of all this worship under the first testament, says Paul: “Wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a school-master.” Gal. iii. 24, 25. And Paul therefore says: “For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” Rom. vi. 14.

For, let it be remembered, those sacrifices which were offered by the law, throughout the Levitical priesthood, could never make the worshippers perfect, nor take away their sins; but they must be repeated daily, and from year to year, in which there was a continual remembrance of their sins. This solemn fact is clearly presented in the epistle to the Hebrews, wherein we have a vivid comparison between the priesthood of the Old Testament and that of the New Testament, and a strong contrast between the old covenant of legal works and the new covenant of gospel grace, showing the infinite superiority and diviner glory of JESUS the Son of God over Moses the servant of God. Yet some of the Hebrew believers were zealous for the commandments of Moses, while they professed to believe also in Jesus; therefore they sought to mix the works of the law with the grace of the gospel. For they were Israelites, the people of the first covenant, the worshippers under the ceremonious priesthood of the showy temple, all of which had a show of great sanctity, and they were attracted and charmed by all this. It is much the same yet among all superficial worshippers under the priesthood of Catholicism, and the ministry of Protestantism, who make a pompous show of much sanctity and zeal.

Indeed, so tenacious and zealous were the priesthood and people of the old covenant for its shadowy forms and typical sacrifices that they desired nothing better, but would have perpetuated it, and never have given it up for the new and better testament. For, failing to look beyond and above it, because of their legal blindness, they depended on and trusted in the works of that covenant, more than in God, who gave them the covenant with all its provisions and blessings; and so “they worshipped and served the creature, more than the Creator.” Thus did they pervert those divine ordinances, which God gave them as “shadows of good things to come,” and made an idolatrous use of them, by trusting in them, rather than looking through them to the Redeemer that should come and make the one perfect sacrifice for sins forever, and turn away ungodliness from his people. It seems strange that the people of God, all along down the ages, have shown a proneness to thus corrupt his divine ordinances and service, by looking to and depending on the gifts more than the Giver; thus making their salvation from their sins, whether of commission or omission, conditional upon what they do in the way of serving God, instead of attributing all their devotional service, with every salvation and blessing, to his special qualification, mercy and grace. This fact not only shows the prevailing legal tendency of the human mind, which all are reluctant to give up, but also our selfish ingratitude toward the Father of all our mercies and blessings. Surely, we all need “a merciful and faithful High Priest” to atone and intercede for the selfish imperfections of our best efforts to serve our God; and it is well for us that he “is rich in mercy,” and is merciful to our unrighteousness, or we should receive no blessing from him.

This legal blindness and selfish pride was so strong and active in the priesthood of the old covenant, that it culminated in their rejecting, seizing and crucifying the Lord of life and glory, the harmless and

holy High Priest of the new and everlasting covenant. How fearful! As though this were not woe enough against them, their false zeal hurled them on to madly seek to defeat his priesthood and destroy his kingdom; first, by preventing his rising from the dead, which their own prophets and himself had said he should do; next, by persecuting and killing his ministers. Thus did they fearfully prove in themselves the utter weakness and failure of a conditional covenant of divine service and worship, which depended upon the faithfulness and works of the people themselves, to their own just condemnation and terrible overthrow. And thus did the just God and Savior make it fearfully manifest by them, that there is no perfection by a covenant of works, nor justification by the deeds of the law, as performed by the people who are under it. So the wrath came upon that priesthood and people to the uttermost, and they went out in awful failure and darkness, as a divine warning to all worshipping peoples not to trust in themselves or rely on their works. The same hand-writing of God is written upon the wall of Time all along the succeeding ages, as plainly manifested by every religious establishment among men; and it is the voice of the Almighty, saying: “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.” Jer. xvii. 5.

This is sadly a dark history and painful religious experience, and it fills the world with woe and the heart with mourning; yet God saw that it was necessary, and so ordained it; for in no other way will the children of men be convinced that there is no help in man, and be taught to “trust in the Lord,” in whom alone is righteousness, salvation and life, favor and blessing. “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.” Jer. xvii. 7. It is sad that all those whose entire trust and hope are in the Lord have ever been misunderstood, reproached and opposed by those who trust in man, and depend upon the outward obedience to the forms and ceremonies of religious service, looking more to the letter than to the spirit of the worship; but this has ever been so, as seen in Abel and Cain, the publican and Pharisee, Mary and Simon, the younger and elder sons.

Men either forget, or do not know, that “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;” that “Blessed are the poor in spirit;” that “God hath respect unto the lowly;” that “the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.”

But in the infinite wisdom of God, who is holy in all his ways, and who knew what is in man, he purposed all this experience of trial and suffering as needful to bring the true worshippers “to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant,” and to make them “the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” Therefore Paul wrote to the brethren in Christ, “That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.”

“The law and the prophets were until John,” the forerunner of Jesus; then they ceased, God having accomplished his purpose in them. All the Scriptures of holy men of old, from Noah to Malichi, testified of Jesus the Messiah; and every bleeding sacrifice and sin-offering, from Abel’s offering by faith until the angel Gabriel was sent from God to Zacharias the priest in the temple, typically testified of and pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ, as so many prophesies and promises that he should come to his temple at the time appointed of the Father, in the end of the law and all its ministrations, which could never take away sins, when all things were ready, as “the Messenger of the covenant,” and should “purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness,” as testified by the last prophet under the first testament.

“Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people;” the long and dark legal night grew more fearfully dark as it neared its close; men’s hearts were failing them for fear; all, all had proved the wretched failure and frightful guilt and ruin of all the sons and daughters of men. This is the

humiliating and bitter lesson of the law and its priesthood, and by it our God and Father has taught us the dreadful necessity of “a more excellent way.”

CHAPTER THREE.

“GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON.”

WHEN “The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God,” and said, “They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one,” he did not shut them up in the horrible pit, to perish without mercy; but to his Anointed he said: “I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house.” Isa. xlii. 6, 7. So the Lord is longsuffering, merciful and gracious unto the children of men, as said Elihu: “Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, ’deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.” Job xxxiii. 24. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass. * ** And he shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong bold, ye prisoners of hope; even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee. * * * And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people; and they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his hand.” Zech. ix. O how rich in mercy is our God! for he is the God of salvation.

“When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Gal. iv. 4, 5. Of this wonderful advent of the beloved Son of God to the earth, John says: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. *** And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” John i. 14, 17. Thus is the Advent of the only begotten Son of God profoundly declared. His Incarnation and Birth was the most marvellous event of time, and of infinite interest to lost men; and second in important wonder to his birth was his Death, and thirdly his Resurrection. Without these three most wonderful events in the universe of God, no flesh could have been saved from sin and death. But God declared to Moses that he would keep mercy for thousands, and forgive sin, iniquity and transgression; therefore, “Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy Salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.” Isa. lxii. 11. “Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon One that is mighty; I have exalted One chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established: mine arm shall also strengthen him. *** He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my First-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.” Ps. lxxxix. This David (beloved) or Son of David is the man Christ Jesus, the Son of Abraham and Isaac, David and Mary, and therefore chosen out of the people of Israel; yet he was also the holy Son of God, while he was verily a man, and called himself “the Son of man,” but at the same time he dwelt in the bosom of the Father, whom he revealed and declared. This is most wonderful, that the “holy child Jesus” should be one with God and one with men! As a man, Jesus dwelt among men in the days of his flesh, and at the same time

he was in heaven and reigned upon the throne of glory! Truly did Paul say, “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” A most wonderful mystery, that God himself, whom heaven cannot contain, would condescend to bow the heavens and come down to earth, and dwell among men in the likeness of sinful flesh as a man, unto the end that the children of men should be exalted to dwell in heaven with God! This glorious mystery is embraced in the incarnation of the Word, and the holy priesthood of “the man Christ Jesus,” whom God made strong for himself, and gave him power or rightful authority to lay down his righteous life, and power to take it up again, according to the commandment of his loving and holy Father. This was in fulfillment of his holy office and consecrated work as the High Priest of all his people.

There was a most solemn and sacred necessity that the Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God, should be made flesh, take upon himself the form of a servant, and be made in the likeness of men, as stated in the following Scripture: “For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for our sins. And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee.” Heb. v. 1-5. For the people whom God gave to the Son of man in the new covenant, that they should be his brethren and be with him in his glory, are the children of men, “partakers of flesh and blood,” and so sin and death stood between them and the life of holiness and glory unto which God in his everlasting love had chosen and predestinated them. These enemies must, therefore, be destroyed and taken out of the way; “that we, being delivered out of their hand, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life” – an endless life.

But our Deliverer must come to us in our nature and as our near kinsman, for he must be our Brother in the flesh; yea, he must be one with us, that we should also be one with him in true holiness. In no other way could he be qualified as the High Priest of his people to meet and receive the sword of divine justice, fulfill and satisfy the holy law and redeem them from its curse, suffer and die for their sins, then rise up out of death, above the law and the dominion of sin, justify them unto righteousness, and save them by his life. “For since by man came death,” it follows that this penalty of death was against man only, not against angel or spirit; so it is equally true that, “by Man came also the resurrection of the dead.” Cor. XV. So it is written: “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” Heb. ii. 9, 10. For in no other way could the sinful people of the covenant of life and peace be made perfect, and “grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life” over them. “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” Gal. iii. 21. “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” Gal. ii. 21. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Rom. viii. 3, 4.

All this divine testimony fully shows that the Anointed Christ, the one Mediator between God and men, was truly a man in the flesh and the Son of man; that he died in the flesh as a man, and for the children of men; that God raised up from the dead the MAN Christ Jesus, to die no more, and anointed him with the fullness of the Holy Spirit of life and peace the glorious High Priest of all his people forever.

The descent and parentage of the risen, ascended and coronated Son of man, whose name is "Wonderful," will further show the real humanity or manhood of our High Priest unto God, and his true Divinity as well. "The angel Gabriel was sent from God" to a virgin of the royal family of David the king, saying unto her, "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.*** Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke i. Mary was given faith to joyfully believe this wonderful annunciation, and she said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." More than seven centuries before the time of Mary, a prophet said, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isa. vii. 14. The interpretation of this name is, "God with us." Jesus, his personal name, means the same; that is, Jesus is God with us, for he is the God-Man, or God-and-man in his one person. All the perfect attributes of the incorruptible God and of uncorrupted man were verily his. As well in his manhood as in his eternal Godhood, Jesus was sinless and divinely holy, and is God's "holy child." "Jesus Christ our Lord was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. i. 3, 4. it was absolutely necessary that the holy and blessed Jesus should sustain this twofold relationship – to his Father and brethren – and possess all this divine fullness of perfection and power, to constitute him our sufficient and successful Prophet and Priest and King, and bring all his people into the glory and bliss of the Father's presence and love, sanctified and holy, and say, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." Unto this merciful purpose and work of full salvation Jesus came. How rich the mercy and divine the blessing, that our God would thus glorify the children of men, in the person and exaltation of the holy Son of man, and make them in and through his Son the children of the Most High! What infinite love that God came to us as Man, that lost men should be saved! This was compassion like the blessed God, and it verifies the ravishing truth that "God is Love!"

The angelic salutation to the mother of Jesus proclaims him King, as well as Priest; for, on his mother's side, he was the Son of David and heir to his throne of Israel, while, on his Father's side, he was the Son of God and heir to his throne of Heaven. This is very wonderful! David was king in Israel, but he could not also be a priest; for the priestly line was in the family of Levi, while the kingly line was in the family of Judah, and so the two sacred offices were distinct. It were death should a king of Israel thrust himself before the Lord in the most holy place of the sanctuary. On the other hand, neither Aaron nor his sons, though consecrated to officiate in the holy office of high priest, could reign upon the throne of Israel.

A very instructive and important lesson is thus taught us; that is, that neither Aaron nor David were complete types of our adorable Priest and King, because neither could represent him in both these divine offices; yet each partially, Aaron as high priest, and David as king. In the complete Bible we shall find a more perfect typical person, therefore, of him "that is born King of the Jews," and was also "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession;" and this better type has God given us in the remarkable person of Melchisedec, who was "king of Salem, priest of the most high God." By interpretation his

very name signified “King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.” Heb. vii. 1-3. That is, Melchisedec was the only priest of his order, and therefore he was without descent in his priestly office, and his was an abiding priesthood, in which he was a true type of the Son of God, who abideth a priest forever. Melchisedec was also king of righteousness and peace, and in this he fitly represented the King who reigns in righteousness, even Immanuel, whose “name is called The Word of God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.” Rev. xix. How wonderful was this man Meichisedec as type of the Son of God! At once perfect and alone as both priest and king, no other man in the wonderful Bible so truly personated the man Christ. So it is written of Jesus: “The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Meichisedec.” Ps. cx. 4. In Heb. vii, we learn that this man was so great that Abraham paid tithes to him, and that thus did Levi and Aaron and all that priesthood, who received tithes of their brethren, the people of Israel, pay tithes to the better and greater priest in the person of their great patriarch Abraham, who honored Melehisedec as superior to himself. In this we connect Melchisedec with Jesus, who said to the Jews, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. *** Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM.” John, viii. 56-58.

“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Meichisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change of the law.” Heb. vii. 11, 12. Thus it is very evident that the priesthood of the Son of God belongs to a new and better testament or covenant than the Levitical priesthood, and is entirely different and distinct from it, which difference will be considered hereafter.

A further notice of the fleshly lineal descent of the holy Son of man is of vital interest to all who earnestly desire kindership and union with him, without which we have no representation or interest in his priesthood, for he is the High Priest of his brethren only, and they shall for this reason be joint-heirs with him in all the fullness and blessing of his successful and glorious priesthood. First, then, the precious Redeemer unites in himself the three-one office of Prophet-Priest-King, not as arbitrarily thrust in either, but rightfully, as born unto them. For his genealogy on his royal mother’s side, as given in Matt. I, shows that the prophets and priests and kings of Israel united in his “precious blood.” Yet his patriarchal line is reckoned from Judah, from whom the scepter should not depart, said the dying Jacob, “until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” The meaning of Shiloh is, “resting-place,” and Christ gives rest unto all the people that come to him.

But Jesus is the salvation of God unto the ends of the earth, and Simeon said of the infant Redeemer: “A Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.” So, though Jesus was born of the Jews, it is equally important and interesting to the Gentiles, to whom God grants repentance unto salvation, to know that no less than four of our Lord’s maternal ancestors were Gentile women, whose husbands were sons of Israel, which the record plainly shows David the king, of whom Christ came, was the great-grandson of the interesting Ruth, a daughter of Moab, and beautiful type of the Gentile church. The kings of Jerusalem were likewise descended from the mother of Solomon, a Gentile woman. It will interest the Bible reader to trace the other Gentile women of faith, from whom came our Brother-Redeemer. How wonderful this is, that the man Christ, the Anointed of God, our Prophet and High Priest and King for ever, is our near kinsman in the flesh, though we were lost sinners of the idolatrous Gentile race. In this is seen the riches of God’s mercy, and the much more abounding of his

grace, reigning by our Lord Jesus Christ. This overflowing of salvation to the Gentiles, who were outside the walls of the first covenant, is beautifully expressed in the typical blessing of the dying Israel upon his son Joseph, saying, “Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall.” So it is indeed true of the spiritual Joseph, whose “bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel. * * * The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph.” Gen. xlix. “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.” “And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.”

CHAPTER FOUR.

OUR BROTHER HIGH PRIEST.

AARON, the first and greatest high priest in the old covenant, was a type of JESUS, the great High Priest in the new covenant; and Aaron was the brother of Moses, by whom the law was given, and as well the brother of all the people of that covenant, whose high priest he was. As often as he entered within the second veil of the holy sanctuary with the atoning blood, to appear in the presence of the Lord, the twelve precious stones in his breastplate reflected the names of the twelve tribes of the people of Israel toward the mercy seat before him, while the two precious stones upon his shoulders also reflected their names heavenward, and all these were his brethren, no less than his fellow-citizens in that kingdom, and it was for their sins that he made the atoning sacrifice there in the presence of their covenant-Lord, and for them only he interceded. Being their brother, they were near and dear to him, and he could be touched with the feeling of their necessities and infirmities, because he was in this close relationship and sympathy with them. Moreover, they were not only his own near kindred in the flesh, but they were the people of the Lord his God, and their merciful God had ordained him their high priest, to appear in the Holy Presence and typically put away their sins. All this appointment, and the very constitution of this brotherhood, was of the Lord, for he had ordained it thus. This is instructive and very wonderful, for our God thus teaches his spiritual Israel a divine truth. For all this pointed to and was typical of the greater High Priest than Aaron, even “Jesus of Nazareth, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write,” and dimly represented his diviner priesthood and priestly people.

For, as pointed out in the last chapter, the Son of David the king, as born of his blessed mother Mary, was Brother of all his people in the flesh, as well of the Gentiles as of the Jews; for his God and Father gave them all to him and him to them in the everlasting covenant of life, and ordained Christ and his people to be one in the covenant, one in the flesh, one in death, and one in life. Therefore, it is verily true that the holy Son of God is our Brother in the flesh on his mother’s side, and we are his brethren in the Spirit of life on his Father’s side. This blessed and divine reality is clearly revealed by the Spirit in the holy Scriptures, and witnessed in the hearts of the people of Christ’s holy priesthood, after they are born of the Spirit. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” Rom. VIII. 16. “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.” Heb. ii. 11, 12. This is the church that Christ loved, “and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.” Eph. v. 25, 26. So at the conquered grave, the newly risen Christ said to Mary: “But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” John xx. 17. Here our First-born Brother from the dead preciousy owns his brotherhood with all his people, the children whom his Father gave him, and is not ashamed to call them brethren, notwithstanding he had passed through death and stood victorious on heaven’s side of the grave, and they yet sorrowed on earth’s side.

