

father on the earth; for one is your Father, who is in heaven."¹ But it is clear that the passage in which these words occur was addressed to His disciples as distinguished from the rest of those who could hear Him. The greater part of the discourse was a vehement denunciation of the Pharisees. I repeat that it was in the discourses addressed to His disciples, and in these discourses alone, that our Lord used the phrases "your Father," "your Father in heaven," and "your heavenly Father," in order to describe God. In the discourses in the synagogues and by the seaside and wherever else He was speaking to the multitude, not specially to his disciples, there is not a single instance in which any one of these phrases is used. There is this difference between the manner in which He spoke of God to those who had believed in Him and the manner in which He spoke of Him to others is not occasional; it is habitual; it is constant.

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THE SOUL'S EMANCIPATION.

"Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?"—*Rom.* vii. 24.

"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the law of sin and death."—*Rom.* viii. 2.

WHO is the "wretched man" of the seventh chapter of the Romans? Is he a man of God or a mere worldling? Is he still in the death of nature, or has he known that great change, rightly called Conversion, when the world of the senses becomes a secondary thing, while the higher world takes the higher place, and God dethrones the man himself in His affections?

As long as we suppose that any such distinction, any essential difference between one man and another, is the main point in the discussion, we shall find ourselves hopelessly perplexed and entangled. In marked contrast with

¹ *Matt.* xxiii. 8, 9.

his manner hitherto, the Apostle writes about himself, and in the first person, to shut the door against this notion. Never would he have called himself that unconverted person whom, on this supposition, he describes. On the contrary, it is in this very epistle that he writes, "we that are strong . . . I have therefore my glorying in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God."

It is impossible to suppose that St. Paul would use the phrases, "I myself" . . . "I am carnal" . . . "I find a law in my members," if he had long before passed away for ever from the only condition in which the experience he describes could be his own.

And yet it is equally impossible to suppose that we here catch a glimpse of the lurid interior of his soul, while he was writing about peace and joy and a life hid with Christ in God. It is incredible, on one hand, that he should say of an unregenerate man, "it is not I that sin"; and yet it is just as incredible that he should represent a believer as such, looking about in perplexity for some one to deliver him.

We must seek elsewhere than in the contrast between Christian and worldling for the clue to this remarkable passage. And it is found when we discover that he is thinking of neither in opposition to the other, but of man, any man at any stage of his experience, contemplated apart from divine grace and the steady support of the Spirit. It is surely possible to think of the best man for a moment thus. Scientifically and in the abstract, St. Paul found it easy to take himself, their evangelist and leader, for the typical example of what even a good man, standing alone, must endure. Even he might wish well, might hate himself for failing, and yet he would not succeed. "I myself, I see good, but cannot attain it; I hate evil, but it haunts me, it is 'present with me'; sin overpowers my convictions and aspirations, and creates so

strange a dualism within me that the good which I would I do not, and it is not I who do the evil."

Thus torn asunder, he cries out, "O wretched man! who shall deliver me?" but, in the act of confessing the misery of this condition, he, being in experience an Apostle, declares his emancipation from it, and exclaims, "I thank God [for deliverance] through Jesus Christ."

This reading of the passage suits perfectly the whole argument of the Epistle hitherto.

The Roman Church was a half-amalgamated mixture of Jews and Gentiles, full of rivalries and jealousies; the Gentiles boasting against the stem into which they were grafted, the Jews needing to be reminded that "we" are no better than they; while the lesson is pressed on both that, because God is one, therefore He deals impartially with all His children, justifying the circumcision by faith and the uncircumcision through faith.

But here he anticipates an objection. Does not this doctrine encourage evil living? May not faith cancel our obligation to fulfil that righteousness which the ancient law required? May we not even glorify God by exhibiting much sin receiving grace through abundant faith? The answer of the Apostle is remarkable. It is not that we dare not run the risk, but that there is within us a life which "cannot" behave thus. This, he insists, our very baptism teaches. Immersion is burial and emergence from a watery grave, and announces that we who thus claim to share Christ's death profess also to share His new life. And all baptism is either immersion (*i.e.* burial) or such a passing of water over the head as represents and means immersion.

