

VOLUME 13

TWENTY LETTERS

OR

LIVING

TESTIMONIES

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON

Volume 13

William Huntington

Living Testimonies

LETTER I.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

I WROTE a letter with an intention to send you ever since the 15th of April, 1789; and the Rev. Mr. V. of P. was to come to London, and give it into your hands, but he did not come: but now having an opportunity by a friend to send you a few lines, I have taken the liberty to write, hoping this will find you and your family in good health.

Sir, I have longed to see you again at B. ever since I heard you there, for it pleased the Lord to make you a blessing to me, in removing a doubt which for many years weighed down my very soul, and caused me to hang down my head at times

like a bulrush; which doubt seemed to vanish when you preached from these words in the prophet Isaiah, chap. i. "*Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness;*" which words you was enabled to handle, by divine assistance, as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. When you made the inquiry who they were that he did redeem; did he redeem all? You said your Bible told you that there were vipers and goats, that he did not redeem; which words opened such a scene in the word of God to my view, that the Bible became like a new book to me. I saw such beauty in the distinguishing love of a dear Redeemer, that I can in some measure say, against all the temptations of Satan, against all the allurements of the world, and against all the strugglings of fallen nature, by a small spark of living faith, that Jesus is mine and I am his. O, ea6 my dear sir, who can tell, or what tongue can express, the beauty, the desirableness, and the gathering home of the mind and affections there is between Christ and the soul, when the divine union takes place!

But now, my dear sir, I wilt just give you a short account of the manner in which the Lord was pleased to shine upon me. From my infancy I had many convictions; but as I grew up to manhood those convictions seemed to wear off, though not altogether; for sometimes I have been driven to fear death, judgment, and hell, to that degree, that I have, been afraid lest the devil should carry me away body and soul: but, when I was about seven and twenty years old, it pleased the Lord to open such a scene, by conviction in my soul, of the depth of my fallen nature; that I was brought to cry, from a heart-felt sense of my danger, God be merciful to me a sinner! Sleep, at this time, in a great measure departed from my eyes, and slumber from my eyelids, for weeks and months together; so that my whole employment seemed to be to know how I could escape the wrath to come. But it pleased the Lord, in my deep extremity, to point me to Jesus by faith, through his eternal

Spirit making manifest to my poor soul that the law which I had broken was fulfilled by the obedience of Christ, and that by his death all the demands of justice were satisfied; so that I saw that God could be just, and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus.

Then I began to inquire after the people that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name; and, living at that time at Kingswood, I joined Mr. Wesley's connection, and after some time it pleased the Lord to open my mouth among them, so as an occasional preacher I was permitted on Sabbath days to go round the country to preach Christ to the people. But there was, after some time, a whispering among the preachers that I did not preach methodist doctrine; from which there arose first a shyness, and then some contests; and I believe for about twelve years before I was separated from them we could not agree, for I could never believe that a child, of God that is justified could ever perish, but that he finally should be saved: but the doubt that stuck with me was this, whether or no there was not some time in a man's life that he might be called, and, rejecting that call, might perish eternally. But the vipers and the goats settled this with me; so that, like a giant refreshed with new wine, I went forth in the strength of the Lord, pulling down man, and setting up the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour and foundation of a sinner's hope: so there was soon after a separation.

And now, sir, I have a little meeting of my own in B. and a few scattered ones that attend me. And, if ever it should please the Lord to send you again to B. my heart, my door, and my people, I believe, will be thankful and glad to receive you, and shall esteem it as a favour, and render, I hope, all honour and praise to him to whom it is due. Sir, I should take it as a favour, if by the bearer you would send me a few lines. Please to direct them to me at R. M. Wine-street, B. May the Lord bless you in your body, in your soul, in your family, in your

church, giving you many souls for your hire, that against all oppositions from professors, for I hear you have many, you may see of the travail of the dear Redeemer's soul and be satisfied, is the prayer of your unworthy son in the gospel of Jesus Christ,

R. M

Living Testimonies

LETTER II.

To Mr. R. M. at B.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your letter with thankfulness to God for his goodness to you, and for making choice of my mouth to solve your long perplexing doubt. I have long thought that a bigoted Papist, a self-sufficient Arminian, and an hardened Antinomian, are the hardest souls to work upon of any that ever came under my observations; and working upon such may truly be called plowing upon a rock. But is there any thing too hard for the Lord? All that are ordained to eternal life must come to Christ for life. The children of the free-woman must receive the truth, that the truth may make them free; and, if they err in spirit, they shall come to understanding; and, if they murmur, they shall learn doctrine.

You are a living witness of the truth of God's election, being a subject of discriminating grace, and a pillar and ground of this great and glorious truth; for who but God hath made thee to differ from those that thou art separated from? who are left under the deception, to stumble upon the dark mountains, and to wander in a wilderness where there is no way, no way cast up, no way consecrated, no way of access opened; but a way of their own devising, a crooked path, and whosoever walketh therein shall not know peace; destruction and misery being in all their ways, and the way of peace they have not known.

You inform me that a wonderful field is opened to you. True; but thou wilt see greater things than these; thy path will shine more and more even to perfect day, and 16c5 thou wilt have many open visions of the glory that is within the wail; which sweetly convinces the heaven born soul that the gates and everlasting doors, which once lifted up their heads to receive our forerunner, are not closed against his faithful followers. Our rapturous thoughts, our heavenly minds, our renewed and divinely inflamed affections, our faith, and our hope, are often admitted into the holy of holies, ascending (like the angels) and descending upon the son of man, and frequently return with sweet entertainment. Yea, we are raised up and made to sit together representatively in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

And, "*As you have received Christ, so walk ye in him;*" make straight paths for your feet; and cleanse your way, by taking heed thereto according to his word. Be fully persuaded in your own mind respecting every truth, and hold fast the form of sound words, and the doctrine contained in them; and see that you have God's unconditional yea and amen to support everything you embrace and hold forth; and set up your waymarks as you go on, and then you know where to look, and where to refer in every dispute and controversy. For, although you are escaped out of the snare of the fowler, yet

the Fowler will try to ensnare you again. He has more traps than one; he can come as an assailant with an army of terrors, and he can come as a visitor and applaud the prophet; he could teach Eve how to obtain wisdom, and set the Jews to blaspheme, and abuse the name of the Lord Jesus, and then beat his own vassals, and send them out of the house both wounded and naked for doing it; he can cry up the servants of the most high God, that shew the way of salvation, when he thinks it will exasperate the magistrates, and then set the rulers to whipping them when he has done, Acts xvi. 17, 23. He can shine with a false ray in the head of Judas, and make his light darkness; and withdraw from the heart that is in his own possession, and let the sinner attend the word preached so as to have his natural affections stirred up by it, insomuch that he receives the word with joy; and then come back and steal away from his memory every word that he has heard, and make him as barren as before. Two devils can lay their heads together, one to blow up the pride of a graceless professor, and turn him into the likeness of a minister of Christ, until he shall call himself an apostle, a false apostle, a deceitful worker, 2 Cor. xi. 13-15; the other devil, by divine permission, shall go and torment some poor sinner with madness, and this mad devil shall stir up other sinners to go and call for that false apostle to come and cast him out in the name of Jesus; and he comes and commands the devil to depart at his bidding, and he goes; and both have served their own turn, and gained their own ends. The false apostle thinks himself more than man, and gains credit with the people, which paves the way for more mischief; and the dispossessed takes it for granted that he is converted, and attends the ministry of the false apostle. This is infernal policy, and is the stratagem of that diabolical council called the gates of hell; and Christ detects it as such, "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not eaten, &c. in thy presence, and in thy name cast out devils?" and yet he bids them depart, and calls them workers of iniquity: but, if it was the Holy Spirit's

work, it could never be so called. But this whole business is called working iniquity, for the whole of it was done by the devils only to deceive the children of men, and trouble the churches by sowing tares among the wheat. "*The wheat are the children of the kingdom, and the tares are the children of the wicked one,*" Nor does the devil ever deceive more than when he turns reformer. To equip a minister of his for this work, he generally sends him out with a sound creed in his mouth at first, in order to pave his way into the affections of those who have orthodox beads: this establishes him as a pastor over them. He now visits them constantly till he gets into their affections; this is zealously affecting them, but not well: he then brings forth a little at a time of the bane of his heart, and covers it with zeal for the law and practical holiness; and this walking in craftiness makes him admired as a man of piety. Conscience sometimes lashes him as a deceiver, which often draws tears from his eyes in the pulpit; this passes for tenderness of heart and gospel meekness; "Blessed are the meek." He shews an uncommon regard for poor sinners, and uses the most pressing invitations to bring them all to Christ; and has now and then a hard throw at those who make the gate of life so strait, and the way to it so narrow, by running with God's decree of election in their mouths, and warns his audience against uncharitableness; this passes for pious zeal and candour. But God calls such work making the heart of the righteous sad, and strengthening the hands of evil doers; and certainly it is feeding the hypocrite, and starving the saint. In short, the doctrines of God's sovereignty and discriminating grace, faithfully handled, are the greatest bane to such a man, and a lively sound Christian is his worst enemy; but the hypocrite in Zion is his best friend and greatest favourite: and this is the devil turned reformer. But I trust thou art not ignorant of Satan's devices. If thou shunnest these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ. Adieu

W.H. S.S.

Living Testimonies

LETTER III.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I PRESUME to send the following account for your encouragement, that while an erring world reflects, you may still be enabled to pray, preach, and write, for the benefit of those whom God has humbled, and will most gladly receive the same as for their souls' benefit.

My wife has now brought into the world her seventh child: but a few months since, having a thought of her wants at such times, she mentioned it to a neighbour who, she thought had it in her power to spare a trifle for the occasion; but, instead of that, she said to my wife, Did you ever read Mr. Huntington's 'Bank of Faith'? My wife said, No.' Well,' says our neighbour, 'I will lend it to you; and though there are many things in it which I think are Wrong, yet let me hear your opinion concerning it.'

My wife brought it home, and read it; and, dear sir, we can inform you that God came to us with the book, forasmuch as my wife and myself are both enabled in a more free and frequent manner to commit ourselves unto him. Indeed, sir, we have hitherto too slightly laid our case before the Lord,

making our wants first known to man, who sometimes has thrown our requests in our faces.

It has pleased an all-wise God to bring us about much in the same way as he has brought you. We have known the want of bread for years, though it has pleased him these two last years to make it a little better for us. We have often seen the hand of God in unthought-of ways releasing us: sometimes when we have had nothing for our children to eat, we have remarked they have not asked for it.

Happy would it have been for us, if we could have as fully committed ourselves unto the all-wise Disposer as you were enabled to do. But, blessed be God, we find more power to do it now. The Lord be pleased to give us more of this confidence, and continue it to us, so long as we shall have to struggle here below.

Surely we can say, respecting the book put into our hands, that the Lord came with it; for that every line seems to sympathize with us, 'There is the thing we suffered.' Surely we can say, God gave you to commit it to the press for us, and for others before us, and for others after us into whose hands it shall fall!

We were obliged to return the book: the Lord enable us to purchase it, that we may have it with us continually, and lend it to others, unto whom we should think it a blessing! For, dear sir, there are thousands in the world that it would be better than a present of ten pounds; though at the first not so gladly received, yet afterwards such would find the good, and be enabled to bless the Lord.

I said, at the beginning of this letter, that I presumed it might be for your encouragement; but, O sir, how slight is such a prop! God, that has most wonderfully brought you to this moment, can aid, direct, and support you, and make you a

blessing where, how, and to whom his wisdom thinks fit. But excuse me, sir, as in the gladness of my heart I have made the same known to you, as the Lord has been pleased to make you a blessing both to me and mine. The Lord keep you; so prays,

Rev, and dear Sir,

Your very humble servants, T. and M. W.