O, how highly favored are the people of God’s covenant-mercy, since his exalted and glorified Son calls them, “My brethren!” “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!” 1 John III. 1. While this sonship embraces sinful people of the Jews and Gentiles alike, it is in the sonship of the Son of man, and in his holy life and divine nature; for the sinless Jesus is “the only begotten Son of God,” and in his life and righteousness only are we the sons

of the Father who is holy. That the people whom the Father gave him in the perfect covenant should he made “The holy people,” the holy Son of God came to them in the flesh and under the law; and thus is he their near kinsman and beloved Brother, and in him was the right of redemption. The noble and compassionate Boaz, the near kinsman of the widowed and impoverished Naomi, who represented the state of the Jews, and as betrothing Ruth unto himself, as representing the Gentiles, thus redeemed them both and made them rich, in which he is a beautiful type of our spiritual kinsman, of whom Paul says: “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” 2 Cor. viii. 9.

It was thus, as the Son of man in the flesh of his people, that the holy Son of God was one with them under the law, and therefore lawfully and righteously represented them as in covenant and life union with them, so that their sins were righteously imputed to him, and his righteousness likewise was theirs in and with him as his brethren and members. This is divinely and wonderfully true and comforting, because in no other way could sinners be saved and made holy. It is this sacred and endearing oneness with our Beloved that makes him so unspeakably dear and precious to every humble believer in him; for he is our All-in-all. It was in these sacred bonds that Isaiah said of the holy Lamb of God, “and he was numbered with the transgressors,” and that Paul said, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Cor. v. 21.

God did this in his infinite holiness and wisdom; therefore Peter said of Christ, “Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God.” 1 Peter 1. 20, 21. So Paul also: “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.” 1 Thess. V. 9, 10. So the death of Christ for his people was according to this appointment of God, which proves that he died righteously, and in his death fulfilled all righteousness, made an end of sin, abolished death in its sting and power over his people, and brought life and immortality to light in his resurrection unto God and glory. He did this as our Brother and for his brethren. The sufferings unto death of the Anointed man Christ in the flesh were because of his sacred relations to his people, whom he should save from their sins; therefore he neither represented nor died for any others. In the absence of this brotherhood that made Christ and all his people one, as Head and body and members, his death could not have fulfilled the righteousness of the law for them, nor put away their sins; because he would not have had the just right to redeem them, neither could the righteous claims of the divine law against every transgressor have involved him with and for them. This principle is established in equity, and it obtains as well in nature as in grace, for the just God has so ordained it. And because this is true, the atonement of the holy Redeemer is necessarily special, and it could not possibly be general or universal. For, before there could be the imputation of our sins to the sinless man Christ, or the imputation of his perfect holiness to us, he must be one with us and we one with him. No truth is more clearly revealed in the inspired testimony than this, and it is only in this sacred and divine union with him who is righteousness and life that “ye are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power.” It is because God ordained that “they two shall be one flesh,” that the husband is justly obligated with and for the wife in law, and his payment of her debts justifies and acquits her equally with him. Without this union and unity, he could not be justly held to satisfy any law for her. It is so with straying and trespassing sheep; for the shepherd and owner only is under a lawful obligation for them, just because they are his. “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep,” is the precious word of Jesus. For no others did he give his life, neither could he righteously do so, and for the sheep only because the Father gave them him and they were his. “My Beloved is mine, and I am his.” “The one thing needful, dearest Lord, is to be one with thee.”

It is most wonderful and blessed that the “One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,” is at once one with his brethren and his Father! And because he is, he raises them above sin and death and uplifts them to his Father, and to their Father! In view of this, a poet sang:

“Halt sacred union, firm and strong!
How great the grace, how sweet the song!
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!”

But our present consideration is, the grace that brought Christ down to us, in touch and sympathy with us in our sinful estate of suffering and death in the flesh. In Psalms XL, David testifies that the Lord went down to him in a horrible pit, brought him up out of it, set his feet upon a rock, established his goings, and put a new song in his mouth. Of the priesthood of our compassionate Redeemer, another say “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like u to his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” Heb. II. 17, 18. Thus it is shown that the people of this priestly covenant are also the brethren of their High Priest, and that, as merciful and faithful, a sacred obligation was upon him to bow the heavens and come down to them, and be made like them in all things; for otherwise he could not have suffered and died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. As distinct from his people in the flesh, who were appointed of God to be “an holy priesthood,” Christ could not have suffered and died for them, neither could they have been washed and purified from their sins. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Heb. ii. 14. Thus and in this way only was Christ qualified, clothed and consecrated unto the office-work of the ordained High Priest of the people for whose sins he should atone, and who should be his brethren and royal priesthood for ever. For they are the children of men in the flesh, sinful and under the sentence of death; for this cause the Redeemer must himself be a sinless and perfect man in the flesh, and as a man obey the law for them, suffer its sentence of death against them, fulfill it, redeem them from its just and fearful curse, by being made a curse for them, then, rising up out of death, destroy it and the devil; for in no other way was it possible for him to reach them, or for them to rise up out of death, living and holy, and be with him as his sanctified and holy brethren and priesthood, to praise God forever. O how awfully solemn and dreadful was all this on the part of the dear Son of man!

CHAPTER FIVE.

CHRIST'S PRIESTLY OFFERING.

“FOR every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.” Heb. v. 1. “For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this Man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things. *** But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second” Heb. viii. 5, 7. This most conclusively shows that the mediatorial covenant, priesthood and ministry of the holy man Christ is new, and not like the first covenant and priesthood under the law of Moses, and far better than that, for it was faulty, in that it was conditional and depend upon the people to keep it; therefore it was so unreliable that it made nothing perfect. And so radically different is Christ the High Priest of the new covenant from those high priest that, whereas death put an end to their priesthood, it was through death that he was perfected and established in his priesthood forever. For by his one offering, he perfected forever them that are sanctified or set apart and consecrated as his priestly brotherhood. This was the offering up of himself through death. Until Christ made this one offering for all the sins of all his people, he was one with them in his and their flesh and under the law, the first covenant; but he was not a priest under the law or of that first covenant, after the order of Aaron’s priesthood: therefore it was necessary that he should die in the body of his flesh as the victim and sin-offering under the law, then rise up from under it in “the power of an endless life,” and ascend up into his spiritual, new and heavenly kingdom in the fullness and perfection of the new and better testament, and in the unveiled presence and glory of God, that he might perfect his eternal priesthood. This is the meaning of the clause above: “For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest.” Thus does the inspired writer on the priesthood of the holy Son of God strongly contrast between the two covenants and priesthoods, the first and the second, proving that they are as distinct and separate as death and life, and showing that while the old is burdened down under sin and imperfection, bounded and ended by death to all its people and worshippers, the new is so perfect and abiding in its blessed fullness that in it sin is ended, the burdens of the law taken away, the power and victory of death and the grave destroyed, and all its people and worshippers are alive from the dead, clothed with priestly robes of righteousness, and “shall never die.” Is it any wonder, then, that our inspired writer has so fully and clearly pointed out to the Hebrew brethren in Christ the weakness and folly of turning away from the fullness of the new covenant in Christ, to the emptiness of the old conditional covenant, that made nothing perfect? Nay, is it not a strange delusion that, until this day, any of the people of the new covenant of grace and life and peace in Christ Jesus will have a proneness of mind and heart to turn away from the fullness of grace and truth in him, to the ever-failing conditions of a covenant of works? This is because the people of God are first born of the flesh, under the conditional covenant of legalism, to which they naturally cleave in their fleshly mind; therefore all fleshly religion and service and worship is always Legal or conditional in its nature and motive. They look to themselves and their works of supposed prey lung obedience to supply the lack or insufficiency of grace in the gospel of full salvation in Christ, seeming to forget that there is no acceptance and no perfection in the sight of the u and holy God only in his righteous and beloved Son, by whom alone our very prayers acceptance gain with God. Christians should remember this Scripture: “For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just

for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.” 1 Pet. III. 18. The simple truth in this testimony is, that we must suffer for sins in the flesh unto death, so long as we are in the flesh, as Christ did, and that all spirituality and holy devotion and service in us arises from the quickening Spirit. This truth is also fully presented by Paul, in Gal. v, showing an entire separation between the works of the flesh, which are corrupt, and the fruit of the Spirit in those that are Christ’s, also saying, “But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” It is evident, then, that all who are not led by the Spirit, but by the fleshly mind, are under the law.

The holy Son of man, spotless and undefiled, was the Lamb of God, and by faith Abraham spoke of him to Isaac, saying, “My son, God will provide himself with a lamb for a burnt offering,” and it was so. On turning, Abraham saw the typical lamb held fast in a bush; he, at the command of God, loosed Isaac, the heir of promise, from death, then sacrificed the divinely appointed lamb upon the same altar. The lamb yielded up its innocent life, that the bound and unresisting Isaac (type of the children of promise) might go free and live. The forerunner of Jesus pointed to him and said, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Jesus calls his people lambs and sheep, the “little flock,” and himself their good Shepherd, who “giveth his life for the sheep.”

How inexpressibly wonderful is “the Man of God’s right hand, whom he made strong for himself,” that he was at once the Lamb and the Shepherd, the Offering and the Priest. No other high priest was like him in this; no, not even the great Melehisedec: for neither they nor he offered up themselves unto God as an atoning sacrifice for sins, because they themselves were sinful, and needed a more perfect sacrifice. So God in his mercy provided them with lambs without blemish to offer to him in sacrifice for themselves and their people and brethren. Yet those sin-offerings could never take away their sins, (except ceremonially and typically, as pointing them to the Lamb of God,) nor make the worshippers perfect. In this fact we are taught the necessity that the High Priest unto God of the better testament should be prepared to make a better offering for sins than had ever been made, or else no flesh could be saved from sin.

“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. *** He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. *** But this Man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.” Heb. X. In this sacrifice of the holy Lamb of God upon the burning altar of the fiery Law of eternal Justice, the infinite mercy and compassionate love of the Father and grace of the suffering and dying Son were most richly and blessedly manifested toward all the people of the everlasting covenant, whose glorious High Priest the precious Christ is. O how deeply mournful, that the holy Son of the holy Father must be sacrificed! – sacrificed on the accursed Roman cross! and sacrificed that guilty sinners, such as we, might plead his gracious name!

“This was compassion like a God!
That when the Savior knew
To ransom us required his blood,
His pity ne’er withdrew.”

The loving and faithful High Priest unto God well knew that no other offering than himself, his precious blood and holy soul and body, as a whole burnt-offering, would take away our sins and make reconciliation for us; therefore when his soul was troubled, he submissively said, “But for this cause

came I unto this hour.” And when the priests of the law had delivered him up to Pilate, Jesus said to him, “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” John XVIII. 37. He had before this time bore witness that he came to fulfill the law and the prophets. One of the prophets had said of us and Christ, “All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter. *** He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken,” Isa. liii. Another thus wrote of him: “What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.” Zech. xiii. This seems O too dreadful! But to reconcile and comfort us in this great sorrow, let us hear the lamb-like Shepherd himself say, “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.” John x. 17, 18. Finite language is too weak to express the strength and perfection of the infinite love of the obedient and suffering Son of God thus spoken by him love to his Father, and love to his flock. It is surpassingly sublime, divinely beautiful, lovely and holy.

Come with me, you whose hearts overflow with sorrowing love for him, and let us further consider him as the High Priest of our profession, the Beloved of our souls: He was a young man, perfect in divine excellence, faultless in person, surpassing the holy angels in purity, no guile in his mouth, lamb-like and full of heavenly goodness, ever ministering to and relieving the afflictions of all who came to him, so divine a man that his blessed mother Mary adored him, and his disciples worshipped him; yet he was “meek and lowly in heart,” sought not honor of men, made himself of no reputation, was so poor that he had no home of his own on earth where to lay his head at night, but wearily travelled on foot with his little flock, that he might bear consolation and blessing to the suffering and helpless, and finish the work which his Father gave him to do. O thou lowly “Man of sorrows,” thou immaculate Lamb of God, and lovely Prince of peace! thou blessed Son of the Highest! we do not wonder that thy Father-God, when he brought thee into the world, said, “And let all the angels of God worship him.” Yea, we too would weepingly kiss thy dear feet, with sorrowing Nary, sinful and needing thy cleansing blood and free forgiveness as much as she, and with the angels lovingly worship thee. But we sorrow most of all, dear Master, that thou must die, must die because we have sinned against thy holy Father and thee, must die for us! O thou self-sacrificing Brother, born for adversity, how shall we ever requite thy redeeming love?

“For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself” Heb. vii. 26, 27. “And as it is appointed unto men once to die: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.” Heb. ix. 27, 28. Death, therefore, is the appointment of God unto all men, because of sin, and the just wages or penalty of it. For this cause, Christ, though a sinless and divinely holy man ascending up to oneness and equality with the infinite God, was yet appointed, ordained and sent of God to be offered up in death, bearing the sins of many, a countless number, yet all known of God, and all their numerous sins known as well, that by his death as a man and as God’s ordained and consecrated High Priest for his dying people, he might make the full atonement or reconciliation for all their sins to the holy Law

and divine Justice, which called for satisfaction by full and faultless obedience. Death only could now fulfill the holy law, since man had sinned against God, who gave the law. But the death of all sinful men could never remove the guilt of their sins, nor make one sinner righteous in the sight of the Holy One. Yet he who atones for the sins of men, and redeems them from the curse of the law, must himself be a man, perfectly holy, and possessing all the excellence and merit that were sufficient to “magnify the law and make it honorable.” It must be a man with whom the righteous God himself is “well pleased.” Abraham’s strong faith in God convinced him that God would provide himself with such a Lamb for an offering, when by faith he saw the day of the Christ-man, and rejoiced in him. So also did the faith of tried Job, when he said, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth.”

“E’er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.”

Yea, shall he when I meet the Lord in holy heaven with all his saints.

The solemn words, “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many,” presents a solemn fact; that is, “the sins of many” were all known to God and numbered in his omniscience so definitely that he imputed them every one to Christ, to bear them and put them away by the one whole and perfect offering of himself. For unless every sin of the many whose sins Christ bore were known and determined, to the last and least sin, he could not have borne them when he was offered. But if only one sin of the many for whom the Lamb of God was offered was left out of God’s account and not imputed to the Surety of the better testament, then the atonement and redemption could not have been complete and perfect, therefore not accepted, and all must have been a failure. This is inevitable. But the Omniscient One, who has numbered the very hairs of our heads, has not omitted the least or last sin of all whom he appointed to obtain salvation from their sins, by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. And this certainly establishes the fact that God, in his infinite counsel and eternal purpose in Christ, reckoned up all the sins of all his people whom he foreknew and ordained unto eternal life. Hear Paul, therefore: “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Tit. ii. 13, 14. Redemption from all iniquity, and purification from all sin and unrighteousness was the divine purpose for which Christ gave himself for his people, that they should be holy and blameless before God in love, unto which end God both chose and predestinated them, that they should be conformed to the perfect image of his holy Son. It was not possible, therefore, for one chance or stray sin to be committed, which was outside of the counsel and purpose of God, and for which Christ did not offer himself and make full atonement. “And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,” says John. And therefore the suffering Redeemer bore all the sins of all his straying sheep, and perfectly atoned for them when he poured out his precious blood unto death. “Who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” 1 Pet. ii. 24. The healing is the sure benefit of his stripes; and his death in his own body on the tree for the sins of his brotherhood unfailingly secures their death to sin, and their life unto righteousness; for with the offering and sacrifice of our holy High Priest God himself was well pleased, and his holy law asked no more. “For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how

much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.” Heb. ix. 13-15. Thus the perfect accomplishment of the mediatorial work of the Redeemer, in the redemption of his people from their transgressions, and their purification unto the service of God and possession of the eternal inheritance in Christ, the Son and heir of the Father, is as absolutely sure as his death for their redemption. With Christ, our perfected High Priest, who is now glorified in the presence of God, there is no possible failure, but all is complete.

The baptism of Christ in Jordan, and his temptation in the wilderness, after he had fasted forty days and nights, were solemnly important events in his priestly office, and were a part of his preparation and consecration as the Apostle and High Priest of his beloved people. He walked from Galilee to John the Baptist, who was baptizing penitent sinners in Jordan, to be baptized of him. “But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matt. iii. 13-17. Thus did God bear witness to his obedient and lowly Son, and honor him in anointing him in his holy office of High Priest with the fullness of the dove-like Spirit, symbol of innocence and peace for this Anointed One, the Christ-man, is the Prince of peace and the peacemaker of his people. His baptism in the water of Jordan was a solemn and suitable symbol of his death; “for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness,” he said, and thus he perfectly fulfilled. This anointing with the Spirit of holiness was unto his priestly offering upon Mount Calvary, near where Abraham unbound his son Isaac, and offered instead the lamb that God provided. And as faithful Abraham did not withhold his son as an offering to God, neither did God withhold his well beloved Son as an offering for Abraham and all who are blessed with him in the covenant that God made with him, saying, “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Gen. xxxii. “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Gal. iii. 29.