Well, then, our "old man" has shared His crucifixion; has it died, that as death no more has dominion over Him, so should sin (which indeed *is* death) have no more dominion over us. All this the Christian is bound to ex-

hibit in his life and practice by an effort of faith. He must reckon himself dead to sin; he must not let sin reign in his mortal body. Having made his choice, he must present his members as servants, not to uncleanness but to holiness. This is our duty and our privilege. But this, he urges incessantly, cannot be attained by a weary, mechanical effort, dealing separately with each detail of life, but only by a spiritual change, a new vitality, an eternal life in Christ Jesus. In theory, and looking at what is given to us (but given, that we may accept and so enjoy it), this release from the dominion of sin is perfect as the release of a woman from conjugal obligations when her husband dies. Now, joined to another, we are to serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

Was this then easy? First, he tells of his own bygone experience. As to the letter of the law, it was good: I saw its goodness, and desired it, but I failed; I found myself dead. In the depths of my consciousness it made me fatally worse, and worse off, than if I knew it not: it slew me!

And at this point there comes a significant change of structure: he passes to the present tense. For the same is always true. Always, to say, "I will do right—I myself: I will conquer, attain, perform, work righteousness," that is to be miserable; it is with the flesh to serve sin, even while the mind is loyal to a sublime but unattained ideal; it is to struggle, to fail, to perish, to ask—and on such terms to ask ever in vain—for a Deliverer.

All this the Apostle accepts for his own. Because it *was* his own, and just as true of him, if ever he tried the experiment of living so, as of the youngest formalist who fails to-day, but is confident that he will succeed to-morrow. No, my friend, on those lines never, not if you were the Apostle Paul.

But now the remarkable thing is, that, whereas the

sixth chapter asked, "How can we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein? How is this possible?" the seventh chapter asks, "How is anything else possible? Who shall deliver me from this?" In the fifth chapter we are dead to the law and free from its marital claims, and in the sixth chapter we are dead to sin. But in the seventh chapter the position is reversed: the law is alive, and we are powerless as the dead to its requirements. What are we to think of this? We are not to think of it without marking the strong contrast, the bold and glad antithesis, between the two experiences of the seventh chapter and the eighth, between a man as far as he only strives and the same man when he receives grace. The wretched man of the seventh chapter is not enjoying the rights, and exercising the freedom spoken of in the fifth and sixth chapters. The discussion is formally summed up in the assertion that "with the mind" I myself aspire; "with the flesh" I sin; but when the spirit of life takes the field the conflict is decided.

The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus emancipates from the law of sin and death. What a different freedom from that which for a moment crossed our mind as the vile thought flitted by, Let us continue in sin that grace may have the more scope in pardoning us! To one who knew anything of grace this was impossible; how could he? Not emancipation, but slavery and anguish, was what fleshly license meant. And now, from this base slavery the way of escape was plain. Freedom in religion, like all true freedom, was not license, but glad obedience to a nobler law. The law of the spirit of life breaks the force of that sinister tendency, that infection of nature as with a plague, that law of sin and death.

It is so with all other life as with the life divine. The law of life in our material bodies sets them free from the law of disintegration, dissolution, which would otherwise

in a few hours convert them into dust and vapour. The inspiration of patriotism, or even of martial honour, makes it freedom and joy to a soldier to go on active "service," with its toil, privation, discipline, and peril.

The law of love made it so light a thing for Jacob to serve for seven years, that they seemed but a few days unto him, for the love that he bare unto Rachel.

And no religion is worthy of the name which has not its inspiration, its new life with new conditions, which are privileges. The deaf man is perplexed and baffled—but his ears are unstopped. The blind man gropes in the noon-day as in the dark—but his eyes are opened. The prisoner endures cramp and confinement—but he is free; and as well may the captive pity the exertion with which the freeman roams beside sparkling waters, or climbs the wind-swept mountain and gazes over half a realm, as the captive of Satan pity the freeman who serves Christ, in newness of the Spirit, with that service which is perfect freedom.

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SOME RECENT BIBLICAL LITERATURE.

THE Cambridge Bible, *Joel and Amos*, is another specimen of Dr. Driver's thorough work and exhaustive scholarship. It provides all that the ordinary reader needs to know, and adds much that is valuable to more advanced students. Slight changes would make it a student's commentary on the Hebrew text. Advantage has been taken of the brevity of Joel and Amos to introduce numerous special notes on such points as *Shaddai*, *Jehovah of Hosts*, etc., and above all, the long and interesting illustrated excursus on *Locusts*. Perhaps the most important feature is the very full discussion of the date of Joel. The uncertainty as to whether Joel was one of the earliest or one of the latest pro-