Living Testimonies

LETTER IV

To Mr. and Mrs. W.

MY DEAR FRIENDS IN THE LORD JESUS).

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you. I received your kind letter, and am glad to hear that you are emboldened and encouraged to make use of the poor saint's Bank of Faith, and to look to God as the God of providence. Your Bible abounds with bank notes, if you have but the hand of faith to take them, the spirit of supplication to plead them, and wisdom to copy after the many precedents which God has set before you.

Some tell us that God has nothing to do with the belly, only with the heart; that we are to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things are to be added unto us; and that this addition is to cut off all prayer for daily food, for

we have no warrant to pray for temporal things. This is the doctrine of those who have more gods than one; but what are you and I to do, who have but one God? When God sent Moses to deliver Israel out of Egypt, he told him that his name was I AM THAT I AM. At first sight this might appear nothing but a blank; but Moses soon found the validity of it, for when he came to make use of it, it always turned up a prim turn it which way he would. Moses wanted a deliverer in Egypt, and God was that; and he wanted mercy and judgment, goodness and severity, at the Red Sea, and God was that. When they came to Marah, they wanted either a providence or a miracle, and the answer of God was, I AM THAT, THAT I AM. They wanted a guide by day, and a guard by night, and God was both. In their war 1ae e s with Amalek, Cog, and Sihon, they wanted a captain, and God was that. In their hunger they wanted bread, in their thirst they wanted drink, and in their lust they wanted flesh; and they had them.

It is true, they did not presume to pray to the Almighty for these things, but they tempted him; they rebelled, and murmured, and called his omnipotence in question about them: " Can God furnish a table in the wilderness, can he provide flesh for his people?" And I think this sounds worse than humble prayer, and calls loudly for a patient, long-suffering, merciful, sin-pardoning God; and he was all that. And this Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. When Christ came to deliver his spiritual Israel from a worse bondage than that of Egypt, he tells them to pray, "*Give us this day our daily bread;*" and he taught them at the sea of Tiberias where to look for it, for his inquiry there was how their belly fared: "Children, have ye any meat? They answered, No." And as their answer was No, they no sooner came to land but "they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon and bread; and Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine." He not only warrants us to pray for these things, and promises to give them, but he has condescended to cook them. O! the

goodness, the condescension of this ever blessed Jehovah-jireh!

Go you, and do as you are bid: in all things and at all times, with supplication, thanksgiving, and prayer, let your requests be made known unto God; and that God, who ordered the ravens to feed Elijah twice a day, and afterwards commanded a widow to sustain him, and who wrought a daily miracle for twelve months together to do it, will also feed you, O ye of little faith.

"Give me neither poverty nor riches," says one, "but feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full and deny thee, or lest I be poor and steal;" "And, having food and raiment, let us be therewith content," for we have a covenant God that careth for us.

You have the whole account of the covenant of grace by Ezekiel; and the last branch of this new covenant secures temporal things, and in the sacred pages runs thus: "I will also save you from all your uncleannesses; and I will call for the corn and wine, and will increase it, and will lay no famine upon you. But thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them," Ezek. xxxvi. 29, 37. Hence it is plain that those, who tell us that Christ grants no warrant to pray for temporal things, speak a vision out of their own hearts, and go by their own purse, instead of God's promises; and make the covenant head to contradict the covenant maker, instead of coming into the world to do the will of him that sent him.

The poor little book that you speak of, as well as myself, goes through evil report and good report. Some curse it, and others bless it; some laugh at it, and others weep over it; some believe it is true, and others declare it is a lie; some ridicule it, and others are encouraged by it; some vilify me for sending it out, and others thank God that ever it was written. No man

can serve these two masters. The book never was intended for the worldly wise, for he sacrifices to his own net; nor was it intended for the miser, for, with him, one bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, for he has goods laid up for many years. Nor will it suit the self-dependent professor: a bank of faith will never be used by an unfaithful man; he is better acquainted with the English funds than with an overruling providence.

The book was designed for poor believes, who are heirs of promise, of the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come; and who are called a poor and an afflicted people, who shall trust in the name of the Lord; whom God loves too well to trust them with a stock in hand, lest, like the prodigal, they become independent of him, and get far from him by riotous living.

True faith will view the world and the fullness thereof in the hand of Christ, for he is heir of all things. The gold, and the silver, the corn, the wine, the oil, the wool, and the flax, are his; and so are the fowls of the mountains, the beasts of the forest, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. These things are often thrown in great abundance to those who are to have their portion in this life; to such it is given to gather together and to heap up, but not an heart given to do good therewith. But, " The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just." " He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor," Prov. xxviii. 8.

The miser is often afraid to make his will, lest death ensue; and death often ensues a neglect of it, and so he dies without it; by which means Providence holds back his hands, that he cannot perform his enterprise: this is a repetition of the ancient question, " Whose shall these things be which thou hast provided ?" Let the true Christian's situation be what it may in this life, sure I am it is best for him; and, was he to

choose for himself, he would never mend the matter, or add a cubit to his own stature. Sleep is sweeter with a hungry belly than with a full one. It is better to be poor and liberal, than to be rich and covetous. A saint with an empty stomach is often wakeful, active, lively, and can feed sweetly under a sermon; when a full belly lulls the hearer to sleep. A pampered appetite is the same to the soul as a restive horse is to his rider; it carries him whither it will. I know not which is worse, a keen appetite and no food, or plenty of food and no appetite. I have experienced both.

The Lord hath chosen our inheritance for us; and what little of this world's good falls to our share, he will keep it in his own hands, and make the morrow take thought for the things of itself. We are to be diligent in business and fervent in spirit, and the prayer of faith will fetch in every supply that is needful for us; for our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things. The Egyptians carried all their complaints to Joseph, and Israel in the wilderness carried theirs to Moses; but we must look to Jesus, and we shall see all his goodness pass before us: faith will watch his hand, and gratitude acknowledge his mercies. "*He that will observe these things, even he shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord.*"

Yours, in the faith of the gospel,

W.H.

Living Testimonies

LETTER V

To Wm. HUNTINGTON.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I hope you will excuse my writing to you at this time. I know your work is great, and your time much taken up, in feeding the household of faith. Having, by the blessing of God, received a morsel by your books and preaching, I cannot eat it alone, or conceal it any longer; but, as a penny of the Lord's coin, I am constrained to send this, that praise to God from you may redound on my account. About five years back, being in a barn threshing corn, a sense of guilt was powerfully impressed on my mind, and these words came, This do, and live; this do, and live.' This was repeated many times over, and for many days. Not knowing any thing of the word of God, being scarcely able to read a word therein, and having such an enmity to all that were called Dissenters; but having a brother who was partly a Dissenter, and partly a Churchman, I went to him, and asked him if there were any such, words in the Bible, or in any author he had read. He told me he thought there were in Gen. xlii. This set me to reading up and down the Bible; in doing this, God was pleased to direct me to the 5th of Amos, 6th verse, "*Seek the Lord and ye shall live, lest he break out like fire, and devour the house of Joseph, and there be none in Bethel to quench it.*" But how to seek the Lord I knew not; yet the fear of this fire breaking out on me filled me with great dread. This drove me to hear a Baptist minister of C-----te; and he, insisting that the Lord was to 2000 be sought in all the appointed means, made me diligent in hoaxing. I now began to view his followers as angels; but

found myself nothing but sin. I longed to be with them; but, alas! I viewed myself too bad, and the shew of my countenance witnessed against me. Thus I continued for six months; in which time several of his people would often converse with me, particularly Thurgood, who would often say, Come, will you tell us what God has done for you? This was generally done when fresh members joined the church. But I wanted to know whether it was God or the devil that set me out in a profession. If I had but known that it was the Lord, I thought I could bear the indignation of the Lord, because I had sinned against him: but the minister often saying, this you may try yourself by, if you have left off sabbath-breaking, drunkenness, swearing, lying, and the like; if you love the ways and people of God, undoubtedly old things are done away, all things are become new. Once when he was preaching from Lamentations, "*He sitteth alone, and putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope;*" by what he said on those words, 'If you cannot go into the company of the world, and see yourself unfit for the society of God's people, thus you sit alone with a witness; thus you may have reason for hope;' here I first began to hope. Then he preached from these words, "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord." This was to be done, he said, in the ways of God, and in the ordinances of his house, being zealous to know the Lord, and to follow on to know him, soon got into the water, hoping to leave my burden at the bottom of the pool; as the minister often used to say, 'Come to his ordinances, and you will get comfort;' yet, alas! I brought my burden up out of the water with me, which soon grew too heavy for me to bear. This being the ease, I often broke my mind to friend Thurgood, still viewing him as an angel; and, my experience agreeing with his, I got upon his back, as it were, trusting to him as a guide; but when your letter to Caleb Evans came out it cut up all his religion, and down came he, and I too. I now thought that my guide was deceived by reading your books, because he began to be dissatisfied with the ministry that we

sat under, which our minister said was the case. I being simple, believed every word that the preacher said, for so I had been taught, that every word spoken by him, when in the pulpit, must be believed as though Christ himself was there. This being the case, I carried a weapon to our preacher against Thurgood, which was this, "*They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercies,*" and I wished the minister to preach from it: so foolish was I. But so it is, a bond child cannot love a freeborn son: yet, blessed be God, we were then brethren in the purpose of God. This it was that made him often come to speak to me, though he seemed to be cut off from our community; and I was zealous for chastening him. This I did in ignorance and unbelief; however my burden still kept upon my back, and increasing worse and worse, till at last, like Peter, I cried out, "Lord, save, or I perish." Thus I went mourning, till these words came with power to my mind, "*Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted;*" "*Say to them of a fearful heart, Be strong.*" Before these words came I was sorely tried and tempted with blasphemous thoughts, till I did not know whether I uttered them or not: this made me mourn sore; but the above words, blessed be God, removed the temptation, the burden, and all; and on the next Lord's day I waited for our pastor on the road coming to C — te, in order to tell him of my deliverance. I had also another passage brought to me, which was this, "*If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father:*" this I also told him at the same time, with the joy and peace I found in believing in those precious words. I told him I had considered what my mourning sprung from, which was being burdened with sin and those temptations; and then what my comfort sprung from, which was having an advocate with the Father: to which he made answer, that Satan could tempt, accuse, condemn, and comfort too. Then, said I, Satan must be divided against himself. He said, he wished his hearers to steer between Antinomianism and Arminianism; but never described the way. This stripped me of all my comfort, and kept me

mourning till you published your second part of -the Barber; which delivered me from my burden; the particulars I shall relate by and by. I have since found out what he meant by steering between Antinomianism and Arminianism; which was, by all means to avoid reading your books, or hearing you preach: for he declared, in the public pulpit, that he would set his hand to burn all your books as soon as he came down, for it was them that had made all the disturbances amongst us; for Thurgood had circulated your books very much among us, and I had read several of them, which gave me some degree of comfort, and made me anxious to hear you.

At last Thurgood took me to London with him to hear you preach; and, blessed be God, I never repented me of my journey. Your text in the morning was in Luke: I well remember the words, and I think I ever shall; "*Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound, lo these eighteen years, be loosed from her infirmity on the sabbath-day?*" In describing the likeness between Abraham and his seed, you quoted this passage, " Abraham went out, not knowing whither he went:" this you applied to every sinner when first setting out, that if he met any one he could not tell which way he was going. This came with such power to me, and being so similar to my case, comforted me, for I set out not knowing one step of the way; but you said, He set out for the land of Canaan, and to the land of Canaan he came:' so, thought I, surely, I have set out to find the Lord, and find him I shall. I went in the strength of this meat many days; and, though my brother died whilst I was in London, yet when I came home the comfort I received was so great that it had no effect upon me. Thus, sir, you was made manifest in my conscience, and had a great place in my affections.