“Jesus of Nazareth,” the dearly beloved son of Mary, had left his sorrowing mother’s humble but divinely blessed home to abide in it no more, only in spirit and love; for he went forth from his baptism to fulfill his ministry, and finish the work which his holy Father gave him to do. O with what sorrowing sympathy we by faith follow this now homeless young man as he goes alone away into the terrible wilderness, to be with the wild and savage beasts. Yet his loving Father sent him there. The devil had compassed the ruin and death of the first man and all his people, through his subtilty and temptation unto sin, and Eden was lost, and all men as well. So now the devil, “that had the power of death,” must himself be destroyed; therefore this guileless youth, “the second man,” must needs go into the wilderness, just as his type, the youthful son Joseph, must leave his father and mother and go down into Egypt, that his father’s family should not perish, but be saved. O how solemnly wonderful are the ways of God! At times the lines of his providence seem densely dark to finite vision, and men will cry out against him as though he were both unjust and cruel. But not so did either Joseph or Jesus; no, nor, tried and suffering Job, who said, “For though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.” So, it was but a triumph of the infinite goodness, compassion and mercy of God to countless millions of his predestinated sons. and daughters, who had sold themselves for nought to sin and Satan, that the Captain of their salvation went Into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, at the end of his long fast, when he was hungry and

weak in the flesh, It was a fearful trial, but the issue was not doubtful in the least; for the fierce conflict ended in the overthrow of the prince of darkness, who then left Jesus, “and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.” This was the most wonderful and blessed victory ever won for righteousness, and in it God and his Son were glorified, and all the people of the second Adam were delivered from the destructive power of the devil. And so our conquering Christ said, “I saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” Therefore, for our consolation, it is written: “For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.” Heb. iv. 15. And in his complete victory over sin and Satan is the divine assurance of the full salvation and triumph of his tempted people. “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” Heb. ii. 18. The Lord will not suffer his tried brethren to be tempted above that which they are able to bear, but with the temptation he will make a way for their escape or deliverance. Therefore Paul says, “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” Rom. viii. 37. This was secured to us by the conquest of our tempted Christ over the devil, which makes manifest the rich mercy and boundless love of God to his people in sending his Son into the world, and into the wilderness. For it is not the will of the Father in heaven that one of his little ones should perish; but perish should the devouring enemy of righteousness and their sins; yea, death and the grave.

The same guiding hand of the loving Father that led the dear Son of his delight down into Jordan’s flood, and out into the wilderness, also led him up into a high mountain, with three of his apostles, where the Father himself met them, withdrew briefly the fleshly veil, and gave them a glimpse of the awaiting eternal glory of his beloved Son, again testifying that in him he was well pleased, and commanding, “Hear ye him.” But Oh! in the midst of his glory appeared Moses and Elijah, talking with Christ in the hearing of the apostles, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.“ Luke ix. 28-32.

The time drew near, which the Father had put in his own power, when “The Christ of God” should be offered up, as spoken of at his transfiguration on the holy mount; and he said to his little band of followers: “The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.” Thus, knowing all this solemnly fearful suffering and sacrifice that his Father had appointed unto him, and that he came into the world as a man to accomplish, O how needful and sustaining was the loving Father’s revelation of his future glory upon the mount; and the comforting voice from the excellent glory: “This is MY beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” He knew every step of the suffering way, and all the solemn and mighty work and closing conflict before him; but the dear Man of sorrows knew as well that the Father had made him strong for himself, and had given him power over all flesh, and that when he through the eternal Spirit had offered himself spotless and holy unto God, he should again arise in triumph over the last enemy, and his blessed Father would welcome him home and all heaven should shout with joy. Thus armed and consecrated, the obedient Son and faithful Brother “set his face to go to Jerusalem,” which his fearing and sorrowing friends would have prevented. O how full of gloom and anguish all new was to them! They could not understand it, and sorrow filled their hearts. It was the sorrow of Christ’s sufferings in the flesh that thus overwhelmed them. And has it not also filled each one of us with unutterable sorrow, even the sorrow of death? Yet it must be met and borne, and this meek and lowly Man alone was sufficient to bear the burden, drink the cup of woe, meet the awaking and smiting sword of sin – avenging Justice, and he knew that to do this he must lay down his life; yet he faltered not, but meekly went on, as a lamb to the slaughter, because it was his Father’s will, which he came down from heaven to do. When the time drew near he said to his apostles: “The hour is come, that the Son of man

should be glorified. *** Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” John xii. 23-28. Of this infinite trouble and conflict of soul, it is written of him “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.” Heb. v. 7-10.

“And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer, for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!” Luke xxii. No word of complaint against his righteous Father, who, in his counsel and purpose, determined that thus he should go, did the betrayed Jesus speak or feel, but in holy anguish he pronounced a fearful woe on Judas.

The sleepless and dreadful hours of his last night on earth in the flesh wearily wore away. The midnight hours and the three apostles who witnessed his glory on the mount, now witnessed his infinite anguish of soul and his entreaty, as he laid prostrate at the foot of Mount Olivet, crying, “O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.” “And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” This amazing suffering of his holy soul, even unto death, as he had just said to the three witnesses, was the smiting of the sword of Justice for the sins of the flock of slaughter; and thus “He was bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him.” O the holy example of patient submission to the Father’s will he thus left to us! It was the precious Christ-man, the Anointed Jesus, the meek and lowly son of Mary that thus agonized in the garden in prayers and cries, tears and blood, under the shadow of Mount Calvary, to his holy Father and God.

All was finished now, except to be offered up in sacrifice the next day. The dear Master and Teacher had, in this solemn night of death-sorrow, lovingly and comfortingly talked long to his sorrowing disciples; then, in their hearing, he prayed to his Father for them: “And lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” John xvii. 1-5. When Peter drew his sword to defend his Master from arrest, Jesus said to him, “Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?” To the officers and band sent by the chief priests to seize him, and led by the traitor, he said, “If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.”

“And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.” When they lifted him up on the cross, he said, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” To the dying, penitent and supplicating thief he said, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” “Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Oh! this was the deepest trial of all, and he could not endure more; yet God saw it needful and best. The suffering High Priest had now made the full sacrifice, drained the cup of woe, poured out his blood on the altar, and made his soul an offering for sin. He cried with a loud voice, then said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit;” and again said, “IT IS FINISHED: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.” “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.”

Even the Roman officer, who conducted the crucifixion, said, “Truly this was the Son of God.”

CHAPTER SIX.

CHRIST'S INTERCESSION WITHIN THE VEIL.

“COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.” Isa. xl. 1, 2. For now that was accomplished of which an angel, a man clothed in linen, spoke to Daniel the prophet, saying, “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even unto that same time: and at that time thy people shall he delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Dan. xii. 1. “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them.” Rev. xii. 7-12. This is the glorious victory achieved by the hard fought battle with the powers of darkness, and the accomplished warfare, and the divine triumph fills all heaven with great joy, melody and praise, saying, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and bath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” Rev. i. 5, 6. Thus, when Christ our passover was sacrificed for his people, did he make peace for them by the blood of his cross. “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Eph. ii. 14-18. Through Christ only both Jews and Gentiles have access unto the Father, and both by one Spirit, therefore, by the Spirit of life, all are one in Christ Jesus, and their life and rejoicing are in him and are spiritual.

Let us again in mind stand in Jerusalem and behold the solemn scene at the crucifixion of our atoning High Priest, especially when he bowed his head in death. At that moment the earth itself was shaken and rent as a torn garment, even to the rending of the great rocks, and the opening of the vaulted graves; but more eventful still, the strong veil of the temple was torn open from top to bottom, which the hands of man could not have done, thus making an open door out of the first sanctuary into the second, the Holy of holies, type of heaven, so that the people of that priesthood could then have access into the most holy sanctuary. Before this deeply wonderful event, no Israelite could enter within that veil, for he must have died before the Lord, save the consecrated high priest alone, and he only once a year, and with the divinely appointed atoning blood for the sins of the people and himself. Now, let us see the meaning of this, for it is wonderful and precious to us. And in this, as in all else, the Scriptures are profitable for instruction, that we may have hope. “Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second

went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience. *** But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands; *** by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. *** For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Heb. ix. “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” Heb. x. 19-22. This is the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, by which God saves us according to his mercy. Thus are we comfortingly shown the divine meaning of the rent veil of the temple; that is, that the death of Jesus in the flesh had opened the way for his people into heaven, which was closed against them by sin, and had given them access unto the Father. This solemn lesson is, that there is no other way for us to come unto the Father with acceptance and blessing, only by the death of Christ and in his holy obedience, it has been said that the veil of the temple was so strong that seventy men could not have rent it; but at the dying words of the suffering Man on the cross, “It is finished,” the separating veil felt the infinite virtue and almighty power of him who conquered in death, and gave way; yea, death and the grave and the sleeping bodies of the saints, all felt the power and merit of the crucified Man of God’s right hand and yielded. Verily, in all the infinite universe there was no power that could resist the efficacy of Christ’s dying cry; for in his death was the infinite value and dignity of the Almighty God, who made and upholds all things. He ordained that wondrous veil, made “of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, of cunning work, with cherubims,” typical of the body and blood of Christ; and he also ordained Christ the High Priest of his people, that he should consecrate himself unto God through the veil of his flesh, and thus take away the strong separating veil, showing that death is abolished, and his sanctified people may now come unto God and worship him in true holiness. The rent veil proved, also, that the priesthood of Aaron and the ministry of Moses and the law were taken away, that the old covenant and the temple service were finished and ended; for their great antitype and fulfiller, God’s eternal High Priest, had come and taken all things out of the way of the return of his people.

How vain, therefore, the blinded rage of the priesthood of the old temple, in their effort to still defeat all this mighty work of the greater than Moses, by the sealed sepulcher and the strong Roman guard. It is just as impossible yet for men, in their self-trust and false zeal, to either defeat the success of Christ’s finished work, or to add to it.

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hand have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it *** Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Acts ii. The apostle Peter thus spoke to the Jews in Jerusalem on the ’day of Pentecost, fifty days after the crucifixion of Jesus. He quoted from David, and said of him, “Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all

are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool.” Thus was fulfilled the word of the angel to the favored mother of Jesus, saying, “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” Thus did the Almighty Father exalt his holy Son to the throne of glory, and crown him with unlimited dominion, putting all things under his feet. Of this glorious power, Paul says, “And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” Eph. i. 19-23. This was the blessed fulfillment of the dear Son’s prayer the night of his soul-sorrow, when he said, “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” Of him Paul said, “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given, him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Phil. ii. 8-11. For this also the humbled and suffering Man entreated his loving Father, saying, “Father the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.” O how divinely was the Father glorified in his Son, and how gloriously the Father exalted his meek and lowly Son! And O, how unspeakable the honor and blessing, that this glorified and “highly exalted” Son of man is not only a man, and our perfected and accepted High Priest unto God, but our very Brother! Yes, the Son of God on high, with all things put under his feet, is verily a glorified and divinely glorious MAN! the “Man of God’s right hand.”

He had passed through the veil of his and our flesh, thus through suffering being made perfect, by perfecting the redemption of his people and brethren, that they might be perfected in his righteousness, and sanctified in his life, and now he was in the unveiled presence and glory of his Father. Thus was Jesus the Christ, the Anointed of God, the High Priest, who had passed into the heavens, “to appear in the presence of God for us.” Let us remember, it is the man Christ Jesus, who is the one Mediator between God and men. Of him God said, “I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.” “For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed,” etc.

“But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” Heb. i. 8, 9. “Thy fellows” evidently refers to his people and brethren, and the word means an equal, an associate or companion; so, indeed; Christ was made in all things like unto his brethren; yet “he thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” And so the sword was commanded to “awake against the Man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts.” This is very wonderful. “Christ” signifies the Anointed of God, and it is the official title or sacred name of the holy Son of God, as the Christ-man and has special application to his priestly office.

The perfect atonement being made, which was equal to all the requirements of eternal Justice and Righteousness, in behalf of all his holy Father's predestinated children, the entire brotherhood of Christ, he arose from the dead, as was typified by the release of Isaac from the altar on which he was bound as unto death, and then he in his risen body, which saw no corruption, ascended up to God and the kingdom of glory in the power of an endless life, our eternal High Priest, where he ever liveth to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. It was by the infinite merit of his own blood that Christ entered in once into the holy place, to appear in the very presence of God, having obtained eternal redemption for all his people.

The typical high priest of the Lord's covenant people first made the atonement for their sins, as the Lord appointed; the Lord accepted the atoning sacrifice at his hands; then, by virtue of the atonement, the high priest interceded in the most holy place at the mercyseat and before the Lord for the people; and the Lord heard him, and blessed them. So did our great High Priest pass through the veil of his suffering and dying flesh, and then ascend up on high to the mercyseat and the throne of heaven, where he, in robes of holiness and immortality, intercedes as our Advocate with the Father, who always hears his beloved Son, and Christ prevails. In this the wrestling Jacob was a type of Jesus, for he as a prince had power with God, and with men.

The divine testimonies that have been given show that when Jesus, who was God manifested in the flesh, was received up into glory, and sat down on the mediatorial throne, God the Father anointed and crowned him both High Priest and King, in fulfillment of the angelic annunciation to his mother Mary. David had long before prophetically said, "Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength. * * The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, he will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne." Ps. cxxxii. 8, 11. David again testified, saying, "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Ps. cx. 1, 2. Thus was the command of the Most High fulfilled, in which he said, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." Ps. xxiv. 7-10. By faith David saw this glorious ascension and coronation of his Son, the King of glory, and rejoicingly said, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Ps. lxxviii. 18.

All this wonderfully makes known the infinite perfection, power and glory of our successful High Priest and King, as well as the sovereign goodness, rich mercy and abounding grace of the Almighty Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. i. 2, 3, It was most worthily said of our blessed Brother and Redeemer, "He hath done all things well."

When he had swallowed up death in victory in his triumphant resurrection, our Lord said to his apostles, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." His Father and God gave him this fullness of power and dominion, and crowned him with glory and honor. Therefore Jesus himself said, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should

honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which has sent him. * * * For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.” John V. Thus is the precious Christ, God’s holy child Jesus, whom he hath anointed the High Priest and King of saints, given power with God and over men, even unlimited authority and dominion; therefore God always hears him, and gives him everything that he asks for. So true is this, that Jesus, in the time of his deepest humiliation and betrayal to his enemies, said to Peter, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” Matt. xxvi. 53, 54. These words of the betrayed Master teach a most instructive truth, and solemn admonition; that God’s established purpose in all things must be; and that as his innocent Son, though persecuted unto death, would not resist, but meekly submitted, saying, “Thy will be done,” so it becomes us to be still, and know that he is God.

We have now seen how divinely and gloriously the Christ of God was qualified and authorized to successfully intercede in the behalf of all whom his righteous Father gave him in the new and everlasting covenant, and for whom he had freely and righteously given himself in sacrifice, whose sins he had thus made reconciliation for, and had put them away for ever. For thus he had redeemed them unto himself, from sin and law and justice, so they were and are righteously his own; for he had – wondrous to tell – even given himself a ransom for them. O how righteously and with what divine authority our Advocate says, “Deliver them from going down into the pit.” So now it is declared, “And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” 1 John ii. 2. The term “whole world” refers to all that the Father gave him in all the Gentile world; while by “our sins” is meant his people among the Jews; and “the propitiation” is the reconciliation, the atonement for our sins. “Jesus Christ the righteous” is this himself for all his covenant people. Thus he has the most sacred and holy right to plead and intercede for them, that they should be forgiven and saved, although they are a sinful people; and his holy Father always accepts the intercession of his own beloved Son, and not only pardons all for whom Christ died, but also justifies them unto life and eternal glory. And so, when Jesus was about to call Lazarus back from death unto life, he said, “Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.” John xi. 41, 42. O how all this should fill us with unwavering confidence and unquestioning trust in the faithfulness and sufficiency and perfect success of our Divine intercessor, who is in the presence of God in the glorious robes of his eternal priesthood. For the Father himself hath borne witness of him to us, saying,, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” And God has authorized our beloved Redeemer to ask, saying to him, “Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” Ps. II. 8. Accordingly, our holy Advocate with the Father asks for all that his Father gave him, and says on their behalf “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” John xvii. This is most heavenly and blessed, because there is no opposing power that can defeat it, or prevent its perfect fulfillment. O how divine the glory and infinite the holiness! With adoring gratitude, let us repeat the transporting assurance, so full of infinite blessedness, of our Beloved: “That the love wherewith thou

hast loved me may be in them, and I IN THEM!” For all that the Father of love gave him, our Intercessor asks this immortal heritage of the fullness of perfect Love and Life!

“We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.”

CHAPTER SEVEN.

THE ORDER OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD.

"THE LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Meichisedec." Ps. cx. 4. "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Ps ii. 7. So the Son of God is a priest after the order of Meichisedec, a priest forever, and made such a priest by the solemn oath of Jehovah, who will not repent. The Son of God is, therefore, unchangeably established in his priesthood, and all pertaining to it is likewise ordered and sure. Nothing whatever belonging to this priesthood shall ever be disannulled, changed or amended, but all is "ordered in all things and sure." The oath of the Lord God, who changes not, nor repents, has made it as firm as his holy throne. "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."

"This day have I begotten thee," is the day of Christ's resurrection and triumph over all the power of darkness, and which perfectly qualified and prepared him to be crowned with glory and honor as the Son of God with power, and Priest and King forever. Paul says of the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, that he "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. I. 3, 4. Paul also said, "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David." Acts xiii. 32-34. So the man Christ Jesus was the manifested Son of God with power as begotten from the dead, to die no more. Of Christ's resurrection from the dead as the declared Son of God, it is written again: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." Rom, viii. 29. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Col. i. 18-20. In support of all this divine and glorious truth, the Son of God in his glory said to his servant John, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. i. 18.

Now, all this revelation or manifestation of the Man of Nazareth in his finished work in the flesh, and resurrection unto an endless life and glory as the Son of God with power, was in fulfillment of the above decree and immutable oath of the God and Father of our glorified High Priest. Our merciful God has thus made his exalted Son a priest after the order of the priesthood of Melchisedec, which is very unlike the order of Aaron's priesthood, And now, therefore, it will both instruct and comfort us to seek a true understanding of the order and nature of the priesthood of Melchisedec, and its difference from the order of Aaron's priesthood, both being of Divine appointment and order, and also somewhat typical of the divine priesthood of the holy Son of God, as has been pointed out.

"A priest forever." This is the special and divinely excellent feature of Meichisedec's priesthood; and this was one signal weakness of the Levitical priesthood; for it was not enduring, but so transient that it has long since passed away forever, because it was only a shadow. But, strange as it may seem, many

devotees of religious worship have ever preferred ceremonious forms and unsubstantial shadows, rather than that which is real and abiding. For this cause the religious world is carried away with showy rituals, worldly wisdom, human philosophy and outward morality, which may gratify and please the fleshly mind, even of some who have fled to Christ for refuge, but all of which are as chaff to the wheat. But the priesthood and ministry of the Son of God are abiding, divinely substantial and perfect, and also perfecting in all the true worshippers in this priesthood; for Christ's priesthood is as enduring as the days of heaven, and it has no end. Death soon removed Aaron as high priest, and also his successive sons after him, until Christ came, when that entire ministry and its corresponding covenant vanished away, as the fading stars and moon when the sun mounts the skies and darkness flees.

So superior was the priesthood of Melchisedec to that of Aaron, and thus it stands out alone in the typical heavens as a faithful and true witness to the everlasting priesthood of the Son of God, who abideth a priest forever. "And being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. v. 9, 10. "And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this Man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. vii. 23-25. The priesthood of the first covenant had not this power and glory, for it could not put away the sins of the people, nor save them from death.

Another divine excellence of the perpetual priesthood of the Son of God is, he was made High Priest forever with an oath, "in which it was impossible for God to lie," repent or change; and thus Melchisedec, the wonderful type, was "priest of the most high God; *** having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God: abideth a priest continually. *** (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.)" Heb. vii. Thus it is proven that neither sin, nor Satan, nor the law of sin and death, can ever possibly defeat, change or cause to fail the holy priesthood of the Son of man, who with the righteous oath of the unchangeable Jehovah is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

Still another most wonderful and essential peculiarity of Melchisedec as a sublime type of our High Priest was, he was King of righteousness, and King of peace. He thus united in himself this twofold office and ministry, with all the dignity, power and divine excellence and success belonging to them in their fullness of perfection. After this order the oath of God consecrated his Son our Priest and King forever. In this both the power and love of God toward the people of his covenant are richly and mercifully made known to us, even beyond the reach of finite thought.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

The high priest of the first testament was divinely appointed to make atonement for the sins of his people, and then to intercede with God for them, in which he was a type of Christ; but he had no authority to reign over his people, neither could he bring them into the heart-given love and service and worship of God; for he was neither a king of righteousness, nor righteous himself. Thus was he imperfect.

In all these things Melehisedec was a far better type of the Son of God, and the order of his priesthood much nearer the perfection of the everlasting priesthood of him who has swallowed up death in victory, and reigns over the house of Jacob for ever. For our successful High Priest sits at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, and is crowned the King eternal and immortal, and all the angels and saints of God serve and worship him. Our Redeemer's kingly office and work, then, support and give success to his perfect sacrifice and intercession in his priestly office; while his finished reconciliation in his priestly office supports and gives virtue and right to him as King upon his holy throne of power, so that it was long written of him: "A King shall reign in righteousness." And now, as the anointed High Priest and crowned King, the adorable Savior, the crucified Man of Nazareth, the Son of Mary, the Son of David, the Son of the Highest "must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

In the full accomplishment of the salvation of "his people from their sins," and in making them wise unto salvation, that they may know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ," whom the Father sent, our blessed Lord, in whom all fullness dwells, is as well the holy Prophet of his dear people as he is their atoning Priest and reigning King. This is divinely and joyfully wonderful and blessed, and it worthily entitles this child that was born unto us to be called, "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isa. ix. 6. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Therefore Jesus is the Three – One – God, the Father and Son and Spirit, in the one Person of the God-Man, who reigns upon the mediatorial throne of his glorious power. And so he is three-one in his glorious work and dominion as Prophet – Priest – King, in which he is the infinite fullness of Wisdom and Righteousness and Power is SALVATION.

Christ, the glorified Man, as the Prophet, was neither represented by Melchisedec nor Aaron, and we must look away from them for a typical prophet, and this one is Moses, who prophesied of the Messiah to his brethren. For they entreated that they might not again witness the great fire upon Sinai, nor hear the voice of God; therefore Moses said to them, "And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." Deutt. xviii. 17-19. For God had made Moses very great in Israel, as his prophet unto them, their law giver and mediator; and through Moses he revealed and made known to them his covenant, and laws and counsel. Thus Moses ascended up to God and God came down to him on the holy Mount, showed him his glory, and talked with him as a man to his friend. This was very wonderful, and thus Moses was more highly honored and favored than any other man on earth, except the man Christ, who was "like unto" him. Moses also was the meekest man on earth; and in this he was like unto him who said, "I am meek and lowly in heart." Neither did Moses seek honor of men, in which he was like Jesus; for the God of his people called and sanctified Moses, at the burning bush, clothed him with dominion and power, gave him Aaron his brother, as his mouth and minister – as he gave the Spirit to reveal the things of Jesus to his brethren – and then sent him down into Egypt to free his enslaved people and lead them up into the goodly inheritance. Thus was the faithful Moses a prophet like unto Jesus the Son of God, who said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John vi. 38, 39. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this Man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he

that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” Heb. iii. 1-6. Thus truly did the servant Moses typify the Son Jesus in his prophetic office and its successful fulfillment, and also largely in his mediatorial office and work. In the infancy of Moses he was a striking and touching figure of the infant Jesus, for each of their lives were sought by the rulers; and it is a striking coincident, that as the infant Savior of his people was sent down into Egypt for personal safety, so Moses, the typical infant deliverer of his people was likewise divinely sent into the house of Pharaoh for personal safety. And of Moses and the house of Israel the word of God was as true as it was of Jesus, “Out of Egypt have I called my son.” And so Jesus followed the typical Moses from Egypt up to Canaan; but as the typical deliverer must die, before his people could be led through the bold Jordan and be saved in the typical kingdom of God; so also must Jesus die without the gates of Jerusalem, that his people should enter into his Father’s kingdom and be saved from the hand of their enemies. Moses beautifully represented Jesus in the days of his flesh unto death; then, succeeding Moses, Joshua (meaning Jesus or Savior) was a type of the risen Savior, and he led his people through Jordan into the kingdom God gave them.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

CHRIST'S BETTER TESTAMENT.

THE PRIESTHOOD of Christ was not after the order of Aaron, nor by the law of Moses, as has been seen; therefore he is the High Priest of another testament or covenant than that of Moses and Aaron, and according to a different law. The inspired writer on our Lord's priesthood, (believed to be the apostle Paul,) is very plain upon this point, saying, "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." Heb. vii. 12. He further says, "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." He then says that the commandment going before was disannuled, being weak and unprofitable; and that the law made nothing perfect. The priests of the law were made priests after this law that made nothing perfect, and without an oath. Thus is shown the weakness and failure of that first covenant and its corresponding priesthood; and the great superiority of our Lord's perfect and eternal priesthood. The writer then says, "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." Verse 22. As surety, Jesus makes the better testament sure, unfailling and perfectly good, because he faithfully and righteously fulfilled it in all its provisions and promises, as its bondsman or mediator. Therefore it is certain that all the people and heirs of the better testament of Jesus are just as secure in their inheritance as his brethren and joint-heirs as he is their faithful surety; and since he is made all this to them by the oath of God and after the power of an endless life, their inheritance of life and holiness in this better testament with Christ is for ever sure.

Now, therefore, forasmuch as both the priesthood and the law have been thus changed from Aaron to Jesus, and from the first testament to the second, it will be profitable to understand this change, and its nature and extent. We should know whether the two testaments or covenants have been united or blended together, so that the new retains much of the old, or whether they are radically different and distinct. In this investigation, as in all things pertaining to salvation from our sins, we must rely alone on "Thus saith the Lord;" for, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." Of Christ as our High Priest it is thus written: "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second." How evident this is, for there would have been no room or need for the second. "For finding fault with them he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Heb. viii. 6-13. This was written to the churches in Judea a very few years before the total overthrow and dispersion of the Jews, and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, by the Roman armies, at which time that faulty, old and

decayed covenant did vanish away, as a wornout garment. Its priesthood was taken away, its sacrifices and temple service ceased for ever, and thus it was made fully manifest that Christ “blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” Col. ii. 14, 15. That is, in death by the cross. The necessity and purpose of this is thus written: “And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.” Heb. ix. 15, 17. And so it is written of Christ and the two covenants: “He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.” Heb. x. 9. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” Gal. iii. 12.

All this revealed truth very conclusively and strongly shows us, not only that the old covenant does not enter into or form any part of the new and better testament of our successful High Priest, and is not according to it, but also that the old has been fulfilled, ended and taken out of the way of his people by the Surety of the better testament; so that it no longer has any dominion over them, nor power to either reward or curse them, because they are not under it, and it is dead to them. Yea, more; for the Scripture says, “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” Rom. vii. 4-6. The old covenant, then, was unto death, and its awfully solemn ministrations were sacrifices of blood and death, thus ever teaching with fearful emphasis that its people and all else belonging to it must end in death. But the death of its last and consummating sin-offering, to which all others had pointed, made an end of it all, and of sin and death as well. So unlike this is the new covenant, that it is unto life – endless life! and all its ministrations are life and peace! How true, then, that it is “not according to the covenant” that made nothing perfect, and which the people continually broke. Most truly, therefore, was Jesus made the surety of a better testament, which was established upon better promises. For of him and his people the Lord of hosts said, “My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.” Mal. ii. 5, 6. Behold, this is an everlasting covenant, that shall never wax old nor vanish away, as did the first which is therefore called the old covenant, while this is forever new. “And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.” Rev. xxi. 5.

The new covenant is not according to the old in another essential part, its Mediator; for while Moses the servant of God was the mediator of the old, Jesus the Son of God is the mediator of the new. Moses was the mediator of the law, which ministered justice, and therefore condemnation unto death; but Jesus is the mediator of the gospel, which ministers mercy and grace, and therefore justification unto life. It is written: “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. *** The man that doeth them shall live in them.” Gal. iii. 10, 12. Neither Moses, nor Aaron, nor any of the people of that legal covenant ever thus continued in perfect obedience in that covenant, which was thus conditional, and cursed the disobedient, while it rewarded the man that lived in

obedience; but they all failed, and were under its curse. This is the woeful defect and weakness of any conditional covenant, which in its nature necessarily requires full and continual obedience, to its righteous conditions, before any one can live in it or be saved by it, or receive any blessing according to it. But since “there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not,” as many as are of the works of a conditional covenant are under the curse according to it, and shall receive no blessing unless he faithfully continues in all its conditions. But so entirely unlike this is the new and better covenant, which God has established upon infinitely better promises, that one of its rich provisions is, “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more,” saith the Lord. For the Mediator of this covenant hath redeemed his people from all their sins and iniquities, and his blood of the new testament, which was shed for the many people, washes them from their sins. And so this covenant is based upon infinitely better promises.

The primary principle in any conditional covenant is full obedience to its requirements, without which none of its provisions can be received, for they are bestowed as rewards to the obedient only; therefore no blessing in a conditional covenant can be received otherwise than as a conditional reward, and the conditional consideration or price paid is righteousness, or perfect obedience; for the conditional demand must be rightly fulfilled, before the recompence can be received. Such was the nature and spirit of the old covenant, according to which the good and obedient only could be rewarded with its conditional promises of good; for its very nature was yea, and nay, blessings and curses, and all the good things in it depended upon the righteousness of its people. The same is necessarily true of every conditional covenant, whether it be claimed under the law or under the gospel; for there cannot be any more than the two covenants, with their two principles and ways of salvation, which are either the mercy and grace of God in Christ, “not according to our works,” or “by works of righteousness which we have done.” All religions and religionists belong to and are of either the first or last of these two, for there is no union or concord between them. For mercifulness to the unrighteousness of a people who are under a conditional covenant of salvation is forbidden and impossible, because the conditions are righteous obedience, and mercy to unrighteousness is forbidden. So the moment mercy is admitted, conditional salvation is destroyed, and the new covenant is established. And the better promises upon which the Lord has established the new are, “it stands from all conditions clear,” and is not yea, and nay, but yea and amen, to the glory of God in Christ.

For the Lord himself makes this new covenant with the true and spiritual house of Israel, in which he is their God, and says they shall be his people; that he will put his laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts. And still another better promise of this new testament in the atoning and pardoning blood of its High Priest and Mediator is, “And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest.” So in all the tables of this better testament of Jesus, the Lord says. “I will,” and “they shall.” This makes it and all its provisions, mercies, blessings and promises positive and sure, as long ages ago promised, saying, “I will give you the sure mercies of David.” And so David himself said, “Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he maketh it not to grow.” 2 Sam. XXIII. 5. Israel was his house or people, who were as the sand of the sea, but of them it was written, “Yet a remnant shall be saved.” For as a house or body, they trusted in the old covenant of conditional righteousness and rewards therefor; therefore they had no place in their hearts for the promise of God in the new covenant of Christ, that he would be merciful to their unrighteousness, and would blot out their sins and iniquities in the blood of the High Priest of the better testament. O no! for this principle of salvation and blessing according to absolute mercy alone, and this to offset their unrighteousness, rather than to

reward their obedience, was too humiliating for them, so long as they esteemed themselves able to keep the commandments of God; therefore they adhered to the rewards of the old covenant, rather than flee to the sure mercies of our spiritual David in his new and better testament. It would seem to them, no doubt, to make void the necessity of good works, and take away the incentive to obedience, if the Lord must be merciful to their unrighteousness, and they must rely alone upon his grace in the new covenant for all their salvation and every blessing.

But to the contrite and poor in spirit, the sick of sin, the lame and helpless, who have to sorrowfully confess, "How to perform that which is good I find not," the absolute promises of the Lord's mercy and grace, pardon and full salvation in the new covenant, is all their salvation, and all their desire. This was the dying testimony of David the king, and it is likewise true in the living and dying experience of every one who has been made to truly know the daily need of salvation from sin, with whom the God of salvation has made the new covenant. How good and blessed to all the new Israel that the Lord himself makes the new covenant with them; that he writes his laws in their hearts, is their God and Father, makes them his people, says they shall all know him; that though they are sinful and unrighteous, and have to confess that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," yet he is ever merciful and gracious, and remembers their multiplied sins no more! This is the only covenant that will save and bless the sinful and unrighteous, such as Isaiah and Paul. it is as far removed from the old covenant of conditional blessings and curses as life is from death, and salvation from condemnation; therefore the Lord says the new is not according to the old. Moses was the representative of the old, but "the man Christ Jesus" is the very embodiment and soul of the new testament in his precious blood; therefore all its sure mercies, promises and blessings are yea and amen in and by him. Yea, to him God said, "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Isa. xlii. 6, 7. Thus the new covenant embraces all the fullness of its Mediator and High Priest, who ever liveth to make intercession for all that the Father gave him, that they should be with him.

CHAPTER NINE.

CHRIST THE PROPHET-PRIEST-KING.

“CROWNED with glory and honor,” the ascended Christ-man is seated at the right hand of the blessed God and Father, and unites in himself the glorious three-one office of our Prophet and Priest and King. All the divinely sacred authority, obligations and holy qualifications to perfectly perform and fulfill all the divine work of this tripple office, God the Father vested in his well beloved Son, “Whom he hath appointed heir of all things.” And as the anointed and crowned Son of man and Son of God, Christ “was faithful to him that appointed him” over his own house. “Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my son, to-day have I begotten thee.” Heb. v. 5.