This journey made me as a speckled bird to my former brethren; and, when they spoke against your books, or you, or your followers, it went like a dagger to my heart. However,

they first began to whip me with this text, "*Woe be to him by whom the offence cometh.*" This had some weight on my mind at first, till I considered if I had offended it was for the truth's sake, my conscience bearing me witness in the Spirit that it was the truth I had heard from you. About this time God was pleased to send the gospel to Wellwyn. I attended there the first time to hear our dear pastor, Mr. O. whom God has now given us; he spoke from those words, Ephes. ii. 13-15. This doctrine was what we had not been used to hear. Here I got convinced, that the law was not the believer's rule of life, and of God's knowing that partition which stood between him and my soul. In short, I was determined to hear him again when he came. Thus, sir, I continued at Wellwyn until the minister called at my house to reprove me for not filling up my place at his meeting. I went out trembling, knowing my own weakness, fearing lest I should be left to say a confederacy with him in speaking against you and your books, conscience bearing me witness to the truth; and, not knowing what to say to him, I first asked if he did not think you was a good man: to which he answered, Yes; and then intimated you to be of a bad spirit, which to this day puzzles me much, how they can make a good man without the Spirit of Christ. But I shall leave that to their blindness, as in many other things, for they know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

But, sir, I shall leave this and proceed further. I begged of the minister to have a week to consider of this matter. The next day, being 154e Monday, as I was making faggots, these scriptures came into my mind, but where to find them I knew not: the one was this, "*Whatsoever they say unto you, that observe and do, but do not after their works, for they say and do not;*" the next was this, "*Whether it be right to hearken to you more than unto God, judge ye.*" These were as though some one had repeated them over, and over, and over again; and seemed to work some persuasion in my mind that it was concerning the point in hand. This continued on my mind all

the week, and on the Lord's day I went to C---te, and told the minister I could not consent to the terms he proposed. He endeavoured to prevail with me, but I could not, I durst not, so I ran away like a lusty fellow, as the proverb is; for, in my judgment, it was from the appearance of evil.

Now, sir, all this time my experience lay buried in confusion; when I had any promise come with some degree of power, and caused comfort to spring up, this would come in again, 'Ah, Satan, can comfort;' and then down I went again. Thus, sir, I went mourning many a day sometimes these words came to my mind, out of Dr. Watts, 'Why should the children of a king go mourning all their days?' which would make me wonder what this could mean. I have read your account of Little Faith, and I have thought you must know something of my ease; but how to express my feelings fully to you I cannot. But thus, sir, I went mourning, staggering, and stumbling, up and down, till providence directed into my hand your Barber, the second part; and, as I was reading it, I felt myself as I thought like a prisoner who was in humble hope of hearing some one speak the word that I might come out: thus, Sir, as I was reading your answer to the quotation in page 10, where T. Priestley says, 'The most eminent Christians, who have been indulged with the greatest manifestations of divine love, cannot be satisfied with these;' in your answer to this, in pointing out the feelings of a soul in its first love, you describe the first promise that is applied with power, and say, from the word of God, that it is the saint's first landmark, 'And to walk in love is the more excellent way.' Ah, Sir, this came to me with such power as I am not able to relate; it immediately brought to my mind the former portions of scripture which I had been plundered of, and thereby stripped and wounded and left half dead. Under the joy and peace which sprung up in believing, I burst into tears, and in these words said to my wife, I felt this as I was going over such a field.' And from that time, blessed be God, my eyes were opened; surely, "*Light is sown for the*

righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart;" and thus, Sir, upon this mountain I find the Lord is destroying veil, the face of the covering, that is cast over all people

One morning, as I was sitting by the fire, meditating on the goodness of God, my heart was overwhelmed with a sense of God's love, and I verily thought I saw, as it had been, a piece of paper drawn before my natural eyes, and on it, as I thought, these words, "*Him whom ye have not seen ye love;*" but, not knowing where these words were, nor the meaning of them, I went to my friend Bunker, and he directed me to the passage in the epistle of Peter. Thus I found faith came by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Thus, Sir, have your books and your preaching been blessed to my soul; and, as the Lord has promised that his secret shall be with the righteous, and to them he will chew his covenant, I desire to be found blessing and praising his holy name for every means of his matchless grace in raising up such faithful servants to declare his truth, and for sending such an one as we have got to us at Wellwyn, as we have reason to believe he is after God's own heart, who has and does feed his people with knowledge and understanding, whilst "The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because they cannot find the way to the city" of habitation.

Thus far I have endeavoured to give you a short account of the little experience which has by you and your books, in the hand of God, been brought to light in my soul; I therefore beg you will excuse my ignorance and mean manner of expressing myself. I hear, Sir, that every day discovers fresh troubles to you; but blessed be God, who has promised that as our day is so our strength shall be. May he ever give us faith to exercise on his own word, and in him we shall be able to stand and withstand. You have many enemies, and they are mighty: but may the Lord give you light and liberty, that every tongue that rises up against you and his truth you may

be enabled utterly to condemn. So I shall proceed no further at present, only beg an interest in your petitions when it is well with you; and may the Lord bless you and keep you, and all that love Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth, is the desire and hearty prayer of

Your unworthy Servant,

WM. W_____ N.

Wellwyn.

Living Testimonies

LETTER VI.

The Coalheaver to his dear brother Hedger and Ditcher, sendeth greeting.

BELOVED, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. I read thy epistle with tears of joy, believing in my heart that it is in every sense an original; the style, the diction, the artless strokes, and simple embellishments, made the author manifest in my conscience hat he is taught of God, insomuch that I have thee in my heart both to live and die with thee.

Beautiful upon the mountains of Zion are the feet of those who bring me such tidings. That God hath chosen the weak and the foolish to confound the strong and the wise, is manifest,

both in you and me; and, whilst either of us live, the earth will not be left without a witness to that truth.

Your epistle came in season. I have lately been in much heaviness through manifold temptations; but the Lord, who often comforteth them that are cast down, comforted me by the coming of Titus, 2 Cor. vii. 6. Pay no regard to any reproach cast upon me: I expect evil report and good report; this ever was and ever will be, the lot of God's servants: for the two-edged sword of the Spirit cuts both ways still, and works death in some, but life in you.

O the condescension of the King of kings! who not only humbles himself to behold the things in heaven, but to visit those on earth! Moses found him in a bush; the shepherds found him in a manger; I found him in a tool-house; and you found him in a barn! Thus he puts down the mighty from their seats, and exalts them that are of low degree. "*What house will ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest?*" Solomon had seen servants on horseback, and princes walking as servants on the earth; but I have seen criminals in coaches, and kings and priests threshing in a barn. Go on, my son, the flail will never go round thy head so fast, nor down so hard, as when thou art favoured with the presence of the Lord.

I am a thresher, and a threshing instrument having teeth; I work in the barn as well as you: let us thresh as clean as we can, and separate the chaff from the wheat, and pray the master to use the fan and purge the floor, and, while we are sifting the corn, we had need to watch and pray that we do not fall into Satan's sieve ourselves, as poor Peter did.

They tell you that Satan can condemn, accuse, comfort, &c. That he can condemn and accuse I believe; but he must be a miserable comforter, because his comfort generally springs from revenge, as Esau's did, when the murderer influenced him; "*Thy brother, as touching thee, doth comfort himself,*

purposing to kill thee," Gen. xxvii. 42. But the elect shall all be taught of God, and they shall all know him from the least of them unto the greatest, and great shall be their peace; so that, if any of them are out of the way of public means, yet they cannot be forgotten; or, if they fall into the hands of a blind guide, they cannot be finally deceived nor finally misled: God will either bring them to the means, or call them, as he did me, without means. I have had two persons that heard the joyful sound under me from Denmark, four from Germany, and several from Ireland "*I know my sheep,"* says the Shepherd, "*and am known of mine, and they shall all hear my voice.*" And who teacheth like him? God makes us feel the impressions of his own perfections, and the blessed energy of his own truth. Under the deep impressions of holiness and justice we sink and tremble; under his quickening operations we feel, with the most acute anguish, his anger, his threatenings, and our own guilt and shame; but, under the impressions of his loving-kindness and tender mercies in Christ Jesus, we bow, we bend, we yield, we melt, we resign, we submit, we approve, we wonder, we adore, we weep, we repent, and abhor ourselves in dust and ashes, and love him with all our souls. Here we are less than nothing, and he is all in all; on this mount of transfiguration the covering veil is destroyed; here our interest in him is made plain, and reconciliation takes place: old things pass away, and all things become new; upon this mountain the feast of fat things is prepared, the evidences of our adoption are manifested, and sensible union takes place; jealousies subside, and everlasting light and love discovers the day of espousals, and knits the marriage knot.

Verily there was joy in heaven in the presence of the angels of God while my poor brother hedger was weeping, rejoicing, and making the faggots. 'Ah,' say you, and sure the hand-bill never cut so well, nor went through so sweetly; no, nor had even the withes been seasoned a whole month, and warmed

over the fire, they could not have been more pliable, nor have bent better, than at that time, when I found my soul bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord my God, 1 Sam. xxv. 29.

As thou hast received him, so walk ye in him; beware of remissness in prayer, or in attendance on the means, which leads to backsliding; for backsliding often leads to legal bondage; and, if thou get the old yoke upon thy neck again, every thing will go contrary; the bill won't cut, the eathers they will break, the stakes won't drive, and you will often hit your hands with the beetle instead of the stake, and break great gaps in the axe; the white thorns will run through the cuffs, if not through the buskins, and you will forget the wallet or the bags, and at some places in the bank the spade will have gone in too far, and in other places not far enough; the stuff will not lay, nor stick, but tumble in the ditch again, for two or three yards together; and, when you come to step it out, or to run the pole over it, on the Saturday afternoon, it will not answer to more than three rods per day, and then you will go murmuring home, saying, Sixpence per rod is too little; what is nine shillings per week to keep a wife and family?' You read in scripture of some who Sowed much and brought in little, for God Wowed upon it. Others planted vineyards, but did not drink the wine of them; others olive-yards, but did not anoint themselves. "*Ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah,*" Isai. v. 10. As it is with the farmer, so with the labourer, when they backslide. All this comes upon us for walking contrary, and for which, cause God walks contrary to us.