And as we have before seen, God also raised up the meek and lowly man Christ to be the Prophet unto his Father’s house, as he did Moses; and he bestowed upon his Son all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, that as the wise Prophet of his people he should “open their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures,” and make them wise unto salvation, and that they should know to choose the good and refuse the evil. “And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.” Isa, xi. 2-5. God further says of his Son, as the elect Head of his people: “Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he hath set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.” Isa. xlii. 1-4. Thus it is revealed and seen how wondrously qualified is our Prophet to gloriously execute his office, and to perfectly fulfill all his ministry and work. In all this prophetic work of revelation there is a holy positiveness and absolute certainty, as expressed in the frequent word “shall.” For it is the omnipotent God who dechires that all this his enthroned Son shall bring to pass Of the ministry of our reigning Prophet upon his mediatorial throne of grace it is also written: “And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. *** Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. Hut when he seeth his children, the work of mine bands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.” Isa, XXIX. 18-24. “Then the. eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.” Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.

These glorious prophesies present our eternal High Priest in both his prophetic and kingly power and work, and as having sanctified his people by his blood, reconciled them unto God by his death, and is now saving them by his life. For, let us not forget, he is our High Priest unto God for ever after the

power of an endless life. So it is by the authority or power of his risen and righteous life eternal that he thus reigns in the successful fulfillment of all this divinely blessed work of righteousness, in the full and free salvation of all the people whose sins he died for, and for whom he ever liveth at the right hand of God to make intercession. How supporting and comforting to us, whose arm is too short and weak to save us, are these divine prophecies, which are verified by the “wills” and “shalls” of the God and Father of our only Savior, who speaks and it is done; commands, and it stands fast. These positive declarations concerning the saving power and work of the one Mediator between God and men are supported by his eternal power and Godhead, and can no more fail of fulfillment unto his glory than the immutable Jehovah can change.

The glorified Son of man is the highly exalted and coronated King eternal and immortal upon his Father’s holy throne of universal dominion, and his kingly power gives absolute support and success to him as both the Prophet and the High Priest of all his Father’s house, so that there is the infinite fullness and perfection of Wisdom and Holiness and Power in him; wisdom to enlighten and give understanding to the blind and ignorant, holiness to purify and sanctify the sinful and vile, and power to save the lost unto the uttermost, so that they shall be “The holy people.” It was unto this heavenly ministry that God crowned JESUS with glory.

Of his kingly power much is written, but only a few statements can be given here. The Most High says, “I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.” Ps. ii. 6. “Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness.” Ps. cx. 1-3. “Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim; and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly.” Isa. xxxii. 1-4. Our holy God says all this shall be. To our precious Christ he has given this power and success, and he fulfills all the good will of God. “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” Zech. vi. 12, 13. The counsel of peace shall be between the King and the Priest, and also between the Priest and the people, for he is the Prince of peace, and his peace he gives unto them. “God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ,” said Peter to the Jews. “Both Lord and Christ,” means the same as both King and Priest, or Anointed. The Lord said, “I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant: with my holy oil have I anointed him; with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him.” Ps. lxxxix. “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” Heb i. 5. The crowned Son’s name is, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” Rev. xix, 16.

“ALL HAIL the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring for the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.”

“Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” Acts v. 31. “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye

are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power.” Col. ii. 9, 10. “We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and want, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.” Rev. xi. 17. “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” I Cor. xv. 25, 26. His feet refer to the inferior members of his body, which is the church; that is, to the bodies of his saints, by which they are now kept in contact with the earth and the present earthly life and nature. But the King of saints must reign till he hath given them the victory over death, and then he will present the sanctified church to himself, a glorious bride, blameless and holy.

“Wonderful,” and glorious beyond our highest thought, is the highly exalted Prince and Savior, Son of the Father Almighty, who thus unites in his Divine Person the prophetic and priestly and kingly office-work, as the one all sufficient Mediator and Redeemer of all his everlasting brotherhood in the new covenant of life and peace. For we have now seen how God himself speaks to and of his Son Jesus in his holy oracles, and with what infinite fullness of wisdom and holiness and power he hath invested and clothed him as his Anointed, “the man Christ Jesus;” who “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” O! it was for his people, who are the children of men, that Jesus, the Word that was made flesh, thus bowed the heavens and came down to us in our low estate of helpless misery and ruin.

We have seen, too, that this loving and faithful Brother of ours in the flesh met all our enemies and the power of darkness, our sins, the curse of the law, death and the devil, fought our battle, accomplished our warfare, redeemed us from all our sins and iniquities, despoiled death of its sting, and the boasting grave of its victory, then ascended up to his Father in triumph and glory. God is well pleased for the righteousness' sake of his Son, who magnified the law and made it honorable; and now he hath given him a name which is above every name, and seated him at his own right hand upon the throne of omnipotent power. Thus did Christ love his dear people unto the end of his obedient sufferings in the flesh, and gave himself for them, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. In that he gave himself for us, he has bought us, takes us to himself, and gives us himself; therefore he is ours, with all his infinite fullness of righteousness and salvation and life, and God accepts his people as complete in his holy Son and loves them even as he loves him. John xvii. 23. But O, how amazing that Christ gave himself for us! He thus stood in our place and for us, took all our sins and miseries upon himself, suffered the full penalty of the holy law for us, as our sacrifice unto death, that we should be his and stand in his place, as spotless, holy and blessed as himself! “O wondrous love!” “Such an High Priest became us.” No other offering and sacrifice unto God could have been well-pleasing as a sweet savor or holy incense. How divinely true was the word of the apostle Peter: “The God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus.”

Come, all ye whose hope he is, and let us in faith view him in his divine glory, the High Priest for ever, the holy Prophet, and the King eternal; and all this for us, that we through him might have access unto God, come to his throne of grace, obtain mercy, and be accepted with him. Let us ever cherish in our hearts with profound gratitude and joy that this wondrous King of glory, clothed with omnipotence, having all power in heaven and earth, whom all the angels of God worship, is none the less the meek and lowly ministering Man, the sympathising Brother, who wept with the sisters over the death of their brother, the pitying Master, who stooped and washed the feet of his poor disciples, the tender son, who provided a home for his heart-broken mother, when dying on the cruel cross; and who was thus always sacrificing himself, but ever having compassion upon those whom he came to seek and save. In all his infinite love and compassionate sympathy, ministrations of mercy and consolation to the poor and

needy, the blessed Christ is the same Divine Friend, who never loses sight of one whom he gave himself for, nor forgets for a moment the least of his brethren. They are his Father's gift to him; yea, his Father's beloved children, and his own brethren. He was once on the earth with them in the flesh, and is yet, as then, touched with the feeling of their infirmities; and he always hears their cries, succors them in temptation, in that he was tempted for them, and ever sees them, though they see not him. O, weak and tried friend of Jesus! remember that he is at the right hand of God, who is rich in mercy, that he is there as your accepted High Priest, and as your Advocate he makes intercession upon the throne for you – yea, for every poor sinner who pleads his gracious name. And through him your prayers and cries for mercy find acceptance with God, who forgives your sins, softly wipes away your tears of sorrow with the hand of his mercy, gives you an answer of peace, and blesses you for the name's sake of his holy and beloved Son, who loved you, died for you, and loves you still.

“This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.”

“Since Christ and we are one,
Why should we doubt or fear?
If he in heaven hath fixed his throne,
He'll fix his members there.”

CHAPTER TEN.

THE PEOPLE OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD.

"HE SHALL save his people from their sins." For this he was born of the virgin Mary and came into the world; for his people are born of woman and are in the world. Thus they are partakers of flesh and blood; for God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." To this one whole family in the embodiment of the first man God said, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Man ate, and died. Death passed upon all in him. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12. All the family of man sinned in and by the one first man, who was the earthly head and natural life of all. This life of all the children of men Adam was, and they inherit and receive it from him. This is brought forth and developed in the natural birth of the flesh. From this sinful life is our corrupted fleshly nature, mind and soul, and our mortal body. "By man came death *** In Adam all die." 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. The entire Adamic tree was corrupted in its root, and hence a fatal and withering blight rests upon it, even unto the righteous curse, as upon the barren fig tree, and the sentence went forth to "Cut it down." Thus all the children and members of the first man Adam were righteously and hopelessly condemned in and with him, by the just sentence of the holy command of the beneficent Creator, to whom all men are righteously accountable forever. Our individual sins do but manifest this original guilt and condemnation unto death and separation from communion and favor with God.

All the foreknown, chosen and predestinated people of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose names were written in heaven and are in the book of life, were held in this righteous condemnation, alike with all the human race, whose life was in Adam. So the righteous obligations and claims of the condemning law stood in force against them all, notwithstanding their guilty inability to fulfill and satisfy it.

Now, therefore, how infinite the mercy to the lost children of men, that God's "holy child Jesus" was not a member or branch in the Adamic tree; for then all must have been condemned and lost forever. For "the man Christ Jesus," who is the one and only Mediator between God and men, is not a son of Adam, although he is the son of Eve, the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent's head, and destroy the devil and his works. For, as we have before seen, God is the holy Father of our only Lord Jesus Christ, while the favored Jewish virgin, the daughter of David and Abraham and Eve, who is the mother of all living men, was his blessed mother. And this was the greatest and divinest honor that was ever bestowed upon Eve and her daughters; and thus also through Eve and Mary came this infinite mercy and grace upon Adam and his guilty sons. So Eve was a wonderful type of the church, the bride of the Son of God, that Christ loved, and gave himself for it. Adam loved Eve unto death, and died with her; but death was their sad separation forever. Not so, however, with the second man Adam; for after he had died for his sinning bride, whom he had betrothed unto himself forever in bonds of deathless love and saving mercy, he had power to arise from the dead and give her life for evermore, and to adorn her with the new wedding robe of purest linen, spotless and white, the righteousness of saints. And this because the Omnipotent One was his Father, and gave him the commandment to lay down his life, and to take it up again. Jesus therefore said, "I and my Father are one." One in Divine Essence and holiness and power. Yet it is just as true of him as a man, the child that was born unto us, that the Father's Son and his brethren are one. Of them he said in prayer for them to his holy Father, "Thine they were, and thou gayest them me." The gift was mutual, so that they were Christ's and he was theirs. The church as

the bride says, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." In his prayer for them, the holy Son further says, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me. and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." John XVII. This oneness asked for by our Intercessor is in life and holiness,, and it secures their complete separation from all their sins, from weakness and suffering, mortality and death, and that they shall be with Christ where he is, and forever love and worship God in the beauties of holiness.

This indeed is the perfection and fullness of the glorious priesthood of God's holy Son Jesus. Of this he spoke when he said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi. 38-40. This is overflowing with eternal truth and heavenly assurance, showing that the righteous and almighty Son shall successfully and entirely accomplish his holy Father's will, in the full salvation and eternal redemption of all the countless millions of his people, his Father's gift to him. This holy testimony of him who came down from heaven is so blessed, let us a little dwell on it, that through its comfort we may have hope. First, his exalted and holy origin, which is from God out of heaven; therefore clothed with the eternal excellence, dignity and power of God himself. Second, he came to do his righteous Father's will, not his own as a man. How this should instruct and correct us, and also reprove and humble us. For it is the most exalted man that ever dwelt upon earth, possessor of heaven and earth, who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," that abnegates or renounces his personal will, and is wholly swallowed up in doing and suffering the will of the Father who sent him; for, as we have seen in these pages, that will appointed him to endure infinite suffering and sorrow of soul unto death, and the cruelest tortures at the hands of the most wicked men, as a harmless lamb in the midst of wolves; yet the loving and obedient Son faltered not, nor complained, but with meek submission said, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." This is the true spirit, and its divine lesson is, no man should presume to reply against God; nor dispute his sovereign right and holy will. Third, the Father had given him a countless people, whom no man could number, yet definitely known to the Father and Son; these were in the world, away from God and Christ, as lost sheep, and they must all die, having sinned; but Jesus came into the world to bring all this people to his holy Father, to serve him in holiness and righteousness before him for ever. Fourth, "the last day" is repeatedly named by our Divine Prophet when he shall raise up again his people. Fifth, he then identifies them personally, as every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him. Thus the Savior himself very fully reveals the Father's will, and specifies the holy purpose and righteous work which he came down from heaven to do. It was to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, to the everlasting praise and glory of the Father, in the glorious exaltation of Christ. In his intercession with the Father for them the holy Mediator says, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. * * And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." John xvii. They shall surely be sanctified unto the saving knowledge of the Father and Son through the truth. And the Son of God is himself the full revelation and embodiment of the Truth. He therefore said to the apostle Thomas, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John xiv. 6. To come unto the Father by the Son, then, is to be blessedly brought into the way, the truth, and the life; and this is nothing less than to be rescued from the broad way of destruction, from falsehood, though it be religious, and from the monster death. Now this holy Prophet, who reveals his Father's will, and does it, also says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John vi. 37. He thus makes it absolutely sure to all his people, the children that God gave him, that they shall come unto the Father, and be

accepted with him, but not in their sins and unrighteousness; for he who is the way of holiness, and the truth that makes them free from sin, and the life that sanctifies and saves them, will himself bring them. His holy obligation to his Father behooved him to thus make them nigh unto God, and he does so by his sin-cleansing blood, and his saving life, which he gives them. God gave his Son this power, the power of an endless life of holiness.

The holy Son of God fulfills this work of sanctifying his Father's people through the truth unto holiness by the power and perfection of his eternal priesthood, in union with his prophetic and kingly power, as we have beheld him. In thus giving life to the dead, sight and hearing and understanding to the blind and deaf and ignorant, and salvation from the dominion or reigning power of sin, that his people whom he thus sanctifies may come and offer unto God an offering in righteousness, the Holy Spirit of love and truth and peace is his minister, to quicken them from death in sin unto life in righteousness, and to comfort them. Therefore, said Jesus to one who trusted in the covenant of works, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." John iii. 5, 7. For God is a Spirit, and his kingdom is spiritual; therefore his worship is spiritual, and neither fleshly nor legal, as the ruler of the Jews had thought. So, as the Prophet and Teacher come from God, Jesus cut him off from this fleshly dependence, which was the delusive error of the legal worshippers, as it is till this day. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John iv. 24. This unerring teaching of our Divine Prophet, who prevailed to open the sealed book and to reveal what was written therein, cuts off all legal and carnal or fleshly offerings and works of men from the true and acceptable worship of God, as unclean and unholy. So God had not respect to Cain and his offering as worship, because it was neither in spirit nor in truth, and was not in faith, which is a fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God. The only way to be made free from this legal dependence and carnal worship is by the circumcision of the Spirit in the heart, and this is nothing less than death to the covenant of works, and being raised up in newness of life, to serve God in newness of spirit. It is to be born of the Spirit. "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me" Rom. vii. 12. "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." Gal. ii. 19. This is as true in every one who lives unto God as it was in Paul, and the power of this solemn truth is experienced in the heart. No one, therefore, lives unto God and worships him truly, until he first dies unto the law, and to legal trust and hope. For God will not accept any legal service. Paul very clearly states this fact when he says to his brethren in Christ: "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Phil. iii. 3. Of this true and spiritual work of circumcision in Christ, Paul says, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." Col. ii. 11-13. This holy operation of circumcision or cutting off the sins of the flesh of the true Israel was accomplished by the death of Christ unto sin in the flesh, as Paul here states, showing that Christ was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgressions of his people in their sinful flesh, as their passover who was sacrificed for them; that, having thus made reconciliation for their sins, God raised him from the dead for their justification unto righteousness, as shown in the ordinance of baptism, and therefore he quickens them together with Christ in his risen and righteous life; "that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." As thus judged in the flesh, every one so quickened by virtue of Christ's death unto sin, and

resurrection unto life, is spiritually baptized with his baptism of soul-sorrow and suffering for sin unto death. This is the true circumcision, made without hands, for it is by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and it brings all who are his down into his death unto sin in the flesh and under the law, as also unto it, then quickens us together with him, and raises us up together in the power and holiness of his endless life, to live with him in his Father's kingdom.

Now it is evident, from the divine testimonies given, that this saving and sanctifying work of righteousness in the people given to Christ, in bringing them from death unto life, and separating them from their sins and the law, is an experience in the heart and life of trouble, mourning and weeping, of supplication and crying unto God for mercy and pardon, and of sinking down into the anguish of fearful despair and the bitter sorrow of death. It is truly being brought into the fellowship of the Man of sorrows, our anointed High Priest, in the days of his flesh, that we may die indeed unto sin in the flesh, as did our suffering Christ, and that we might know the power of his resurrection by the Spirit of holiness, and be the sons of God in the life of his first-born Son from the dead. In no other way could our dying Redeemer enter into his glory, in his Father's kingdom of righteousness and life and peace. Therefore, in words of sympathetic reproof to his lamenting disciples, the newly risen Man of the cross said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Luke xxiv. 26. He was reconciled to his loving and holy Father's will, though that will was that he should be betrayed into the hands of sinners and tortured unto death; and he would likewise have his sorrowing disciples reconciled and comforted, knowing that his Father's will and way was best. So in no other way can we come into the life and holiness and glory of the risen Christ, only through his sufferings and death. We must follow him in his steps. Such is the meaning of circumcision. It is to die unto sin, that we may live unto righteousness. It is to become dead to the law of works by the body of Christ, who was smitten by the sword of the Law, and to have no confidence in the flesh, that we may rejoice in our Savior alone, and worship God in the spirit.