The Lord's servants are to bring some to the marriage from the highways and hedges; yea, the poor, the halt, the lame, the maimed, and the blind, that the Lord's house may be filled with guests; but who would ever have thought that the coalsack and the leather jacket would have been had in remembrance; and that such as you and I should have been

brought in? not by the instrumentality of the servants, but by the Master himself: Verily this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. The first heavenly visits that God paid to me were chiefly in a garden; and my studies and qualifications for the ministry were finished in the barge and on the wharf. Gideon went from the barnfloor and the flail as well as you; Elisha from the plough, David from the ewes and lambs, and Amos from the herds. Surely God has provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. They saw things at a distance, and predicted what should come to pass; but we see them all accomplished, and Christ evidently set forth crucified among us; and blessed are our eyes, for they see; and our ears, for they hear. They laboured to find redemption out, and travelled to see it accomplished; and we are entered into their labours, and reap the benefit of them, and so gather fruit unto eternal life, and live in comfortable hope of the harvest-home, when the Master shall gird himself; and come forth and serve the reapers; then he that soweth, and they which reap, shall both rejoice together. ' Seeing we have such hopes, such views, and such expectations, the Lord grant unto us that we may run with patience the race set before us, until it shall please God, who sent his angels to fetch Lazarus the beggar from the gate, to condescend to fetch my brother from the faggots, and me from the scourge of the tongue; then those that have lain among the pots, and some that have worked in the woods, shall be as the wings of a dove. Honourable, honoured, and highly-favoured brother in the Lord, adieu. The Coalheaver wisheth all peace; not forgetting his love to all in Wellwyn, of every sect, name, denomination, and party, 'that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

W. H. S. S.

Living Testimonies

LETTER VII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY VERY DEAR AND MUCH VALUED FRIEND,

NOT receiving an answer to my letter has caused me not a little trouble, fearing your mind might be prejudiced against us; but, blessed be God, this morning I have been relieved on receiving yours. My partner in life stood trembling to hear the contents; and, when I came to your kind invitation, her heart burst with gratitude, declaring your good-will towards us the greatest of any earthly comfort she enjoys. May the Almighty preserve your bodily health, and his presence be continually enjoyed by you, that you may, in the Lord's hands, be made a blessing to thousands yet. I have reason to bless the very hour I first knew you; and may a sense of gratitude remain on my soul for the goodness of God to make me acquainted with you, for the many precious opportunities I have been favoured with in hearing you preach, and in conversation with you. At B—s, the first sermon I heard you preach there, the Lord set in with the word, which will never be forgotten to the end of my days, though the enemy tried to baffle me out of my comfort; but it was engraven too deep for him ever to erase. Mr. J. has been with me these two days past, and we have been much blessed in conversation; he is a godly, upright man, and much esteemed by those who have felt the plague of their own hearts, and have been bowed down through a sense of their own unworthiness, and under the hidings of God's face; who have been tempted, tried, afflicted, distressed, and fast bound in affliction, and unable to get out, while the dreadful sentence of God's curse is raging in the conscience. When he

preaches these things, and insists upon it that these must be felt more or less in every sinner's heart, this many cannot bear, as they are strangers to all these troubles; and some of them pretend to be always happy, and always comfortable, and can apply the promises when they please: they have faith, and what is to hinder their being happy! This is the language of too many; and many preachers are telling us that it is the duty of all men to believe. These are what are called gospel ministers and Christian professors; but, if these are right, I am wrong to this day. Our country abounds with such as these: instead of having true, genuine faith, which is the gift of God, and works by love in the hearts of his saints, such presume on the mercies of God, seeing nothing but the letter, but are strangers to the power of the word; and these are the greatest enemies Mr. J. meets with among us. I have no doubt but God will keep him at L. for great and wise ends, for the comfort of the godly, and the confusion of his enemies, which I think is evidenced in two particular professors high in the esteem of the professing world; one of them standing and warning people not to hear J. as he was out of his mind; the other went from house to house forbidding people to go to hear so dangerous a man, as he certainly was-mad. God has struck both these men with actual madness, and they are in a mad-house at this time. Another person withdrew from his ministry, and declared the same; he lately died raving Mad, after a profession of religion for many years. Thus God's hand is known towards his servants, whilst his indignation is poured forth on his enemies. Excuse my long epistle, but I could not forbear. I know your goodness will put up with my weakness, and I beg an interest in your prayers in my behalf; and, in my poor imperfect petitions, I hope ever to bear you on my mind at a throne of grace, that the Almighty may long continue your usefulness. I am greatly obliged to you for your invitation, and hope I shall see you after Christmas. I have many things to communicate to you, which I cannot write at present sent. Perhaps the country air would be found very useful to you,

more so than any medicine: if you think thus, my house, my all that I have, is at your service; and, believe me, there is none in the world I should be so happy to see as yourself. Do me the favour of a line or two when you find time and opportunity. May mercy and peace rest with you and yours, and the Israel of God, prays your unworthy servant in the precious Lord Jesus Christ,

T. S. M.

Living Testimonies

LETTER VIII.

To Mr. T. M.

DEAR SIR,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be multiplied. I have, from the first time I saw Mr. J. at your house, indulged a full persuasion that he is a chosen vessel, and Satan himself seems aware of it too. Persons fitted for the ministry by men meet with little opposition: the world loves its own, and they that are of the world the world will hear; nor is it Satan's interest to raise any persecution against such from whom he receives no injury, nor the sinner any benefit. He that pleases all, profits none. God has now taken poor J. in hand, and I have no doubt but he will make him useful after he hath fitted him for the work. All God's children must be taught of him; much more those

whom he appoints to be as his month to others. And, indeed, a real chosen vessel stands in need of no small share of afflictions, crosses, trials, humbling dispensations, and humbling grace, to keep him steady; especially one in a public character; that he may have ballast, and not be upset, or left to make shipwreck of faith. " Not a novice," saith the Spirit, " lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil." If that text was to be applied with power to every person that is now in the office of the ministry, we might reverse the order of the following text, and say, God gave the word, and few there were to publish it. It requires too much patience to tarry in Jerusalem till endued with power from on high; especially by those who know not themselves, their own insufficiency, the majesty of the Lord, nor the importance of the work.

The hand of God upon those three men is truly awful, and serves to shew us that a long and empty profession, head notions, and a vain confidence, are no armour of defence against the attacks of Satan. J. in my judgment is a poor, broken-hearted sinner; and God has promised to look to, and dwell with, such: and there is no fighting against God's temples and prospering. Here is a Mr. D. who preaches at B. C. the same who went lately to L. to add affliction to his bondage; who, I hear, is still preaching against him. If he proceeds I shall expose his emptiness, for he is nothing but a wooden vessel. Blessed are they who, feeling the terrors of the Lord, fly from the wrath to come, and embrace the Rock for want of a shelter! Such souls are not without a strong hold in times of trouble, and God knows them that put their trust in him.

I am sadly afraid there are too many, not only at L. but all over the nation, who are set down short of the promised rest, and built up, but not on the foundation that God has laid in Zion: nor can it be otherwise expected, when we consider the

workmen who have laboured among them. Who can cast up the highway that never was in it? and how can they labour to purpose who were never partakers of the fruits? I think God has taken his fan in hand at L.; he will thoroughly purge his floor, and separate the chaff from the wheat, and the vile from the precious.

God's judgments attending the enemies of his servants may serve to awe those who are for healing the wound slightly, daubing with untempered mortar, and crying Peace, where the blood of sprinkling has never spoken. God's judgments attended the magicians in Egypt as well as their pupils. The words, mad, and bad spirit, are very commonly on all used in our days, and plentifully poured forth who know the plague of their own heart and the efficacy of the atonement, and who enforce and insist upon regeneration as essential to salvation and a meetness for heaven. Preaching conviction, conversion, faith, repentance, and a knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins, is called disturbing the peace of the churches. Conversion, with many preachers, consists in nothing but a reformation of manners; external conformity, and a decent deportment. A natural assent to what such preachers say is called faith; conscience, hushed to sleep by a few dead works, goes for the peace of God; and to be enamoured and enraptured with the uncertain sound of such a trumpet, passes for pious zeal, lively frames, and the joy of the Lord. A demure or a smiling countenance under the word is called grace in the very face; tickling the fancy, .and moving the passions, goes current for the operations of the Holy Spirit, and for a precious opportunity; while the honest rebukes and secret lashes of conscience are called the buffetings of Satan, the workings of the old man, and the trial of faith: and, when conscience gets brow-beaten, borne down, and silenced, by the false evidences of the preacher, this is called being blessed and set at liberty under the word; and such precious souls are called the seals of the preacher's

ministry, which strengthens his hands, and serves to encourage him to be always abounding in the work of the Lord, as this is called.

This beating the air, this running at uncertainty and labouring in vain, is almost universal in the present day; and it is not likely that these builders should ever want materials, who can use hay, straw, and stubble, seeing it is not the quality but quantity of the materials that is regarded.

When this assembly is collected together, the next step to be taken by such a deceiver is, to enshrine himself in their natural affections by constant and frequent visits; to lace them up, and keep them tight, in the contracted bands of bigotry; to arm them with prejudice against every experimental preacher; to cry down the power of God under the name of enthusiasm; to call all convictions madness, and all evangelical doctrine antinomianism; and this is called watching over the flock, and guarding it from wolves in sheep's clothing. A seared conscience passes for solid peace, presumption for the full assurance of faith, and being without inward fears and outward fightings is walking comfortably. Sensible sinners, labouring under convictions, who are dissatisfied with the preachers they sit under, are called disturbers of the churches; while keeping quiet in carnal security is allowed to be keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Daily does God make manifest such preachers and professors as these; witness the men you mention in yours. I know that every man's work shall be tried with fire; the day shall declare it, for it shall be revealed by fire, which, shall try every man's work, of what sort it is; "For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many." Blessed be God for ever for condescending to teach us what little we know.

My kind respects to your spouse, and to Mr. J. when you see him. Grace and peace be with you, Amen; while I remain,

Yours, in Christ Jesus,

W. H.

Living Testimonies

LETTER IX.

To the Rev. MR. HUNTINGTON.

MY DEAR SIR,

I MUCH doubt whether my writing to you will answer any good purpose. Your time is precious, and to attend to the prating of a fool that is now fallen, will be only wasting it. My mind is at seasons almost distracted, seeking rest and finding none.. If the house is apparently, swept and garnished, yet a secret lust may be concealed in some closet, which at last, will make its appearance when the eye of justice begins to stare conscience in the face. Then the secreted devils will come out of their holes, and appear in the light of God's countenance as so many terrible sins, ready to tear the poor distracted soul into a thousand pieces. Then the hypocrite in Zion is roused, and begins to cry, " Who shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" This I am much afraid is my case. The Lord hath detected me. But, oh! is it not too late?. Wherefore was I left so long, and to run such lengths, if I belonged to him? And

how is it that I am not now delivered when brought to a sense of my misery, if he means my salvation? But how dare I ask such impious questions? He might have sent me to hell long ago. Yet many such are in my heart, and I think often on my tongue; and, if the Lord' does not keep my mouth as it were with a bridle, far worse will come forth one day or other.

Never before did God suffer such an abominable wretch to live on his earth; especially when I consider what a place I presumed to occupy in his house! I had once some small measure of natural and acquired abilities, and from these my passions were often moved and elevated, which I fondly called the love of God. I had an insight of the scheme of salvation according to the letter of scripture, which I thought to be faith. I preached the doctrines of grace very high, and this I called the work of an evangelist. But now all seems to be taken from me, and given to them that have, Matt. xxv. 28. I have neither abilities, judgment, recollection, nor memory, left me. My outward frame is amazingly shattered, and I am persuaded, if the Lord does not soon appear, that I shall lose my rationality. I have some remembrance of what you said in one of your sermons, that, 'When the soul is put into the fire, he will find that neither his strength, wisdom, or knowledge, will avail him; all will be burnt up.' Those two sermons much supported me for a short season, as I thought my experience was exhibited in them more minutely than I in my present state can possibly describe it; but it soon went off. I am often much supported when I conceive that I have found my path and experience in Job, David, or Jeremiah; but soon I begin to consider there is some similarity between a hypocrite roused and a saint in distress.

If for a day or two I have the comfort of hope, I soon find myself again in a quiet, indifferent, state of mind, neither delivered nor distressed. Then I begin to seek for my burden, knowing that it was not rightly lost; for I had rather live and die

under it, intolerable as it is, than lose it without knowing what has taken it away: but when it comes again I am ready to cry, let me be rid of it on any account, let me have my life comfortable here if I must go to hell at last.

One morning, as I first awoke, the passage in the 18th psalm, verse 16, came to my mind, "*He sent from above,*" &c.; but it was soon wrenched out of my hands; and, as it brought neither power nor comfort with it, I concluded it was not sent of God, though I found it very suitable: yet it was not verified, for I am not drawn out. When I think of praying, the suggestion comes that God will not hear nor deliver me, though he can; and then bitter curses rise up. The devil spews him as a tyrant who will neither give me liberty, nor suffer me to run from his service: and my distraction has often brought me to conclude and say, that it is the last time I shall ever enter a pulpit. Sometimes I think of riding away as far as my horse can carry me, and there to wander in some unknown country till I die! At these times I am sure to find liberty to preach. I have noticed this often of late; but soon after this I sink lower than ever, and the next time I shall be stammering till I see the people are tired and disgusted. I could wish for, some lawful way of getting a livelihood without preaching at all.

I cannot meet with a man, among all the professors, that knows this perilous path, which has made me to conclude often that I am lost. Many of my friends, and those too who seem to be clear in the gospel, turn their backs upon me: this distresses me sorely. If Providence had not brought your writings to my hands, I believe I should have run distracted ere now. I bless the Lord for them. Indeed he has taught you to minister a word in due season to the tried soul. Every book that I have yet read has either wounded or supported me. Perceiving your readiness to assist the distressed, encourages me to write. If the Lord should lay my case on

your heart, and give you a word to communicate, I trust I shall be thankful to him, and ever remain,

Your very sincere and affectionate friend,

J. JENKINS.

Living Testimonies

LETTER X.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, MY DEAR BROTHER,

FOR such I shall call you without any grant from Satan, or any conference with your unbelief. I read your letter with many tears, and found liberty and access in prayer for divine assistance in answering it. I see nothing in it but what is to be found in the saints' path of tribulation, nor one footstep that has not been trodden by the Coalheaver: and no less than the outstretched arm of the living God to this day upholds thee, or thou hadst long since dwelt in silence. "*When they fall, they shall be holpen with a little help;*" "*As their day is, so shall their strength be.*" " It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed; they are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."

Ministers of Christ, if ever they are worthy of that name, must, sooner or later, be instructed with a strong hand, that they may not say, A confederacy, to every one that says, A confederacy; nor fear their fear, nor be afraid. A servant of

Christ, who is furnished with weapons to demolish Satan's strong holds, must know, by his own experience, where his haunts and refuges are: after this seasonable and necessary instruction thou wilt know how to lay open the desperate deceit of the heart, by remembering the wormwood and the gall; thou wilt then be able to shew the sinner what it is to be shut up in unbelief, and the necessity of the blood of the covenant to procure the prisoner's deliverance from the pit wherein is no water; and thou wilt handle the law lawfully. It is the law that has got a fast hold of thee now; by the law is the knowledge of sin; by the law the offence abounds, and sin becomes exceeding sinful; the law genders to bondage, and worketh wrath; sin takes an advantage by it, and works all manner of concupiscence. The law ministers wrath, terror, death, and condemnation; it is a first husband, and a cruel one; it is intended to kill, not to cure; and, when it has done its office, Christ will marry the condemned soul, and raise up the name of the dead upon the inheritance; and then thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt remember the reproach of thy widow-hood no more.

Thy present distress will end in an effectual divorce from Moses and his law, and the wedding will follow: it is cutting thee out of the wild olive tree in order to ingraft thee into Christ; it is shaking thee from the sandy foundation of flesh and blood, that thou mayest build on the rock; it is the pains of legal labour that bring to a spiritual birth; it is the spirit of bondage to fear, which foregoes the spirit of love; it is thy arraignment at the bar of God, which will end in justification; it is fire and water, which lead to a wealthy place; it is the regions of the shadow of death, where God promises the light shall shine; it is turning man to destruction, from whence he calls the children of men; it is the gates of the dead, from whence he begets his issues from death; it is the furnace of affliction, in which God has chosen us; it is the cup of trembling, which foregoes the cup of salvation; it is the

meditation of terror, which precedes a sight of the King in his beauty; it is the dark mountains upon which we stumble, and the horrible pit in which we sink; it is the snares of death, and the pains of hell, the former of which shall be broken, and the latter shall he cured.

O J. my mouth is open unto you, my heart is enlarged! I shall shortly have a fellow-labourer after my own heart. You now feel, and will shortly see, the usefulness of that doctrine which is intended to bring the believer under the law, as his only rule of life. You find now that the law affords you no help, nor will it ever afford you any after you are delivered; and whenever happy deliverance comes, you will find it your will be done without any assistance from the law. Lie passive in the hand of God; call upon his holy name; confess the worst of your faults, and bewail your sins of unbelief, and of despairing of the mercy of God in Christ, which are the greatest sins of all: and be sure of this, that every encouraging text is a forerunner of future power; every ray of light, the phosphorus of future day; every gleam of hope, an earnest of future comfort; every respite, a sign of future victory; and every moment of enlargement, a cordial, or an earnest drop of the new wine of the kingdom, which will make you forget your poverty and remember your misery no more.

By no means run from the work; stand your ground; give no place to the devil. Preach the dreadful fall of man; preach the depravity of human nature; preach the deceitfulness of the human heart, the necessity of a knowledge of sin, and a feeling sense of it; preach the holiness of God, the bondage that the law brings, and the need of deliverance from it; preach the necessity of Christ's blood, and describe the desperate case of such souls as Christ calls to, saves, and heals. This will be preaching out of the abundance of thine own heart: for it appears to me that this is God's intention in keeping thee where thou art. He that feels the terrors of the

Lord should persuade men: and, as you are under an alarm, sound as you are under the rod, preach up the rod; as you are under temptation, shew the infernal captivity that sinners are in; and, as you now feel that free-will, human power, human wisdom, self-righteousness, and even spiritual gifts, are of no use, preach them all down as useless to the afflicted soul; by which means you may bring many into the same bondage that you are in; and, when God delivers you, you will preach deliverance to them; and many will, under the operations of the Spirit, follow you into the joy of the Lord, and into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Pay no regard to the contempt of professors; they must come your way, and drink in some measure of your cup, if ever they are saved. Such a ministry as they had at L. is only calculated to make professors. Real saints, and real preachers, are rare things. I have got some hundreds in my charge who have travelled through the same path you are now in, and such souls will ever follow the tried preachers of Christ. Remember that every gleam of hope is what accompanies salvation, for, "We are saved by hope;" therefore patiently wait, and quietly hope, for the salvation of God. There is a set time to favour Zion: and surely they shall not be ashamed that wait for God. The Lord brings clown, and lifts up; he wounds, and his hands make whole. Blessed is the man whom God correcteth, and teacheth him out of his law, that he may give him rest from the days of adversity. The Lord be with thee! and strengthen thee my prayer shall be, in thy calamity; and believe me to be, with all possible respect,

Dear brother, yours to command,

W.H.

Living Testimonies

LETTER XI.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

I NEED not tell my very good friend how thankful I feel for the attention he pays me. If I belong to the Lord you will be rewarded, and, if not, your labour of love will not be lost. I know not whether I may call any a father; but, if I am a child, even in the place of the breaking forth of children, Hos. xiii. 13, you have been the instrument, under God, to raise my soul to her present hope; and I am sure, if there is a man in England that can be of any future use to me, it must be you: for one among a thousand I have not found that could come within miles of my case; and I cannot help thinking but that this was shewn me in a dream, some time ago, what I have since seen come to pass. When I stood on a stage ready to be executed, and numbers cried out, Hang him, hang him, hang him,' one man in the multitude called to me, saying, Submit to the king, and you shall be delivered.' I turned round and saw the king in a gallery over against the stage, and, making a low bow to him, said that owned him for my sovereign;' upon which I escaped. But this blessed sight I have not yet beheld.

None but yourself ever told me that it was the king that had arraigned, tried, cast, and condemned me; and that I was to submit to him, putting my mouth in the dust, and waiting in hope. Many told me to believe, and that I was under a temptation of the devil; and I strove long to get rid of it, and arrive at my old comforts. If you had been with me for weeks that are past, you could not have described my case and feelings more exactly than you have done. I am at a point,

I believe, as to truth, but not as to my interest in it yet; and, let T. Priestley say what he may about his evidences, I can never see myself a christian in his glass. I know there is a vast difference between what I am now, and what I was, and between me and the world. I will, wish, desire, and crave; but what of that? I am sure, " It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth;" and, if I am not made what I am not at present, I am lost for ever.

I believe in my heart that you are a prophet of God; but am much afraid whether your hope respecting me will ever come to pass. I stand in doubt of myself, that after I have preached to others I myself may be a cast-away. Heavy anxieties, and doubtful disputations, still abide on my mind, whether the marriage will ever take place. To miss this, I think, would be worse than a thousand hells: and, though I do not feel so much of the terrors of the Lord, and the pains of hell, as I have in time past, yet I know, if sovereign love does not reach and deliver me, that there I must go. I am buffeted by Satan, and plagued with the corruptions of my heart. I sometimes think that I am full of devils, and that I shall never be dispossessed of them; and yet, through all this confusion, I am somehow wonderfully supported to preach; and, though I do not find the same liberty always given me, yet I have not been left once so as to expose myself, or the cause I endeavour to maintain. I believe the Lord bears strong witness to what I say in the consciences of all that hear me, and the confession almost every where is, that, if I preach the truth, and they cannot deny nor disprove it, they have known nothing yet of religion. I believe many have hard work with conscience; and I know that some have been necessitated to have recourse to the glass before they come to chapel; others declare they must come no longer, for all their hopes and comforts are taken away. Yet they come, and several attend from many parts of the country. Doors are opened in the neighbourhood, and there is something in me that Wants to be at them continually:

and, though I know not generally what to say before I begin, yet I have no rest. Sometimes I am afraid it is pride and self-will that carry me, and I come home mourning. Indeed I have often tried to be at charges with them. Natural compassion works, and I have wished to speak comfortably to them, and build them up a little: but I have felt such power then on my spirit, and such a contest in my mind, that I did not know what it was till you hinted it; and, as soon as I begin to open my mouth, I am carried away, and forget every thing but tearing clown their false hope and comforts; and I have seen some of their countenances turn so black, that the devil often suggests that I shall drive them to suicide.

I am bespattered worse than any pickpocket. Some say that I am mad; others that I am presumptuous; some that I preach myself; and others that I shall never hold out, but shall soon come round again; and this is what I fear most of all. Some preachers scruple not to call it a damnable doctrine. I believe some of their fabrics totter, for they rage cruelly. There are many, I believe, shaken in their conscience; but I can find but few yet, who, as far as I can judge, are near the Rock. There are some, I believe, where I am myself; and I cannot bring them forward till I am brought out. All I endeavour to do is to keep the wound open. Brighton chapel is shut against me, and many of my friends turned my enemies; but I care for none of these things. Farewell, my dear Sir. I intend to come to town as soon as the days get a little longer, and the weather finer. I shall go through Kent, and leave Mr. S. at L. Heaven bless you, while I remain,

Ever yours,

J. JENKINS.

Living Testimonies

LETTER XII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

DEARLY BE LOVED,

"ELECT, according to the foreknowledge of God," sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called: mercy and peace be with thee. As I am made manifest in your conscience, I can assure you that you are in my heart to live and die with you. The good work goes on within thee, and the work of an evangelist is going on without. Christ Jesus speaks by thee; he is in his chariot as the most mighty; and with his glory and majesty he rides prosperously. His sword is now on his thigh, and his arrows are sharp in the hearts of his enemies; many shall fall under him, and submit to him; and then truth, meekness, and righteousness, shall be administered, and the right hand of the Covenant Head shall teach the mystical body terrible things. "*This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against.*" He is set on the holy hill of Zion. Some shall fall under him, and rise again; some shall stumble at him, and fall to rise no more, and they are such as speak against him: "For if they do these things in a green tree [of life], what shall be done in the dry?" in the vessels of wood, corrupt trees, wild olive branches, and withered boughs, gathered from their profession into the world's company? What shall be done in the dry? Why, "Tophet is ordained of old; for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large; the [funeral] pile thereof is fire and much wood." Pay no regard to these; fear not their fear, nor be afraid. God has set thee to root out, to pull down, to destroy, to throw down, to build, and to plant, Jer. i. 10.

There is a majesty in grace, whether in the bud or in the bloom. It buds in a contracted spirit, but blossoms in an enlarged heart. "*Israel shall bud and blossom as the rose, and fill the face of the world with fruit.*" Thou art a stranger to that power and majesty which others at this time see in thee, and feel under thee. Wonderful execution is done, and that thou shalt know hereafter; therefore cast the bread of eternal life on the waters of confused multitudes, and thou shalt find it, in their confessions, after many days.