The fleshly mind will murmur and fight against this way of salvation, as too self-sacrificing and hard, and will cleave to the old covenant of conditional service and reward, as better suited to the dignity of man and his idea of his free moral agency. Nevertheless, this way unto God by the circumcision of Christ, which is to be crucified through the weakness of the flesh, is the only way of separation from sin and confidence in the flesh, and of preparation and consecration unto the true worship of God. Paul had experienced the power of this only way of salvation and life when he said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and 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. ii. 20. Thus was the devoted apostle of the gospel of Christ, through the sufferings of his crucified Lord, into the fellowship of which he was brought through the ministering Spirit, cut off from the law of works, in which he had trusted, and from the dominion of sin and death, "separated unto the gospel of God," "passed from death unto life," and now the glorified Christ lived in him, and the new life of the servant of God he lived by the faith of the Son of God. This is likewise true in all who have the faith of Jesus. Now, then, Paul says, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus." Having sowed in tears, and sorrowed with him unto death, our rejoicing is now in him, for he has raised us up into loving acceptance with God through the Spirit, and we worship him in spirit and in truth.

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. xiv. 12. This is the experience of "being born again," and these are the fruits or the birth of the Spirit, with its sorrowing in the flesh, and rejoicing in Christ. In this way, but in no other, can any man see and enter into the kingdom of God. Christ, who lives and reigns upon his Father's throne

within the veil, entered into his kingdom through the door of death. So all who have the mind that was in him, and his reconciled spirit, will meekly take the cup of sorrow and suffering in the flesh, as he did, because it is the Father's will, that they may be partakers of his grace and glory. Therefore, "he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom. ii. 29. Of this way of salvation unto life and holiness, Paul again says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Tit. iii. 5-7.

Now, as our apostle here states the fundamental principle and power of salvation and justification, denying that it is by our works as Christians, and affirming that it is according to the mercy of God and grace of Christ, and wrought in us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; so he elsewhere abundantly establishes this doctrinal and experimental truth of salvation by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ – abundant, reigning and sovereign grace. For he says, "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. v. 20, 21. And this being true of grace, he went on to exhort and encourage his brethren in Christ, saying, "yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom. vi. 14. Grace, then, shall have the dominion over her favored subjects, the people of the covenant of grace and of Christ's priesthood; for he hath redeemed them from the law and its curse, and washed them by his blood from their sins; so to them sin has lost its strength, and the law has no power to accuse or curse them. Such is the potency and success of reigning grace. Paul declares a most blessed and heavenly truth, to the praise of grace, when he says that it much more abounds where sin abounded; and so much more that, although the reign of sin was unto death, yet the reign of grace as a heavenly princess is so much mightier that she rescues her subjects from sin and death, and then reigns in them and over them unto life eternal. But, most glorious of all, grace reigns through righteousness, because she reigns by the power of the King of saints, the righteous and ever-living High Priest of all the blessed people of grace. This is the praise and glory of sanctifying and saving grace, and its excellency and sufficiency cannot be over-estimated; for since grace much more abounds than destructive sin, is mightier than the monster death, and so triumphantly reigns that her saved people love righteousness, and hate sin and iniquity, why should any one, who needs and desires salvation from sin and unto righteousness, seek any other way of salvation than by grace? It is a very low and mistaken estimate of the grace of our holy Redeemer, if any one supposes that there is any lack, deficiency or weakness in his reigning and saving grace. In the sore trials of Paul, who plead with his Lord to make his burden lighter, his sympathising High Priest gave him this sustaining assurance: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Thus fortified, Paul adds: "Most gladly therefore will. I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Cor. xii. 9. How sad the mistake, therefore, when any one will turn from grace to his own works and weakness.

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor. vi. 11. This is the necessary preparation and qualification for the holy worship of God in his sanctuary, and all who are thus consecrated are in his kingdom of grace. Christ is their High Priest unto God, and they are of his priestly brotherhood and house. God has accepted them in his beloved Son. To them Paul says, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ,

he is none of his. *** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. *** Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” Rom. viii. We have been born of our Father in heaven, who is a Spirit, and have been made partakers of his holiness in his holy Son, in whom we are thus in brotherhood. All who are thus made partakers of the divine nature, as redeemed, washed, sanctified, and justified, are of the spiritual and divine priesthood and kingdom of God’s holy Son. These are the true worshippers of the Father, who is holy, and whose service is holy. “This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” Isa. liv. “Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord,” I Cor. i. 30, 31. Now, then, all this salvation and consecration unto the worship and service of the God of all grace is of him, through the one Mediator, and ministered by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

To this family of our blessed God, and brotherhood of his holy Son Jesus, the apostle Peter writes and says, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.” 1 Pet. ii. 9-11. This testimony of the inspired apostle shows that, although the people of God are chosen of him unto salvation, and made the royal or kingly priesthood of Christ, and as such they are an holy nation, yet they are for the present time in the flesh, or connected with it, in which there dwelleth no good thing, and that it is not with the desire or will of their fleshly mind they worship and serve God, but they are to abstain from these, as things at war with their soul-pantings after God and his holiness. This revelation of the truth also shows that this holy nation and peculiar people of the living God are strangers and pilgrims in this world, and that the sin-blighted earth and mortal flesh is not their inheritance and home, but they are here only for a time, which God hath put in his own power, as said his Son before he in person left the world to go unto the Father. Therefore, as their interceding High Priest unto God, Christ said to him, “I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” John xvii. 14-18. Here Christ evidently speaks of his people in their spiritual and holy relation to him, not only as his people in the new and better testament, as redeemed by his blood, but especially as born from above of his Father and God. It was as his brethren in the Spirit and as his disciples, therefore, that he sent them into the world, to be the witnesses of his resurrection from the dead, and servants and ministers in his new kingdom. He was then to enter into that within the veil, as the atoning High Priest of his people, and their Forerunner into the glory of his Father’s house, but they were to remain in the sanctuary without as his consecrated and worshipping priestly house, until the time appointed of the Father. This was sublimely shadowed forth by the first priesthood, when their high priest passed beyond the sight of his brethren and stood in the presence of the Lord within the veil as their intercessor, while his sanctified people worshipped in the first sanctuary and court of Israel, as the whole congregation of the Lord. Our Lord therefore said, “And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.” John xvii. 11. All that our Advocate with the Father has asked him for shall surely be granted to him; for the holy Son said to his Father, “And I knew that

thou hearest me always.” “Neither pray I for these alone,” (the apostles) “but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one,” etc. In the fulfillment of our Lord’s prayer, Paul was moved to testify, saying, “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.” Eph. iv. 4-7. And the apostle Peter also, in harmony with the prayer of intercession, assured his brethren in Christ, who are born again, to the holy inheritance in heaven, that they “are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” 1 Pet. i. 3-5.

We are thus divinely and blessedly assured that our Lord’s holy intercession for all his purchased possession shall be fulfilled, just as he has asked his holy Father. God had promised to give his Son the heathen or Gentiles for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; therefore the good Shepherd said, “And other sheep I have, which are not of this” (legal) “fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.” John x. 16. His word is faithful, positive and sure, and he says it shall be thus, and he must bring them, because they were his sheep or people. Thus he is faithfully fulfilling his prophetic and priestly and kingly authority and work, by purifying unto himself his peculiar people, and bringing them into his kingdom, and reigning over them in righteousness by his abounding and saving grace, to the praise and glory of God. “And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel, I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. *** Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. And I will make till my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from far; and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.” Isa. xlix. 6-12.

All this glorious power of the King of glory upon his mediatorial throne shows how truly Paul affirmed the superabounding of the grace that reigns through righteousness by our Lord Jesus Christ, and also manifests the perfection and absolute success of his everlasting priesthood. By the Spirit of revelation Isaiah wrote of him, saying, “Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom.” Isa. xl. 10, 11. O faithful and good Shepherd of his people! How safe are his helpless lambs! “Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: and they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.” Isa. li. 11. All this “shall” be, saith the Lord. To the people of his covenant mercies he says, “Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. *** I even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. *** I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.” Isa. xliii. Of this King in Zion it was written: “Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into

thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.” Ps. xlv. 2-4.

“Rejoice, the Savior reigns
Among the sons of men;
He breaks the pris’ners’ chains,
And makes them free again;
Let hell oppose God’s only Son,
In spite of foes his cause goes on.

The cause of righteousness,
And truth and holy peace,
Design’d our world to bless,
Shall spread and never cease;
Gentile or Jew, their souls shall bow,
Allegiance due with rapture vow.”

This is according to the new covenant, in which the Lord writes his laws in their hearts, and says he will be their God, and they shall be his people. When this is done by him, his laws are sacred and dear to them, and they love him and his laws. He also sheds his love abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto them. Not only do the saved in Christ love God; for they are taught of him to love one another. “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” It is the first-fruit of the Spirit; “for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God,” testifies the beloved John. Indeed, it is the love of Christ that constraineth his followers in their loyal service in his kingdom; for to them he is “the chiefest among ten thousand,” and inexpressibly lovely and precious. Because he is their salvation, their life and their all in all, as has been in part shown in these pages. For this cause his people offer themselves willingly when his gracious and loving power is manifested in them, by the enlightening and sanctifying ministration of the Spirit of truth and comfort and peace. And so there is a holy delight in his worship and service, for he is their adored High Priest and King. His own blessed testimony is, “Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.” John VI. 45. For they have been taught of God, and he hath revealed his Son in them; therefore they know and love and serve him. In all this divine worship and service of love, through the sanctifying and beautifying and righteous reign of saving grace in their hearts, Christ is exalted and God is glorified, and the saints are united and edified together in faith and hope and love. And all this divine and spiritual service and worship of God in his kingdom of grace on earth, is by the perfection and power of our Lord’s eternal priesthood. For all this life-giving power and saving virtue, thus manifested in his saints and in his body, the church, to the praise of the glory of God’s grace, goes out of Christ to all his redeemed and quickened members, as truly as healing virtue went out of him to the suffering and dying woman who touched him, and was made perfectly well.

“Dear, dying Lamb! thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom’d church of God
Be saved, to sin no more.”

“For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit

will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. and ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.” Ezek. xxxvi. 24-28 This is the glorious fulfillment of the Lord’s new covenant of mercy with his people, under our Lord Jesus Christ and by his reigning grace; and all these riches of mercy he has vouchsafed to them, according to this sure covenant in the blood of Jesus Here there is no possible failure to the heirs of promise, the priestly brotherhood of the holy and beloved Son of God. All this proclaims the infinite goodness, almighty power and inexpressible glory of the Holy One.

CHAPTER ELEVEN.

KINGS AND PRIESTS UNTO GOD THE FATHER.

“BLESSED be the Lord God of Israel: for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us: to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant to us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.” Luke i. 68-75. These wonderful and gracious words of the priest and prophet of the Most High, Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, when the child was eight days old, who should go before the face of the Lord Jesus, blessedly reveal and show the whole work of redemption through the anointed Messiah unto eternal glory, according to the holy covenant and oath of God. As this prophecy was just before the advent of the Son of God in Bethlehem, so it was given as a divine message from God, proclaiming that the fullness of the time was come when he would send forth his only begotten Son in the flesh and under the law, to fulfill all this glorious salvation; “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.” Eph. iii. 10-12. And so the Lord suddenly came to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, to fulfill it, and to mediate between his Father and his covenant-people. We have followed him on in his heavenly footsteps and holy ministry, from his lowly birth to his glorious coronation upon the throne of glory, the Head of the church and the King of Zion. We have beheld something of his triumphant success and glorious power as the Prince and Savior, and how his arm of omnipotent power has ruled for him, to the overthrow of the enemies of righteousness, and in bringing his redeemed to Zion, the kingdom of his Father, under the victorious and righteous reign of his grace that bringeth salvation.

Having followed the meek and lowly Captain of salvation, the Commander and Leader of the “little flock,” “through great tribulation,” until we have sat down with him in his kingdom of grace, and found rest unto our souls, we now “serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.” And we rejoice that our glorified Brother upon his Father’s throne of absolute dominion, having all power in heaven and earth, is our High Priest for ever after the power of an endless lire, and that his faithful word to us is, “Because I live, ye shall live also.” Therefore, to him and us God has promised in his covenant, saying, “His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.” Ps. lxxxix. 29. Accordingly, our God has brought us into the sacred bonds of this covenant of life and peace in his reigning Son, and “we are saved by hope.” “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began,” said Paul to Titus. “For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Rom. viii. 24, 25.

The saints are now in this waiting state, hoping for that which they see not; “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” Their High Priest, whom God hath consecrated for evermore, has personally passed beyond the veil of mortal flesh, to suffer and die no more, where he ever liveth in the very presence and glory of God; but we are still clothed with mortality, as our risen and ascended Brother and High Priest unto God once was, and we, according to his promise, by faith look and wait for his return, that we may

behold his glory, which God hath given unto him, and be with him where he is. “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. *** For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” 1 Cor. xiii. 9-12. This waiting and longing and hoping for the full revelation and blessing of God, while we worship him and magnify his reverend and holy name in this earthly tabernacle, was solemnly represented in type by the worshipping and praying congregation of the Lord in the sanctuary without, while the officiating high priest for them stood before the Lord within the veil. The inspiring music of the golden bells upon the border of his sacred robe assured them that God accepted and heard him on their behalf, and that he should surely return again and bless them in the name of the Lord their God. “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.” Num. vi. 22-27. This was a very great blessing, with which God blessed the children of Israel, because they were his chosen and redeemed people; yet all this was only an earnest of better blessings to come. Of these let us now read: “The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.” Gen. xlix. 26. This overflowing blessing the Father put upon the head of his Son Jesus. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.” Eph. i. 3-6. This is the fullness of the blessing, the everlasting blessing in the Beloved, the Apostle and High Priest of all the chosen and predestinated sons and daughters of the everlasting Father, and it is unto all the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus. In the consummation of this perpetual blessing, they shall all be holy and without blame before the Father in love, and shall be taken home to himself, unto which holy and blissful estate he has predestinated or foreordained them, “to the praise of the glory of his grace.” And so, according to this appointment and blessing of God, their righteous Advocate with the Father asked, saying, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” John xvii. 24. So the apostle Peter likewise spoke of this infinite and accomplished blessing of the God of the everlasting covenant, saying, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Pet. i. 3-5. In the last time, therefore, all the heirs to this inheritance in heaven, who are thus kept by the power of God unto it, shall be brought into its full possession, and into the glorious revelation of the finished salvation and the fadeless inheritance of eternal life and holiness, and the perfection of beauty and love. And so John also speaks of this perfected salvation in all the predestinated children of God, the complete brotherhood of Christ, saying, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” 1 John iii. 2. So long as we sojourn in this militant state, as strangers and pilgrims in our earthly house or mortal body, we cannot thus see our glorified and crowned High Priest and King, the first-born Brother from the dead among the many brethren,

because our finite powers are too weak to bear the full revelation of the King in his beauty now. To the three apostles on the holy mount, and again to John on Patmos, was given a brief glimpse of the beloved Son of God as he is, but it was too great a weight of glory for them in the flesh, and they fell to the ground. And also to Paul, to whom was given an abundant revelation of heavenly things, when caught up into the third heaven or paradise of God, he heard unspeakable words. The martyred Stephen, too, was highly favored with his Lord's sufficient grace and the light of his face, to sustain him under his cruel torture as they gnashed on him with their teeth; and "he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Acts vii. 55, 56. These are divinely blessed assurances and earnestnesses of the heavenly glory that awaits the redeemed of the Lord, after they have received the adoption, unto which God predestinated them before the world was. Therefore Paul was inspired to comfort the suffering brethren in Christ with these words: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. viii. 28-34. It has been proved that all for whom Christ intercedes shall be with him in his glory. And Paul shows above that all the predestinated people of God shall be justified and glorified, and thus shall they be conformed to the image of his Son in his divine nature and life and holiness. Yea, with God this is as though they were glorified, and so Paul speaks of it in the perfect tense, as that which is done. He divinely assures his brethren, that, as God had not withheld his Son from his people, but delivered him up unto death for us all, he would with him also freely give us all things. And that, having given his Son power over all flesh, and all power in heaven and earth, so that the Roman governor, who delivered him up to be crucified, could have no power against him, except it were given him from above, as the lamb-like Jesus told him; therefore Paul knew that all things work together for good to them that love God; because all things are under his omnipotent control, and subject to his power. This is the divine protection and safety of all for whom Christ makes intercession, and whom God justifieth. Jesus assures us that heaven and earth shall pass away, but his words shall not till all be fulfilled. Paul was therefore bold to say that no peril, trial or foe, as tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, or sword, shall separate us from the love of Christ, and he says, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. VIII. 35-39. O, how unspeakably blessed and confirming this is! To be conquerors over all these combined dangers and opposing powers would be very wonderful and seem impossible, but O! "In all these things we are MORE than conquerors." This in an infinite good, surpassing our utmost thought. We shall not only conquer all these things, but the least and feeblest child in the kingdom shall triumphantly rise up from the conflict into heights of infinite strength and glory and blessing, for ever free from all weakness, shame, pain and death. All this, O living, glorious words, "THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US!" That loved us, and gave himself for us! This love is mightier than all opposing powers and foes, and they were and are as nothing, when arrayed against the people whom the Lord

loved with infinite, perfect, everlasting love. He who so loved them, through whom we are more than conquerors, and “who also maketh intercession for us,” said to his loving and Almighty Father. “And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I IN THEM.”

All this is infinitely lovely, blessed and heavenly, and our language can never utter its wondrous fullness of divine goodness and beauty and power, thus bestowed upon the chosen people of our Lord’s priesthood and kingdom. For they are all equally embraced in the fullness and perfection of the immutable love of God for his holy and blessed Son, and both this love and the living and loving Son abideth in them; and so their life is hid with Christ in God, and the eternal God is their refuge. Jesus, therefore, comforted his disciples with the assurance that, “the Father himself loveth you;” and he also promised them that, during the time of his personal absence from them in the body of flesh, he would send the Comforter to abide with them and in them, the Spirit of truth, who should bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he had said unto them, and show them things to come. “He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you,” said the loving Savior. It was because of this indwelling and ministration of the Spirit that Paul testified, saying, “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” 1 Cor. xii. 13. Paul says of Christ, “For through him we both”. (Jews and Gentiles) “have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Eph. ii. 18-22. This is the fulfillment of a prophecy of old, saying, “Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” Ps. l. 5. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” Ps. li. 17.

It has been abundantly shown that the Lord will build up Zion, his kingdom, and gather his people together in his spiritual house, that they should offer praise unto him. So there arises in their hearts the desire of David, when he said, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me: he shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord. Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy upon me, and answer me. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.” Ps. xxvii. 4-8. This is the way and work of the Lord, and this its blessed effect; and this is the heartfelt experience, desire and prayer of all who are taught of God.

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” Isa. ii. 2-4. All this reign of righteousness and peace is under the dispensation of the covenant of life and

peace, the Mediatorial reign of the Prince and Savior; and it is positively declared by the Lord that thus it shall be in his kingdom. Let us observe, that the mountain of the Lord's house is exalted above the hills, and established or firmly fixed in the top of the mountains; that is, it is not earthly or worldly, but far above or superior to the hills of worldly wisdom, and the mountains of legal worship, as the law on Sinai. For the temple or house of the Lord is heavenly and spiritual, and it is firmly established upon the eternal mountain of his holiness; and all who are raised up through the divine power of the Holy Spirit to worship in his temple are holy; for they are in the life and righteousness of Christ, and are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion," is the word of God. His holy Son said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John xii. 32. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi. 44. It is thus that the Lord builds his church upon the immutable Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Zerubbabel, who rebuilt the temple of the Lord, was a type of Christ, God's Anointed, and it is written: "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you." "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, Crying, Grace, grace unto it." Zech. iv.

This brings us to the completion of the Lord's house, the time of the end, "the last day," so frequently spoken of by the Son of man, when he shall be revealed in his Father's glory, and "bring all the saints with him." For, as the High Priest of the kingdom of priests did not abide long in the tabernacle of his flesh, so neither shall his brethren, who must come after him in his steps, and pass through the veil of the flesh, then arise and ascend with him in the power of his resurrection from the dead. This will be the perfection of his priesthood in them. Then shall they be a kingdom of priests, an holy nation, the heavenly family, to joyfully worship their God and Father in the divine beauty of perfect holiness In his holy heaven, and make his praise glorious for ever and ever. His washed and sanctified and justified people now taste that the Lord is gracious, "To whom coming, as unto a Living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." I Pet. ii. 3-5. This is not only their acceptable and delightful service now, as grace is given them according to the measure of the gift of Christ, while they shall remain in this mortal house of their tabernacle, but it shall be more fully and gloriously their sweet and eternal employ when that which is in part is done away, and that which is perfect is come. And just as truly as the God of salvation has begun the good work in them by his Spirit of life and grace in his Son, he will also perform it until the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ, when he shall come to be glorified in all his saints, and the sons of God shall be manifested in the resurrection unto life and holiness, bearing the divinely lovely image of the glorified Son of God, their High Priest and Brother, First-born from the dead. For, speaking of the purpose and power of Christ's atoning death and risen life, Paul said, "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." 2 Cor. v. 15. This word, "henceforth," goes on, and on, and still on, so long as they shall live the new life in Jesus, who is the resurrection, and the life; and all this endless life they shall live to him who died for all his people and brethren, and rose again. They cannot live to themselves in the flesh, but must find their life, and their bread of life and water of salvation, in Christ, 'who is their life; for in the flesh there is naught but thorns and thistles, sin and death.

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no

continuing city, but we seek one to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” Heb. xiii. 12-16. We seek a continuing city, an abiding home, “an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” This is “to come.” In part we still bear the image of the earthy man; for we have not yet been glorified, neither have we yet been conformed to the image of God’s Son, unto which he predestinated us that we should be; nor have we yet received the adoption, for which we wait, to-wit, the redemption of our body. But God’s holy decree of predestination shall not fail, for his “wills” and “shalls” relating to his foreknown, chosen and predestinated people cannot fail, because his omnipotence will accomplish all the word that hath gone forth out of his mouth. It is true of us, as Paul says, “For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.” 2 Cor. v. 4, 5. The earnest is the faithful and strengthening assurance that God will bestow the full inheritance of life and immortality, unto which he hath wrought his people in Christ through the Spirit. Paul therefore says again, “in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.” Eph. i. 11-14. It has been abundantly shown from the holy Scriptures that the Lord’s redeemed people are the purchased possession, and that they now wait for their full deliverance from the bondage of corruption and mortality, into the glorious inheritance in light and immortality, when mortality in them shall be swallowed up of life. When speaking of the bodies of his brethren, Paul says, “Now the body is *** for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? *** What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Cor. vi. 13-20. Paul therefore says again, “Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” 1 Thess. v. 22-24. That is, the God of peace, who calls his people with an holy calling, will sanctify them wholly, and preserve their whole spirit and soul and body blameless unto the coming of Christ. The meaning is, the redeemed of the Lord cannot be condemned or perish, because God has justified them from all things, and keeps them by his own power unto salvation and eternal life in Christ. His holy decree of election is, that they should be holy and blameless before him in love. This, therefore, they shall be; for they are “The holy people,” “an holy nation,” “an holy priesthood,” washed and made spotless and without blemish in the blood of the Lamb of God, and they are the righteousness of God.

We have seen that, when our atoning High Priest expired on the cross, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection. And the inspired writer has instructed us that, when this was accomplished, the way into the holy heaven was opened, and the gateway of death was made the highway unto God and glory. For when the strong veil was torn away, then the way was made manifest out of the holy place or first tabernacle into the Holy of holies. This separating veil represented the veil of our mortal flesh, which must be rent and removed by the strong hand of death,

before we can enter into the unseen heaven, “Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” Heb. vi. 20.

The rending rocks, the rent veil, the opened graves, and the rising bodies of the sleeping dead, all are so many infallible proofs that the crucified Son of man made an end of sin, destroyed the power of darkness, and is death’s conqueror. At the grave of Lazarus he said, “I am the Resurrection, and the Life.” And thus did the conquering Man of the cross abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light. This is the holy light of heaven. All upon whom it shines are children of the Light, and shall not abide in darkness, but shall shine in the kingdom of their Father, and be for ever joyful in the transporting Light of Life. Even now their most sacred employ is, “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” Col. i. 12-14.

In the dear Son of God we ourselves have redemption, so completely so that our sins are all forgiven, and shall never rise up to condemn us. Sin brought death, and shuts us up in its prison-house, the silent tomb. But our precious Christ was sacrificed for our sins, then taken down from the altar and laid in the boasting grave, which was both sealed and guarded. O how rich the mercy and compassionate the love of our dear Redeemer, that he was laid in the tomb for us! For here he conquered in the final conflict, and his victory was for us, and we shall be joint-heirs with him in the power of his resurrection. Hear the joyful news: “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept!”

“Eternal life, at his request,
To every saint is given;
Safety below, and after death,
The plenitude of heaven.”

“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” Ps. cxxvi. “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John xiv. 3. “And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Acts I. 10, 11. He will surely come, therefore, at the appointed time of the Father, and receive his people unto himself in his Father’s kingdom of glory. “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” Heb. ix. 28. There is, therefore, an appointed second coming of Christ, as there was the first advent, when he came in the flesh as the sin-bearer of his people, and put away their sins, when he through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God. And by the one offering of himself having, perfected for ever them that are sanctified, that God hath set apart for himself, and for whom the Son asks the righteous Father that they may be with him where he is, and behold his glory, which the Father gave him; therefore, before he went away in person to be with the Father, he left the above promise with them, that he would come again, and receive his dear people unto himself; that where he is, there they may be also. The night before the precious Christ was put to death in the flesh, he said to his Father, “And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee.” The two angels in white testified to the wondering disciples, that the Lord Jesus, the resurrected Man of the cross, was taken up from them into heaven, and that he should so come again in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven. Now all this divine testimony gives us the fullest assurance that our glorified Redeemer will come down from

heaven the second time, not to bear our sins again in his sacred body on the cross, but having washed us from our sins in his own blood, he shall appear the second time without sin unto the full salvation of his people. That is, when he shall appear the second time unto them that look for him, all his saved people shall then be without sin, for he shall have saved them from their sins, as testified the angel before the birth of Jesus. As yet sinful in his mortal body of dying flesh, Paul exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." For Jesus should deliver him from death. He therefore testified again, saying, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. xv. 51-57. This full victory thus given us shall be over both death and the grave, founded upon perfect justification from the law and freedom from sin; and God will crown us with this glorious victory through the righteous priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who took away all our sins, and shall therefore make us free from corruption and mortality, and raise us up to the glorified state of immortality and eternal life, "an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," his holy and obedient Son.

Now, therefore, all this acceptable spiritual sacrifice, with every qualification and consecration thereunto, as God's spiritual house and priestly family, is entirely through the Lord Jesus, our Brother, our Redeemer, our Resurrection, our Life, our Advocate, and our perfected and glorified High Priest, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself spotless and holy unto God for us. So, then, we have nothing that is holy, spiritual, acceptable and well-pleasing unto God, only that which God hath given unto us in his righteous Son. He is our wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, God having made him all this unto us; and it is of God, and according to his choice and predestination, that we are in Christ Jesus. And it is only because we are in him, and God hath made him all this unto us, that we live to God, love him and serve him, and worship him in spirit and truth. Even the power of faith, by which we believe, is the power of God in the resurrection of Christ, as Paul testifies, saying, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places," etc. Eph. i. 18-20. And so the faith by which we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is the inwrought power of his resurrection from the dead, the power by which he now liveth unto God, and also liveth in us. Paul could therefore say, that he was both crucified with Christ, and quickened with him from the death unto sin, and that Christ lived in him, and the life he now lived in the flesh he lived by the faith of the Son of God. He affirms the same truth thus: "But God, who is-rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Eph. ii. 4-7. All this glorious salvation is through Christ and with him; yea, he is salvation itself, salvation from sin and death, the last enemy. And all this rich mercy and great love of God to his people is for the glorious purpose, that in the coming ages, ages upon ages, he might

manifest the exceeding riches of his grace in his loving kindness toward his people through their Anointed Savior, as the name Christ Jesus means.

Now Paul, having thus shown the inseparable relation of faith to the resurrection-power of Christ and his life, then speaks of this faith in the risen Christ as the assurance and earnest of our resurrection in the life and holiness of Christ, saying, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. iv. 14-18. These are truly words of divine comfort, supported by the infallible word of the Lord that cannot be broken, and made sure to us by the victory of our faith in Jesus, that he died and rose again, which we do verily believe, because God has given us this power to believe on Christ. Our faith is the gift of God, and a fruit of the Spirit; therefore it is the witness of the Spirit in our hearts that we are born of God, and are in Christ Jesus his Son. The inspired word of the Lord Jesus is, that he himself shall descend from heaven, and then shall the dead in Christ rise first, and the living saints be changed in a moment, and all, thus redeemed, shall be caught up together to meet the Lord, who has thus come the second time without sin upon them unto their glorious salvation and full redemption, to receive them to himself, to ever be with him and behold his glory. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" Col. iii. 4. There is a divine positiveness and absolute certainty in all these truths, for they are the word of the Lord, and shall be fulfilled at the time appointed, just as he hath spoken, because his omnipotent power will perform all his promises to his people. This is the perfection of the priesthood of the holy Son of God for his people and in them.

"To all eternity our Priest
And King shall be adored;
Sinners from Satan's power released
Shall ever praise the Lord."

CHAPTER TWELVE.

THE GLORIFIED SAINTS.

THE LORD will be glorified in all his saints, and he is the glory of all his saints. God will fulfill to his Son the prayer that they may be with him where he is, and behold his glory that the Father gave him. This shall be fulfilled in heaven, when his saints shall appear with him in glory. Before the death, burial, and resurrection of the holy Redeemer, John said of him, "For the Son of man was not yet glorified." When his hour was come, he earnestly prayed to his Father, saying, "Glorify thy Son." So it behooved him to suffer and die, that he might enter into his glory. This was unto the end that his people, thus redeemed and saved from sin and death, might be glorified with him. Therefore, as it was with their Forerunner into glory, so also is it with them; and they must first be raised from the dead before they shall be glorified. They must follow their Master, who is the way, and be made like him. "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead. *** It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him," wrote Paul to Timothy. The suffering and dying with Christ, then, are absolutely necessary to our living and reigning with him. Of this Paul says, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. *** Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." Rom. vi. Just so shall it be with all who are planted together with him in the likeness of his death, which was unto sin in the body of his flesh; for they shall be raised up out of death in their bodies in the likeness of his resurrection, which was in his buried body, "of the seed of David;" and death shall have no more dominion over them, but they shall live unto God. "Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Luke xx. This is the word of Christ himself, and thus it shall be, as he taught. To be the perfected children of God, then, we must be the children and subjects of the resurrection from the dead, it was by the resurrection from the dead that the Son of David was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness," said Paul. To John on Patmos the Son of God in his glory said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. i. 18. He has the power, therefore, to raise the dead; and he says of every one that the Father gave him, and that believeth on him, "and I will raise him up at the last day." For it was not possible that he should be holden of death, said Peter; so neither is it possible for one of his brethren to be holden of it. If it were possible, then his priesthood would not be perfect, but would fail, and all would be lost, for death and the grave would have the victory.

But the word and power of the Lord says, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Hos. xiii. 14. "The Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Dan. vii. 22. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power." Ps. cxlv. 10, 11.

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. *** Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of

corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Rom. viii. 18-21. When the Lord by his inspired servants says, “shall be,” it must be. We have seen that the sons of God shall be manifested in the resurrection from the dead. We shall then bear the image of the heavenly Man, the Son of God, and be like him. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” Yet he is a man in the flesh, and is now unwillingly subject to vanity, but in hope of deliverance from the bondage of corruption, this body of death, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. This shall be blessedly realized when “Death is swallowed up in victory,” and “mortality is swallowed up of life;” and then the kingdom and dominion “shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.”

The saints are now in the kingdom of grace, and in a militant state, in which they are called to “endure a great fight of afflictions,” and to “sow in tears.” Therefore, while in the mortal body, they are not at home, being absent from their ascended and glorified Lord and High Priest, whose coming again according to his promise, they now wait. Nor shall their waiting and watching for his coming disappoint them. “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Heb. x. 35-37. “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” 2 Pet. iii. 13. “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” Phil. III. 20, 21. Our confidence is in him who is thus able. We confidently look for him to come again, and when he comes, he shall perfect us in his own image. O glorious change in us! How unutterable the beauty, glory and rapture, when our now vile body shall be fashioned in the likeness of his own spiritual, immortal and glorious body! Then, transporting assurance, the bodies of the countless millions of the redeemed saints shall all be thus glorious! O that will be holy, lovely, blissful HEAVEN! O we shall all then behold with transports of love and joy our First-born Brother from the dead, our ever-living and adored High Priest, who perfected us through his infinite sufferings in our flesh, and has thus made us an holy priesthood unto his and our Father and God! Our loving and altogether lovely Redeemer, when he shall present his sanctified bride to himself a glorious church, holy and without blemish, and shall present all his innumerable company of glorified brethren to his Father, saying, “Behold I and the children which God hath given me,” will then be blessedly satisfied, and God will be well pleased for the righteousness sake of his glorious Son. And this will be the fullness of the all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ with which the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ blessed his saints according to his choice of them before the world was. His election and predestination thus gloriously consummated in them, they, though once so sinful and sorrowful on earth, shall be holy and without blame before him in love. “Then shall the King say unto them on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

“And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.” Rev. xix. 5-9.

“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” ”Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.” 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13. “Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Thess. i.

“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” Rev. v. 9-12.

“Come, thou long expected Jesus!
Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in thee:
Israel’s strength and consolation,
Hope of all the saints thou art;
Dear Desire of every nation,-
Joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver;
Born a child, and yet a King;
Born to reign in us forever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring:
By thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to thy glorious throne.”

Hymn 324, Beebe’s Book.