Give a portion to seven, and also to eight," the latter of which are not included in the number of perfection, and thus deliver thy soul as a faithful watchman, " for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth." If the cloud of witnesses be full of the water of life, they empty themselves with such drops of rain and dew as they have got; and, if the tree falls towards the south wind of the gospel or towards the north wind of the law, where the tree falls there it shall lie. He that observes every wind of doctrine shall not sow good seed; and he that regardeth every cloud without rain, and every well -without water, shall not reap, so as to gather fruit unto eternal life.

Go on, thou mighty man of valour: mighty in thy Saviour's might; and thou shalt deliver Israel. Plow up the fallow ground; discover the black, the dry, the stony, the thorny, and the barren soil. Lay the axe to the root; besiege, storm, demolish, and batter, the strong holds of Satan. Rip up, expose, and bring to light and to nought, every refuge of lies. Undermine their sandy foundations; and all the carnal ties and bonds of fellowship, union, or communion, that are not wrought by the Spirit, shall snap before thee, like Samson's bands and withes, when thou givest a shout as through wine: and depend upon this, that no man shall ever make thee glad, but the same that is made sorry by thee.

I wonder not that thou shouldest think thyself filled with devils. Satan has lost his fort-royal; his kingdom of darkness is discovered; the nail is rent; and the god of this world cannot blind thine eyes any longer. " Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." Satan is attacked at the walls of Zion, and the sinners in Zion are afraid: fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites; no wonder, therefore, that the father of such falls like lightning. This is enough to make him smite thy house at all its four corners, and thy carcass with boils. But stronger is he that is in thee, than he that is in the world. Christ speaks by thee; and thou hast no more to do with the work now than I have. His word in thy hearers is not weak, but mighty. Thou art no more giving an uncertain nor a lifeless sound, Thou now standest in the truth, and canst do nothing against it, but for it. Thou art, and ever wilt be, consistent with thyself in doctrine, and in harmony and agreement with the oracles of God. Thou wilt detect thy hearers in all their guile, speak home to all their hearts, and be manifested in all their consciences; and beyond them, and before them, both in verity and power. Make no crutches, manufacture no 'kerchiefs, sew no pillows, heal no wounds slightly, prophesy no smooth things, sing no lovely songs, nor play pleasantly on any instrument but that which God has strung, Hab. *"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it out:"* yea, *"Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from hell;"* therefore spare not his soul for his crying. These proverbs speak unto us as to children, prefaced with the endearing appellation of *My son,* &c. *"Fret not thyself because of evil men."* *"Despise not the day of small things."* A barley cake shall overthrow the tents of Midian and Kedar too; and, if thou breakest three hundred pitchers, all the lamps shall remain untouched, and they shall by thee receive damage in nothing.

Thy unbelief doth not at all stagger my faith in thy future deliverance. If thou believest me to be a prophet, then,

"*Believe in the Lord your God,*" says the king of Judah, "*so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper,*" 2 Chron. xx. 20; for God will confirm the word of his servants, and perform the counsel of his messengers. Thou art filled with anxieties, to make thee earnest and zealous; and with doubtful disputations, to preach to perishing sinners, and that thou mayest appear to doubt of all their states. If buffeted by Satan, it is that thou mayest not be ignorant of his devices; and, if plagued with corruptions, it is to keep thee from crawling into the flesh. By all these means, and in all these things, thou art instructed; and thou wilt find that all the deep and lasting impressions God makes on thy soul will be little enough to keep pride down in thy future prosperity, and to enable thee to curb the various members of the old man.

As for thy old friends turning their backs, it is to let thee know that thou must stand alone; and, when thy future union to Christ takes place, they will sink into the dust of a balance, or the drop of a bucket. Pay no regard to being shut out of any pulpit. Thy work is all laid out by line, and no man shall perform what God has decreed for thee to do. No man can love thy ministry or cleave to it, without the will of God. It is he who reproves them that shall find favour in their eyes. Thou shalt fly thy kite, and they must hold the string. God's election reaches men's mouths and things. "*God made choice of my mouth,*" says Peter. "*Send men to Joppa,*" says God, "*and call for Simon whose surname is Peter; lodged with one Simon [by name,] a tanner [by trade;] his house is by the sea-side.*" Let them rage; they shall never do Jenkins's work. God is fitting thee for great service; and will set thee as a tower and a fortress, to try their ways, to separate the vile from the precious, the chaff from the wheat, the wine from the water, the goats from the sheep, and the dross from the silver, that there may be a vessel for the finer, Adieu.

Thy brother in Christ, and companion in travail,

W. H.

Living Testimonies

LETTER XIII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOUR last favour has been duly received; and it both refreshed and strengthened my heart, and encouraged me for some time to hope and quietly wait. I thought I could bless your feet as they arrived: but my patience is now almost gone. I have but little strength, and I am much afraid I shall one day fall and perish. What you have predicted of me is very unlikely ever to come to pass. To be saved, yet so as by fire, would be such a distinguishing mercy to me, that my soul would never cease to praise the Lord for it. But, as for shining in the ministry, (though I wish to covet that best gift of love) is, I think, very improbable; for, of all the unconverted preachers that now stand in a state of profession, and there are oceans of them, not one half are so vile as I am in my own eyes, nor do I believe that there has been one so abominably deluded by the devil: and, when I consider my abilities, I can see no prospect, for I never was a man of understanding, nor do I know that any of my family or relations ever excelled in any thing save wickedness.

I have been dreadfully harassed for a week back, both by men and devils. I am led into some strange latitude or other. The light and the liberty I had to speak begin to go off; and I am straitened and sadly cast down in my mind. It is clear to me that I must go yet deeper than ever I have been, before my soul is brought into liberty. But, if I am left in darkness and confusion in the pulpit, what will become of me? I shall be condemned from my own mouth; and my enemies will rejoice and exult, for they have predicted that I should not hold out long, and have even confessed they wished to see it, and hoped that I was in a delusion; for, if I was right, they knew themselves were wrong, and would perish for ever. And now, if I am shut up again and confused in my mind, so as not to be able to clear the truth, for I have neither judgment, memory, nor scripture, at my command in these days, what will they say? and what will become of those who have appeared to be under some convictions? Will they not be hardened through my shackles? I am afraid I must run away and leave them all. I think verily that all things together will drive me out of my senses.

Preachers oppose me, condemn me, and reprobate me, as a man that is bewitched. Mr. Gilbert, of Heathfield, has told me to my face that I am a false prophet. I was lately called to preach among some of his people: he met me, and opposed me before thirty or forty of them as soon as I had finished my discourse. However, I never gave him an inch of ground, nor did I give place to what he said, no not for a moment; for I was sure that what I had said was truth. But how long must I, without strength, encounter with such wild bulls of Bashan? and, would you believe it? old master B. has been here, and has been over several times to strengthen the hands that hang down, and to oppose me. This has discouraged me more than any thing, as I always had a favourable opinion of him; but, as sure as I am alive, he is no further than the letter.

However he has not been in deep waters; he does not know, nor can he describe, a gospel hypocrite. He has tried to argue the point with me; but all that he could say was, that I distressed Little Faith. I told him he could not bring one of that family, but what would declare for my preaching, even though they might be distressed by it. He told me I did not preach like you; and I answered, 'That I believed, if you was where I am, you would preach like me; and that if I was where you are, that is in your state, I should preach something like you.' I paid a respect to his grey hairs, and considered myself only a stripling. But, on reading the 'Innocent Game' that afternoon, I thought I ought not to have spared him on account of his locks. They prate against me with malicious words; and, in my rebellion, I have told the Almighty that I will speak no more in his name, if he does not set my soul at liberty. I hope he will forgive me, and consider that I am but dust. May heaven bless you, is the sincere and earnest prayer of,

Your most affectionate friend,

J. JENKINS

Living Testimonies

LETTER XIV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS,

GRACE and peace be multiplied through the knowledge of him that is, and was, and is to conic, the Almighty. I received your kind letter, and am always glad to hear how you go on. I pay no regard to your infidelity. A man in a storm will say any thing. Zion, when tossed with the tempest and not comforted, said, " The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me;" which is a flat contradiction; for, if God had either forsaken or left her, he could not be her God. Those two words were spoken in faith, but all the rest in the language of unbelief.

God hath chosen his saints in the furnace of affliction; where the fire discovers the base metal, and makes it rise on the surface. Human wisdom, strength, and power; external reformation, moral conduct, and decent behaviour; speculative knowledge, blind zeal, false fire, and all the flashes of natural joy, received by the way-side; all natural affections to the word, or to preachers or professors of it; together with all natural and acquired abilities, and all the light that lies in the head; are sure to be burnt up in God's furnace, being nothing but a fire of man's kindling. And in his own fire he walks, compassing himself about with his own sparks; taken, like that of Korah, from his own hearth; instead of taking it from the altar of burnt-offering, which was kindled from heaven, and was never to go out. I mean such as the seraphic preacher took, with the tongs of f9d faith, from off the altar Christ, when he flew with it to Isaiah and laid it on his lips, which was to purge him by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. The live coal was the word of life in the flaming power of the Spirit, which makes a minister a flaming fire.

Your false fire is nearly out, and the true light now shines in you; and God the Spirit searches the innermost parts of the belly; yea, he searches the heart, and tries the reins, and makes a man know what are his thoughts. "Whatsoever

maketh manifest is light," and, " God is light." This is not false fire, nor a false ray; but the true light now shines in you. All the spoils that were taken by Israel under the law were to be purged or cleansed. That which would stand the fire was to go through the fire, and that which would not was to go through the water. When Christ casts out the strong man armed, he divides his spoils; and all the spoils that ministers, who are true Israelites, take in the battles of the Lord, d, get must go through fire and water before the darts, et into a wealthy place. Deep waters, and fiery s, and desponding frames under the fiery try all that are or ever shall be saved."Who is he that maketh me glad, but the same that is made sorry by me?"

As to your having never been a man of understanding, &c. that signifies nothing. God has chosen the foolish, and those that are lightly esteemed, to bring to nought the wise and prudent. If your mouth should be stopped, it is no more than Ezekiel experienced, who sat dumb before all the elders of Israel: God said he should be no longer a reprover to them. Paul's mouth was open, and his heart enlarged, to the Corinthians; though he prays for a door of utterance at Rome. It is not with a minister of the Spirit, as you now are, as it is with a preacher of the letter, such as you once was; the one is a fountain sealed, the other an instrument without life giving sound. Unless the angel trouble the waters; unless the Lord unseal the fountain; unless the Spirit blow on the garden; no refreshings spring up, nor spices flow out. My dear brother knows not what manner of spirit he is of; nor does he know the treasures he already has in possession. I can see where he is, and what he has, clearly; and I know that the Spirit of God is in him: but he will find it as hard work to unriddle himself as to explain the whole Bible. The Bible is a sealed book, and his heart is a sealed fountain: and these two will work together; when the one springs, the other will open. The first furnishes the soul with power, the latter the mouth with arguments.

As to running away from the work, it is only talk. Thou hast no power either to run away or to stay. It is not Mr. Jenkins now, but the Lord. Thou canst neither hinder nor forward the work. Thou hast no more to do with it than I have. We are only the clay; God is the potter. Mr. Gilbert runs at an uncertainty. His trumpet, it is to be feared, gives an uncertain sound: nor is he at a point in any thing. Give no place to him. Thy ministry will be like mine; wholly levelled against preachers and professors of the gospel. B. I know, and have heard how he came into the fold. As he was sound in the letter, and seemed revived by my writings, and to enforce them, by which he incurred the displeasure of many, I had a good hope of him: but he has acknowledged his fault, and is gone back; so that the offence of the cross has ceased. They must go back that are in the letter, and this makes manifest. A double face is a bad sign, which none can carry if the Spirit be in them. I long to see thee. God bless thee. Excuse haste.

Ever thine,

W. H.

Living Testimonies

LETTER XV.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON. MY DEAR FRIEND

YOUR engagements probably have prevented you from sending me a few lines in answer to my last, which I wrote some weeks back. However, when the Lord gives you a word for me, I know you will send it. What you have from time to time communicated has been the greatest support, I trust, under the blessing of God, that I ever met with yet. How true the saying of the wise man, "Better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off." I had many brethren in a human religion, but they all stood afar off; they stood aloof from my sore; and further and further they seem to go. God has weaned me from that milk, and drawn me from their breasts; and they are now mocking and insulting. But the worst of all is, the Lord is far from the words of my groaning.

I often think of the state of Saul when the Lord would not answer him either by dreams, by Urim, or by prophets. There is not a good word either in my heart or in my mouth; and for some days I am in a state of cold indifferency; dead to every thing; no satisfaction nor pleasure in any thing under the sun, nor from him that causeth it to shine: and, when the state of my soul returns with some degree of weight on my mind, then I fret and am filled with impatience. When I can find no access to God, no liberty in prayer, no word going out from my heart, heaven as iron above, and the earth as brass, then rebellion and blasphemous thoughts work up in my heart, and scarce can I keep the door of my mouth. What will the end of all this be? If I am quickened, what can be the cause that the Almighty leaves me so long in such a lingering condition? But this is only presumptuous reasoning; "*He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth:*" and it is this that makes my wicked heart often to heave against him.

I am much afraid at times, though you think you have seen something of the good work begun in me, that it is not begun yet. When my mind is led back to a view of the iniquities of my

youth, I see something of a very heinous nature in my sin; especially the sin of presumption in all my profession. I fear these marks are like those of a deceitful and reprobate mind. I know I was often warned by conscience, and yet I persisted. That I had sinned against the Holy Ghost used to terrify me almost out of my senses when I was first alarmed: but I can see now that I never committed that sin: I never rebelled against his light and power, for I never knew them. But fear some are in danger now from that awful ground. I know light and power have gone with the truth that I have been enabled of late to deliver, whatever becomes of me; and I am afraid some rebel against it with full purpose of heart.

To bear the reproaches and scourges of these tongues is not an easy work to flesh and blood: it grieves my very heart, and makes me often wish that I had never spoken a word. The tabernacles of Eclom and the Ishmaelites, of Moab and the Hagarenes, they all help the children of Lot. Letters are sent from ministers in London to Lewes, to caution the people from receiving my errors, and to endeavour to prejudice their minds against me. Will not the Lord do unto these as unto the Midianites, as to Sisera and Jabin? What have I done? O that I was sure of my interest in the truths that I see, and in some measure am enabled to speak! then I would not care for any of them: but that I myself, after all, may be a cast-away, discourages me.

The Bible is often as if it had been locked up, and not one ray of light opening in it; and my heart fretting against God, and the temptation following me to the pulpit, that I shall not have a word to speak, and that I have neither lot nor portion in the matter. And yet, in general, when I open my mouth, I have such boldness to speak, and am constrained by such power, that I am astonished at myself; and, when I have come down, I have been ashamed, and wished I had not spoken as I did. I know not what will become of me. The Lord bless your soul,

and prosper your labours. I hope, with the Lord's leave, soon to see you. Let me know if you have any intended journey in the country, that I may not miss you. I believe you do not forget me; and my sincere but poor wishes are for your prosperity; while I remain,

Ever sincerely yours,

J. JENKINS.

Living Testimonies

LETTER XVI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

My dearly beloved brother in Christ; my true yoke-fellow and companion in travail, and in the kingdom and patience of Christ: grace and peace be multiplied.

EVERY letter of thine confirms me more and more of the good work begun in thee. Thou art full of power, by the Spirit of God, to slew to Jacob his transgressions, and to Israel his sins. Thou art now a servant of Christ, and wilt never more be able to preach to please men. The offence of the cross has not ceased with thee now, but is revived. God Almighty bless thee, my dear brother. Go on, thou mighty man of valour, like a champion for God: stand like a brazen wall and an iron pillar. Thy face is like an adamant against the forehead of every daring rebel. God hath set thee to pluck up, to root up,

and to throw down; yea, and to build and to plant. It is not thou that speakest, but the Spirit of thy Father that speaketh in thee; which, in the sinner's conscience, is not weak, but mighty. The word of God will mightily grow and prevail. His counsel shall stand; his pleasure shall be done: God will work, and none shall let it. Thou hast no more power over thine own heart or tongue now, in the pulpit, than I have over mine. Thou art now as God's mouth; his ambassador to personate him; and he is with thee as a mighty terrible one. In him thou art a tower and a fortress; set to know the people, and to try their ways. Thy pulpit is God's tribunal, and by thee God comes near to the sinner to judgment. Thou art made manifest in the sinner's conscience; and, like a watchman on his duty, findest, the sinner, takest the thief up, discoverest the disloyal and rebellious, and makest the sinners in Zion afraid; while fearfulness surprises the hypocrite. "*Surely the wicked shall not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;*" nor shall the people of Lewes have either dew or rain but according to thy word. They that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles have no rain; the cloud of witnesses distils no dew upon them; which is to be the plague of all that come not up to the feast of tabernacles: the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Be patient, my dear brother, and humble thyself under the mighty hand of God, and he shall exalt thee in due time. Thy faith has got a fast hold of the justice of God, of his truth, of his holiness, of his immutability, and of his terrible majesty; only lovingkindness and tender mercy are yet lacking in thy faith. Thou believest the law, the threatenings of the law, the dreadful fall of man, and all that the scriptures say of human depravity; and, ere long, faith will bring home, and bring in, the promise and the promised blessings. Thou art not yet come to that sacred spot where deliverance shall surely be wrought out. 'When their strength is all gone, I will appear; when they have nothing to pay with, they shall be forgiven; when they

are last in their own eyes, they shall be first; when ready to perish, they shall come to the feast: when their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them.' To them that have no might he will increase strength; when there' is but a step between the sinner and death, life is at hand; when fast bound in affliction and iron, liberty cometh; when the snares of death and pains of hell encompass the soul, then God appears gracious and merciful. It is a cry from the belly of hell that enters the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Self-despair is the spot where deep calleth unto deep. The mercy-seat and self-despairing sinner are never far from each other. All that thou hast experienced, or mayest yet go through, will be found little enough to counterbalance thy future prosperity; and this thou wilt find when thou comest to return in the power of the Spirit, and the fame of Jenkins is spread abroad. The deep incisions made by the sword of the Spirit, and the various breaches made in thy broken heart, will only serve as so many outlets, hereafter to carry off the corruption that will appear under the swellings of pride and self-seeking, with which Satan will often ensnare thee. In future days thou wilt understand me perfectly. God is instructing thee with a strong hand, that thou mayest not say a confederacy to every one that is called a minister. He himself will arm and equip thee with grace in thy heart, and truth in thy mouth; and perishing sinners will find thee out without being decoyed by a popish robe, or a long band, and without being charmed or allured by a set of bagpipes or a box of whistles. Thou wilt as soon dare to become a popish priest as to set these snares within sight of the birds of paradise. It is needful that a minister of Jesus be well acquainted with the plague of the human heart, the severity of God, the spirituality of the law, the wiles of Satan, and the deceitfulness of sin; with the workings of unbelief; legal bondage, and the fears and torments that attend an awakened sinner. These things, when felt, make the sinner feel his need of Jesus; and a minister who has been in these fires can delineate the troubled soul, come home to his

conscience, be acquainted with all his feelings, and will ever appear before the awakened mind as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Pay no regard to the letters that are sent you by ministers from London. The work is not yours, but God's; and what he has appointed for you to do, that you shall do, and no other shall. Your line is already chalked out, and your warfare is before you; and blessed be he that enlargeth Gad, and WO to him that straiteneth him.

Stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved; be valiant for truth; declare the whole counsel of God; and fear the face of no man. Adieu.

Ever thine,

W. H.

Living Testimonies

LETTER XVII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON:

DEARLY BELOVED AND EVER HONOURED FATHER IN THE LORD;

FOR so, I believe, I must call you henceforth; as I trust the Lord, by your instrumentality, has begotten me to a lively hope; and, though it amounts not to an assurance, yet it

wonderfully supports my soul in her conflicts with unbelief and the powers of darkness. Having discovered, under your ministry, that the blessed Spirit has begun the work of faith in my heart, gives rise to a strong confidence, at times, that he will go on with it to the day of Jesus Christ. But still I feel such bondage and darkness that exceedingly tries me; and, when I have had a hard and dark season, I am ready to give all up; that I will neither preach nor wait any longer: and yet I cannot but hope somehow, and at seasons feel comfort and joy rising up in my soul for what the Lord has done for me, and for what I have in expectation. But, after all, I remain in bondage, and bowed clown under fear and doubts; the Bible shut up, and so blind and ignorant that I can see nothing; and never, I think, did I see and feel so much of it.

I am led, somehow, from preaching so much of the law and the terrors of it as I used to do, that I can speak of nothing but about faith and hope; and am at a loss too to get at these from the scriptures, so as clearly to describe them. My heart and the Bible are still mysteries to me, and I know not when I shall be able to understand them. But, after all, it astonishes me, more than any thing, that the ever-blessed Lord has condescended to look to, and work upon, such a filthy brute; that he brought me from such an awful state of sin and darkness; kept me from going down to the pit, when I was so much like those that go there: that he hath delivered me from the dreadful terrors of a guilty conscience, and an accusing law, and awful blasphemies against his holy name, by bringing me to hope in his word; which I trust, he will fulfil in his good and appointed time. And I hope you will never cease praying that the Lord would make me feel the power of his divine love; for I think, if this was the case, I should never cease praising his name while I have breath, for my debt is immense.

The friends at Lewes salute you most affectionately, and wish, above all things to see you again. Their hearts have been refreshed, and we have all been strengthened. They have been confirmed that I was right, and that my preaching was not in vain; and I am confirmed that the Lord works on many. I could not depend on my own judgment, nor could they, perhaps, so much as on yours. I can see some begin to look out of obscurity, others strengthened in hope; some sinking deeper; and the mouths of many of our adversaries stopt in a great measure.

Many of those who had left me begin to drop back. Mrs. S. sends her grateful remembrance to you. She received light to see the work on her heart, and begins to creep out of her hole. She had been in a profession for a number of years: and, when I began to preach the state of man in sin, and the bondage of the law, she could follow me, having been in great legal distress formerly; but, when I was led to cut at false evidences and carnal hopes, down she came, and has been above a year now pretty sharply exercised. But you described the work, and she saw it, and now talks confidently; and I can see now the work is real. My poor friend, whom I mentioned was brought into liberty, desires her best love to you. She heard you at Ninfield, and could see eye to eye with you. She wished, above all things, she could speak one quarter of an hour with you; but your hurry would not then admit of it. She is one of my strongest testimonies. She declares that it is the same spirit. Gilbert may curse her, but he cannot come nigh her. She stands on mount Zion, which is never to be moved. She told her experience to a neighbouring woman, which sunk so deep as to 'bring her into bondage, and there she is nursing her. I trust we begin to increase and multiply. The Lord bless you, prays

Your affectionate son,

J. JENKINS.

Living Testimonies

LETTER XVIII.

To J. JENKINS.