“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that ,within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” Heb. vi. 17-20. The hope of all the saints is anchored in Christ, the Rock that was smitten for us; and he who is our hope, the hope of eternal life, is now in the presence of God for us. All whose forerunner unto the Father our highly exalted Prophet and Priest and King is shall as surely follow him through the veil of flesh, and be with him in the eternal glory of the Father, as that the Lord God hath said to him, “Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

This, O people of the living God, is the perfect work of the meek and lowly King of saints, who reigns in righteousness, and whose arm of power rules for him; and by him grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life over all the children that God gave him, perfecting holiness in them. The enraptured John said, "And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Rev. vi. 2. Through this crowned Son of the Highest, that loved us, we are more than conquerors in all the conflicts which lie between the cross of suffering unto death and the crown of life that fadeth not away. Again, when the time of the end was shown to John, he says. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns: and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." Rev. xix. 11-14. This shows the victorious and glorious reign of the crowned King in Zion; and that all his redeemed and conquered subjects shall be purified and made white, and blessedly follow him as soldiers of the Cross, the glorious heavenly army, so great that no man can number the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." Rev. xv. 3, 4.

Now, all this forbids the thought that this glorified Son of man, the crowned King of heaven and omnipotent Conqueror, either tries or strives to save and reign over his called and chosen people, or to make his foes his footstool; for the Most High proclaimed of him ages ago, that, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." Even in his humiliation in the flesh, the irresistible power of the then uncrowned King was triumphantly manifested in all his word and work; for all to whom he spoke were subdued into submission, whether winds and plagues, madness and death, men or devils. At his voice or touch, the most loathsome and fatal contagion and disease vanished, and all sins were forgiven; yea, ghastly death fled at his approach and command, and legions of devils must go at his word. And shall it now be thought that, crowned upon the throne of universal dominion as he is, he has not sufficient power and grace to successfully and lovingly reign in his militant kingdom of grace, and in the hearts of his quickened and called people? This would be a reflection and reproach upon him, and an impeachment of both his wisdom and power. From his resurrection in triumph over his last enemy, and coronation upon the throne of God on high, the word of his Almighty Father to him is being unfailingly verified, saying, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

We do well to remember, and let it humble and hush us, that the little line of finite reason or human judgment is infinitely too short to measure and judge the purpose and counsel, way and work of the Lord on high, whose arm rules for him. For his eternal purpose and the counsel of his will can not possibly be turned aside, frustrated or fail in anything or the smallest measure; for there is no disappointment with the unchangeable Lord God omnipotent. Moses was inspired to declare that the Lord rideth upon the heavens in the help of his people, and in his excellency on the sky. In this humble tribute of praise to the Anointed of God, the Man whom he made strong for himself, the clear and strong divine testimonies presented have shown us the glorious perfection and sufficiency of his mediatorial work and reign, as the absolutely successful Prophet and Priest and King, ordained of God before the world was, sent forth in the fullness of the time to do his righteous Father's perfect will, and invested with the fullness of the Godhead, though a sinless and perfect man in the flesh. Therefore, all

that God appointed and sent his Son to do, with all things he has declared and written concerning the sinful and lost people of his new and everlasting covenant, shall absolutely be accomplished in them, because the omnipotent word of the Lord hath spoken it. With him there is not the shadow of a turn or change; neither is it possible for a fortuitous or uncertain event to arise in all the Lord's unlimited dominion to disturb his counsel and purpose, or surprise and disappoint him.

In these pages, devoted to the Priesthood of the Christ of God, it is important to say, the present life and state is fully shown in the Scriptures to be divinely appointed and designed as a preparatory place, and that the God and Savior of his people, who knew all their sins and weakness, backslidings and failures, has an infinitely wise and merciful purpose towards them in it all, to successfully teach and convert and save them in these very things as needful truths and lessons of wisdom, which they could learn in no other way. Therefore, to his dear people the Lord says, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver: I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." Isa. xlviii. 10. This is the way, then, that he is forming his people and preparing them for himself, that they should show forth his praise. Not perfectly now in the flesh, certainly, for none perfectly glorify him now; but when he has refined them through the fires and floods, and shall bring them forth as the pure gold, then shall they show forth his praise and his power to save, and shall be to the Lord an holy priesthood, and perfectly glorify him in their body and spirit. His people and children need not flatter themselves, therefore, that they can raise themselves up out of the furnace of affliction, by any power or goodness that they possess, do and try as best they may; for the Lord has chosen his people and refines them in this hot furnace. So the man who lives so much to his satisfaction that he escapes the afflictions in the trying furnace, does but prove that the Lord has not chosen him at all. Such an one was the self-boasting worshipper who went up in the temple to pray; but the lowly man who asked for mercy was certainly in the furnace.

The Lord again says, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering. * * I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. * * Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing." Zeph. III. This is like the word of Christ, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Matt. v. 3-6. The Lord also says, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening. God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? * * But he chasteneth us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Heb. xii. 5-11. It is in this way that the Lord prepares and leads his priestly people to approach unto his presence and worship him. And so in all the way that he dealeth with them, as well in his providence as in his grace, he is sifting them as wheat, and purifying them as silver and gold in the furnace, that they should show forth his praise. Of the coming and work of Christ Jesus the Savior it is written: "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier

of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” Mal. iii. 2, 3.

The Lord is now upon his mediatorial throne, the Prince and Savior, and he is thus successfully performing his work of purifying the sons of Levi, the priestly family, in his own sure and good way; but not the way they would choose, for it is as silver and gold in the heated furnace, that melts the hard metals and consumes the baser part, the alloy and dross, the legal trust and fleshly confidence; that they may bring to the Lord the acceptable sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit, an humble trust and hope in Jesus the only Savior of sinners. And as thus sifted and humbled, they come unto God by faith in his dear and holy Son, and plead his sacrifice and only righteousness, and God pardons and accepts and blesses them in his righteous Son, who is their salvation and holiness and life.

This is the good work of righteousness that our Savior has begun in his people, and he will righteously and graciously perform it unto the perfect day; and in such a holy way and so glorifying to God that they shall be saved from themselves and their own way, so that they shall know and confess, with Jonah, “Salvation is of the Lord,” and shall offer the true prayer that Jesus taught: “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.” To thus save us from all that we need to be delivered from is not a light or easy work, for it is so difficult, owing to the innate and deep seated maladies of corrupted and self-reliant man, that none but our all-sufficient High Priest, who has all power in heaven and all power on earth, can save us from our sins and from ourselves, and prepare us and enable us to offer unto God an offering in righteousness, and worship him in spirit and in truth and in the beauty of holiness. Jesus only can save; and thus he is saving and will save his people from their sins. Not the least of our sins, that he shall save us from, is self-righteousness, self-sufficiency, self-dependence, and self-trust. A no less physician than Jesus, who had all wisdom, all grace and all power, so that he could save the raving Gadarene from himself, could have cured Peter of his strong and ruling passion of self-dependence, and it almost took his life away to save him; yet the gentle and lamb-like Jesus applied the bitter remedy, by letting Satan catch him in his snare, to shake him up and sift him, and Peter was effectually saved and taught to have no confidence in the flesh. “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” And thus he interceded for his apostle Peter, before he let Satan have him, that his faith should not fail. Christ our High Priest, as the Son over his own house and brethren, is faithful to God who glorified him to be made an High Priest after the power of an endless life. The power and virtue of Christ’s life and holiness will, therefore, take away from his sinful people all their sinful maladies of every sort, and they shall be purified unto salvation and made acceptable unto God. This work of saving his people from their sins is being performed in them, and the Lord who begun it in them will complete it.

It should not be thought, therefore, that because the Lord’s quickened people so often come short in outward or manifest gospel obedience, he is frustrated, hindered or in the least disappointed; for he sees and knows it all, and will as surely accomplish his wise design to the glory of God and the effectual salvation of all his straying sheep and backsliding children, as in the awful fall of Peter, the prodigal son, or the great trial of Job. Let us not think for a moment that the Savior of sinners is either wishing or trying to accomplish something for his people or with and by them, but meets with sad failures and disappointments; for the adorable and perfect Savior, whose arm rules for him, is not trying any experiments with his people, as many doctors do with their worst patients, to see whether this or that will succeed and cure the patient. The world of religion, indeed, savors very strongly of this mere experimenting; and many sincere and zealous souls show that they believe that the glorious King of

Zion is likewise experimenting and trying to accomplish much more than he succeeds in having done, and so there is failure with him as there is with men.

That we may have a far more exalted view than this of the reigning Son of God and his power to save, let us hear faithful Paul, who says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Rom. v. 8-11. This gives us the absolute assurance of full and blessed salvation from sin and death for all whom God loved and for whom Christ died. The apostle then goes on to say, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Verse 17. Not only saved from wrath through Christ, and blessedly reconciled to God, but shall reign in eternal life as kings and priests through Christ and by him. This is divinely blessed to sinners and glorious to Christ. Now, let us notice also in what way Christ thus effectually saves us; that is, by the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness. Then, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." Paul then says, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Verse 19. Not by the obedience of many may they be made righteous; for the word declares of all the sons of Adam that there is not one righteous. "Shall many be made righteous." This is as positive and sure as that the Son of God as a man was righteously obedient. His infinite merit in his holy obedience shall absolutely make all his people and brethren the very righteousness of God in Christ. There is no power in the universe that can possibly hinder or prevent this perfect holiness of the countless many to whom God imputes the righteousness of Christ. The immortal Son of man sits a King upon his holy throne; yea, King of kings, and in power and glory reigns as the Prince and Savior.

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him that appointed him."

CONCLUSION.

THE SACRIFICES OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD.

THE PRIESTHOOD under the law offered unto God sacrifices of blood and the bodies of slain beasts, which represented the awful fact that they were yet in their sins, and under the wrath of the broken law of the holy Lawgiver. Hence, they were ever thus trying to make atonement or satisfaction for their sins, and so obtain the favor and blessing of their Sovereign. This is true yet in all forms of legal service in the formal worship of God. But we have seen that such sacrifices could never take away sins, neither was there anything meritorious in them, nor satisfying to the demands of the holy law. But the fact that those legal worshippers trusted in those carnal offerings in sacrifice for their sins, and expected thus to obtain acceptance with God, was both dishonoring and displeasing to him, and he had no delight in them. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." Isa. i. 11-13. "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering." Ps. li. 15, 16.

The psalmist David was thus taught of God to look away from anything he could do to atone for his sins; and so he ceased from all his own offerings and works, and said, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." So he trusted in God, and offered the sacrifice of praise for his mercies, saying, "I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O Lord, for it is good." Ps. liv. 6. "But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. Unto thee, O my Strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy." Ps. lix. 16, 17. "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High: to shew forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night. * * For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands. O Lord, how great are thy works!" Ps. xcii. 1-5. Thus did David offer the spiritual sacrifice of praise unto God, who had become his salvation, and gave him glory for the greatness of his power and mercy.

How different this is from all worldly religion, and fleshly sacrifice and service, which is ever proclaiming the importance of its works and sacrifices for the Lord. The best people naturally cannot understand that our glorified High Priest unto God has made an end of sin, redeemed from all iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, and that all the true worshippers of God the Father are complete and accepted in his Son, for whose sake only their sins are put away forever and they are blessed. This perfection and fullness of grace and salvation in Christ Jesus is received by faith only; "not of works;" but the natural tendency of all who lean to their own understanding and worldly wisdom is to rely upon themselves and their religious sacrifices. For they cannot divest themselves of the natural belief that they must bring a price in their hands for their present sins, and make such offerings unto God as he will accept, and so reward them with his favor and blessings. This they expect in consideration of their services to him. Indeed, they cannot understand how God will bless them in any other way than this, as a recompence for their sacrifices in his service. While this is a natural principle in all men, it is both legal and selfish; for it seeks and expects a reward, as one who serves

another, for which he is entitled to pay. This principle belongs to nature and law, but not to Divine mercy and grace. Therefore, it does not please and honor the God of our salvation, nor praise his grace; but it does please and honor him who thus brings his offerings of service, and it praises his own works.

In the Lord's new covenant with his people he says, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." Heb. x. 17, 18. This is true of every spiritual worshipper of God, and of all the people with whom the Lord makes this everlasting covenant; therefore their sacrifices are not offerings for their sins, nor in order to obtain the heavenly blessings. Nay; for so far from this principle and motive obtaining in the kingdom of the saints, all their sins of all their lives have been blotted out in the blood of the Lamb of God, and the Lord is merciful to their unrighteousness. So every reward and blessing they receive flows to them from the riches of his mercy.

Paul calls every new covenant blessing the reward of grace; but of all who expect their works to save them and obtain the blessing he says, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Rom. iv. 4-8. Thus it is seen that no sin is imputed to the Lord's believing people, whose faith embraces Christ as their righteousness and salvation, in whom their God and Father hath blessed them with the divine and heavenly fullness of his beloved Son, "whom he hath appointed heir of all things," even all spiritual blessings. So they have ceased from their own works, for any reward or blessing, knowing that they cannot receive more than Christ's fullness of grace and salvation and blessing, all of which is "grace for grace."

In this humble work of faith and labor of love, as a tribute to the praise of our Lord's perfect Priesthood, it has been shown that there are only two principles and ways by which the children of men expect to come unto God acceptably, obtain his divine approval and blessing, and secure their own salvation. One way is to appear before God in their own obedience and works of righteousness, and thus enter into his worship and live in his favor. The Pharisee that went up to the temple of God to worship, very truly represents all who thus approach unto God. The other way of approach unto him in worship is, as expressed and sung by Toplady:

"Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

This way is to come unto God in the obedience and righteousness of the crucified Christ, whose dying words on the cross were, "It is finished." The publican, who likewise went up to the temple to pray, and contritely said, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," truly represents all who seek acceptance with God in the name and righteousness of his obedient Son, and ask forgiveness and every blessing of God for Christ's sake.

The people who are thus saved and blessed in the Lord Jesus, in whom they are complete, are ordained of God to offer up to him spiritual and acceptable sacrifices, not in time only, but more gloriously in holy eternity. In this conclusion, therefore, it is appropriate to briefly sum up the sacrifices unto God the Father of "The redeemed of the Lord."

In the solemn words of adoration: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever," our Lord himself has taught us the true sacrificial worship of all the saints. This ascribes all salvation

and blessing, power and glory to God alone, and to him all praise is due. These are the joyful sacrifices of his saints. They praise God, from whom all blessings flow. They give him honor, and glory for all his majestic greatness, holiness and goodness. There is no place in their hearts for any other sentiment than the sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise to his revered and holy name. They freely and with rapturous melody offer the grateful devotion of their loving and loyal hearts to their God and King, for all his glorious power and grace in their salvation from their numerous sins and foes, and for his surpassing love bestowed upon them in making them his children, and the inheritors of his holiness and blessedness, They can do no more. Less they would not render unto their blessed God and loving Father, who has so wondrously manifested to them his glory. They adoringly realize that they are infinitely indebted to the God of salvation for all his divine mercies and blessings, and that the free streams of his unmerited love and goodness are ever flowing to them from their compassionate Sovereign and Savior; so that they are under ever-increasing and unceasing obligations of adoring love, and the holy sacrifice of grateful praise to their Lord, whose glory is above the heavens. The language of their hearts is: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."

"He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen." "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving." "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee." "Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness."

That God should be praised and glorified forever in all his saints, is the holy design and end unto which he ordained them, and new-created them in the life and likeness of his beloved and holy Son. Thus he formed them for himself, his holy workmanship, redeemed from the earth, born from heaven; a royal priesthood and holy nation, that they should glorify him in the highest, and be holy and happy forever in his perfect love. For it is fully shown in the revealed will of God that his excellent purpose and the crowning glory of all his wonderful works, as consummated in the eternal redemption of all his people, is, that their supreme bliss shall be in his everlasting praise and glory. Therefore to Zion the Lord says, "Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." "So have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, *** saith the Lord; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory." Paul then testifies that we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise in our hearts, "which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Thus it is seen that the praise of God's glory in all the redeemed in Christ is the crowning purpose of the Holy One in all his works of creation and redemption, which are the tin-folding of his eternal power and Godhead. And so the Father Almighty shall be glorified forever in all his saints through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Come, and let us by faith view the innumerable multitude of the people of the saints of the Most High, as they stand in his presence in white robes of salvation and righteousness, the general assembly and

church of the Firstborn, arrayed in holiness and divine beauty as the sons of God, the royal and holy priesthood, offering up to him their blessed sacrifices of praise, all uniting in heavenly harmony and saying, “We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty; * * because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.” This view will inspire our spirit with praise to God and the Lamb for his everlasting love, the riches of his mercy and the power of his grace, in thus bringing home unto life and glory and bliss his dispersed people from all the earth, the redeemed in Christ, the children of the Most High, the heirs of the immortal kingdom of the saints in holy heaven. O how this transporting vision of the holy priesthood in heaven inspires the heart to love and praise God in the highest and give him glory! so that we would freely unite with the psalmist in saying, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth’s sake.” O how wonderfully the Lord has glorified himself in the full salvation of all his redeemed and glorified saints!

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.” This woman is the church, the queen of heaven, adorned with the celestial radiance of life and light from her Divine Lord, with all the shadows and darkness of the moon or law and of death put under her feet, and her days of mourning ended in songs of salvation, joy and gladness.

“O blest the men, blest their employ,
Whom Thy indulgent favors raise
To dwell in those abodes of joy,
And sing Thy never-ceasing praise!”

“So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. *** The King’s daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle work.” This is said of the righteousness of saints, the holy garments of salvation, compared to fine linen, clean and white, with which all this holy people and heavenly family of priests shall be enrobed and made glorious.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, * * * and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”

“O that with yonder sacred throng!
We at his feet may fall;
We’ll join the everlasting song,
And crown him LORD of all!”