MY son! God be gracious to thee, my son. But how is it that thou hast broken forth? I was going to say, this breach be upon thee. How is it that thou hast so soon changed thy language? The tongue of the stammerer begins to speak plainly. Thy 'ifs and buts' will shortly get out of fashion, and come into disuse and contempt. Faith begins to talk, and she will soon begin to triumph. I have for some time perceived her; but unbelief is such a railing adversary, and draws such wretched and hasty conclusions, that poor faith can scarce put in a word. The prisoner will soon go forth, and he that sits in darkness will soon shew himself; and when this Hebrew comes out of his hole we shall have a pure language.

The good work is not only begun, but it is going on apace. The word shall grow and prevail, and grace shall reign; but thou must not wonder if it should come to pass, that at the very place of the breaking forth of children thou shouldest find thyself once and again thrown back into all thy former hard labour: nor must thou conclude it is an abortive birth on this account; it is intended to make us deeply sensible of our affliction and our misery, the wormwood and the gall, that our

souls may have them long in remembrance, and be humbled in us.

But thou art still in bondage: be it so. Blessed is the man whom God chasteneth, and teacheth him out of his law, that he may give him rest from the day of trouble. When thou hast fulfilled thy daily task under that schoolmaster, 14ef and been Well exercised with the burden of guilt and the yoke of thine own transgressions, thou wilt highly prize thy enlargement, and know the worth of the great deliverer. It is for the want of a little of this school-learning that we have so many mongrel preachers: they have claimed their degrees at Zion without learning one lesson at Sinai; but all they have got of Christ is the word, not the power; and all that Christ has got of them is the tongue, not the heart.

But you are ready to give all up, and to say you will neither preach nor wait any longer. This is coming to a point indeed: however, the religion that comes by grace differs much from that you had formerly, that profession you took up of your own accord; and you might have laid it down again, without either danger or difficulty, if you had thought proper. But you are now in the hand of God; and his will, not thy own, must and shall be thy only rule. 'I will' and 'they shall' is the language of the new covenant from first to last; and to this thou must submit, whether thou chooseth or refuseth. To talk of waiting no longer upon him, who has so long waited to be gracious to thee, deserves no milder rebuke than that of "*Get thee behind me, Satan.*" That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is man: neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he," Eccl. vi. 10. It is a fool's lips that enter into contention, and his back calleth for strokes; and these strokes must come on till we can say "*Thy will be done.*" And then, and not till then, will the Lord commit to your trust the word of reconciliation, and take thee sensibly into friendship.

The language of unbelief is just like what is vulgarly called Irish bulls: it is nothing but self-contradictions. The man that uses this tongue of the crafty never confesses what he really believes, nor speaks what he really thinks; so that the words of his mouth are diametrically opposite to the meditations of his heart: this Cretian is always a liar, an evil beast, and a slow belly; and this witness is true.

But the captive exile hastens that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit; and I am afraid of his coming forth too soon, lest, like the grass upon the house top, he wither before he be grown up, and appear among those thin ears blasted with the east wind, wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom. "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin?" I, say a living man; one whom God has quickened when dead in trespasses and sins; a man that has life, and feels the terrors of the Lord, the bondage of the law, and the plague of his own heart; who feels a mighty famine in the land, and has an appetite for the bread of life, and a thirst for the living God; who feels divine motions towards the Almighty, the comfortable rise of a good hope, the conflicts of faith, and who is indulged with an expectation that shall never be cut off?

A good minister of Jesus Christ, above all men, must be refined in the furnace of affliction, and be trained and disciplined in the school of correction. It is needless that persons ordained for this good work should be made to feel all that, as instruments, they are intended to discover, and taste and feed upon that food which they are to set before the household of faith. They that are to be God's mouth to a people must be taught of God themselves. How wilt thou be able to describe those convictions which are common to nature, from those given by the Spirit of God, unless thy own convictions terminate in sound conversion? None but a penitent sinner can describe real repentance; and they must

be made sorry after a godly sort who describe godly sorrow. A soul dead in trespasses and sins cannot preach the quickening operations of God; nor can an unpardoned man preach the forgiveness of sins. He must be born again who describes a spiritual birth, and he must be justified who is a preacher of righteousness. A rebel to God cannot be an ambassador of peace, nor is an enemy a proper person to be entrusted with the word of reconciliation.

A choice experience of these things upon thine own soul will, under God, make thee an able minister of the New Testament; a workman that needeth not to be ashamed; a pastor in the pulpit, an interpreter to Zion's inquirers, and a valuable physician by a sick bed. But he that is destitute of these things is an empty sound in a pulpit, a dry breast to the babe in grace, a dumb dog in spiritual company, a blind guide to the inquiring soul, and a physician of no value to a wounded spirit. But I am persuaded better things, yea the best things, of thee, my son, and things that accompany salvation: for I am fully persuaded that the good work is begun in thee, and that it will be carried on, till thou art thoroughly furnished for every good word and work. So I write, and so you believe.

Ever yours, in faithfulness and truth,

W.H.

Living Testimonies

LETTER XIX.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOUR valuable and much welcomed favour came to hand in due time; and it gives me no small comfort that the Lord lays my case so near the heart of his servant: and I trust he will, in his own blessed time, perform the counsel of his messenger. To me the prospect is often gloomy enough; yet you can see better: and the witness of God is better yet; and it is this I want, He has borne testimony to the word of his grace from your mouth I know, and has fulfilled it in a measure to me; and why may not the whole be accomplished? Nothing shall be impossible to him that believeth; but I cannot see that I have faith. Faith obtains promises, and overcomes the world: but I cannot rest on the promise, and am a captive to corruption.

I have found strange goings on in my soul of late. I think there never was a lust in a heart, nor a corruption in human nature, but what is stirred up in mine; and such wicked, obscene, and abominable thoughts as are too shocking to mention, which can never come but from Satan himself. These make me fear the work is not real, and into darkness and bondage I fall. I am afraid in my heart of falling into their hands. I earnestly pray the Lord against them; and sometimes they cease a little, but return again; and, though I hate them, yet I think something in me receives them.

Dark and bound God knows I am, and my feet are in the stocks the whole week round. But I am afraid this is not the same as you mean. You mean the exercise d82 and trial of a broken-hearted sinner; but I am as bitter and as stubborn as a devil, and could lay violent hands on those that oppose me, and beat them with the fist of wickedness. The Lord only knows what will become of me; and yet, through all these gloomy scenes, am still encouraged to hope that the Lord will not give me up, but bring me through all these, and much

more. I know I am to endure before I am made truly humble. The opposition I meet with from preachers and others fills me with wrath and malice; and sometimes I am so discouraged that I am ready to give all up, fearing that I am attempting something in my own strength, and that the Lord will not countenance me.

Last Sunday Gilbert declared, before all the people at Hailsham, that neither myself nor any of my followers were to be again admitted to that place; and the next time I went there the chapel was shut against me, and the key denied. I preached, however, in a person's house who opened his door for me, and was invited by a woman the next morning to breakfast with her. I did not promise her, as I was rather discouraged, thinking the Lord had done nothing by me in that place, and therefore concluded that I would never come there again; but the next morning I altered my mind, and called on the person who had invited me, and found the Lord had wrought upon her by my ministry, and confirmed her by yours. She told me she picked up a little under every discourse you preached at Lewes; for she heard them all. The good man her husband, who is a man of some property, told me, if I could find a little place for myself in the town, he would give me 50 pound towards it whenever I should call for it; which rather lifted up my drooping head.

The morning before this I had found another farmer, whom, I trust, the Lord has called by his grace, and brought out from the clutches of Viddler, who is one of Mr. Winchester's pupils. This man Viddler is desperately enraged against your late book, and has threatened to answer it, and call it 'Huntington's Everlasting Nonsense.' It is awful to hear him. But now he says it is not worth his notice; and, for my part, I believe him. He never was a partaker of any one truth it contains. The account of the above mentioned farmer made some amends

to me for Gilbert's unkind treatment, and the Lord reward his kindness.

I have sent notice to Cranbrook that I will be there, if the Lord permit, next week. I am sorry for poor Tom Smith; he never grieved me but in part. But to whomsoever you forgive any thing, I forgive also. I have received a letter from him, and have told him that I can, from my heart, forgive all, and pray for him too; and I hope the Lord will humble him. All the friends at Lewes, and the country, still remember you; and we all are glad that you intend to visit us again before the summer is over; for this I pray the Lord, as I know your ministry was blessed among us. The first week I can get my head out of the collar I will trip to London. I long to hear and see you. God bless you, and abundantly prosper you, prays yours in the truth, and wishes he could say in the bond of love,

J, JENKINS.

Living Testimonies

LETTER XX.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

My dearly beloved brother, true yoke-fellow, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Christ,

I RECEIVED yours, and am glad of every line from you informing me how you go on. I pay no regard to your unbelief.

Doctors that are used to walk the hospitals hear her voice in every ward, Persons that are exposed to the storm will say any thing; but their word stands for nothing. The Psalmist said, "*Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever, and hath he shut up his tender mercies for ever?*" But he acknowledged that this was his infirmity, and not the voice of the turtle dove, which attends the singing of birds.

God, my dear brother, has chosen his elect in the furnace of affliction. The fire of sin flaming in the whole frame of nature; the fiery law working the flames of wrath in us; and the fiery darts of Satan hurled at the soul, under a divine arrest; discover the base metal, and make it rise on the Surface of the mind, and disclose itself to the enlightened understanding. The scent that is in us must be changed. We must be emptied from vessel to vessel, that we may not settle on our lees. The blessed atonement will purge the guilt, and the blessed Spirit will remove the filth of sin, when once the day of the Son of man (the set time to remember Zion, the time appointed for every purpose) arrives. Then the weeper shall laugh, and the mourner shall be comforted; then N d2b aphtali shall be a hind let loose, and shall give goodly words; then shall the wild ass be sent out free, and God shall loose the bands of the wild ass; then shall the simple and contemptuous means of moving the jaw-bone slay the Philistines heaps upon heaps, and make the word of truth a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death.

Satan always bestirs himself when any man is raised up to seek the welfare of the children of Israel: he loves to have the highways unoccupied, and to see the passengers go in by-ways. But God will set thee in the gap, and make thee an healer of the breach, and a restorer of paths to dwell in; and thou shalt raise up the foundations that God has laid for many generations, Isai. lviii. 12. The Lord shall give thee such a

propitious, such a soul-dissolving, look, as shall furnish thee at once; and thou shalt go in his might, and shalt deliver Israel. Then a broken pitcher, a burning lamp, the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, shall be sufficient: kings of armies shall flee apace, and she that tarries at home shall divide the spoil. Thou shalt then speak of his mighty acts, and declare his greatness; thou shalt utter the memory of his great goodness, and declare the might of his terrible acts. Thou shalt speak of the glory of his kingdom, and talk of his power, to make known to the sons of men his matchless grace, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

"Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life." Quit yourself like a man, and be strong, that you be not a servant to Moses, to Satan, to sin, nor to the Philistines. Cast not away your confidence, which hath a great recompense of reward. *"Follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth,"* whether through evil report or good report. Watch the footsteps of the flock, and compare every step with theirs as they stand upon record. A young man must cleanse his way by taking heed thereto, according to God's word. Say not a confederacy to any; this is not a time for it. Dare to be singular, and thou shalt shine as a light in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Encourage a tender conscience, and a filial fear; and thou wilt find thyself braced, armed, and equipped, like a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Endure hardness as such, and expect a cross daily, and afflictions in every place; and then thou shalt not be easily surprised, nor wilt thou be often disappointed. Pay no regard to the speech of them that are puffed up, but regard the power of godliness: for, if they are strangers to the power of efficacious grace; if they preach not under the powerful operations of the Spirit; if they have no power with God in prayer; if no power attends their words to quicken dead sinners, nor to refresh the bowels of living saints; they are instruments without life, wells without water, and ministers of nothing but the letter. Shew thyself approved

unto God, and aim to please him that has chosen thee to be a soldier; while I, thine affectionate friend and servant, shall run in trenches, and shout for the battle.

W. H.