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greatest things in the world have been, as a rule, not those who were cleverest at school and carried off all the prizes, but the people who were considered quite ordinary in class, but who made up their minds to 'get there.'

We'd all be better of a little of the bull-dog nose. The bull-dog nose is not what you could call a pretty shape, but it is splendidly useful; for the flat wrinkly way it slants back enables the bull-dog to breathe and to hold on to his enemy at the same time. It is because he is able to hold on that he wins the fight. And victory in life is always to the boy or girl who holds on. We speak of holding on to the *bitter* end. That is a mistake. We should speak of holding on to the *sweet* end; for the joy and glow of a task well done is ten times sweeter than the joy of a task well begun.

2. But I should like to tell you something most important—*don't long too much for the end*. If you are always counting how many rows of knitting there are before the garment can be finished, or how many pages there are before the end of the lesson book can be reached, if you are always sighing for the end, it won't help you to get there. The more you count and the more you sigh, the longer you'll be on the way. You will be like a clock I heard of the other day. It began to count how many seconds it would have to tick before

the end of the year. It got so worried when it thought of the enormous number of times its pendulum would have to swing backwards and forwards that it determined to save itself further trouble by stopping altogether. Some of us are like that foolish clock. We think only how difficult it is to reach the end, and we forget how easy it is to take one tick at a time. Why, if we went on steadily tick by tick we'd be at the end almost before we knew! Don't think of everything at once. Think of the little bit in front of you, and determine to do that well. Climb your ladder step by step, instead of looking up at the top step and saying to yourself, 'How am I ever to get up there?'

3. The last thing I should like to say is this. *There is no such thing as an end*. Every end is just a new beginning. If you have won success, and have got the prize you worked for, don't sit down and do nothing more. Make that success the starting-point for a greater success. Don't be content with an end. Turn it into a beginning. That is the true secret of advancement. It is the secret of life itself. Life never ends. Christ told us that death is not an end, it is only a new beginning. It is a beginning of something more glorious than we can ever dream or imagine; for who knows what wonderful things we may not do when at last we go to be with Christ?

'Are they few that be saved?'

(ST. LUKE xiii. 23).

BY THE REV. RAYNER WINTERBOTHAM, M.A., CANON OF EDINBURGH.

It is useless to ask what this anonymous inquirer meant precisely by his question. It is useless to contend for this or that shade of meaning to be attached to *οἱ σωζόμενοι*. That sort of thing has been vastly overdone, and leads to nothing certain. Our Lord's reply corresponds exactly to the broad and obvious sense in which the question has been repeated with ever-increasing emphasis and insistence by fifty generations of Christians—but never with such insistence as by the Christians of to-day. We want to know, approximately, broadly, what the final result and outcome of our Lord's Incarnation and Atonement is to be on the happiness or

misery of mankind. It seems indeed absurd that we should have to ask the question at all, in face of the overwhelming fact that the Son of God was made man, and died upon a cross, for the very purpose of saving us all. Yet the minute we begin to study either the Scriptures or the records of Christian opinion we meet with a thousand difficulties, reservations, doubts, and contradictions. It really is not any use to put aside the question as though it did not concern us: it *does*. And, as a fact, almost all Christians are more or less explicitly answering it for themselves, without guidance, without authority (whether of Church or of Bible),

and in all manner of different and incompatible ways. When it is the eternal fate of the great mass of mankind that is concerned, it is no use saying 'wait and see.' In this country, at any rate, individualism is rapidly dying. In a broad sense we are all socialists, syndicalists. The call and claim of our common humanity is asserting itself victoriously, and more especially—as is fitting—in religion. What of all these others, O Lord—what of them? Are we to think of 'the saved'—as most of our forebears did—as only a 'few' out of so many?

By way of entrance into this tremendous question, it is worth while to direct attention to a writing which once had a great vogue among both Jews and Christians, but has now fallen into undeserved contempt and almost complete neglect. This strange product of the later Judaism stands as '2 Esdras' in the Anglican Apocrypha. Whether it was actually tintured with belief in Christianity, or whether the present text contains certain Christian interpolations, is really quite unimportant for the purpose before us. It is quite *possible* (though not probable) that it was the author of this book who asked the famous question, 'Are they few that be saved?' If he had come from Alexandria in his early youth to see what answer he could find in Jewry to a question which already agitated his soul, he might well have sought to see and hear the Prophet from Nazareth of Galilee, and to ask His opinion. Writing in his old age, after the destruction of Jerusalem, the same dread question obsessed him with a deeper horror of darkness, 'Why are the saved so few?' 'Must they be so few?' 'Cannot God Himself, the all-powerful and all-merciful, help its being so?' It is this one question which the author, under the transparent pseudonym of Ezra, urges again and again, not so much upon his readers as upon God. The extreme sadness of his outlook is nowhere more poignantly expressed than in 7^{4b-5b}, 'I answered them and said, This is my first and last saying, that it had been better that the earth had not given thee¹ Adam: or else, when it had given him, to have restrained him from sinning. For what profit is it for all that are in this present time to live in heaviness, and after death to look for punishment? O thou Adam, what hast thou done? for though it was thou that sinned, the evil is not fallen upon thee alone, but upon all of us that come of

¹ *I.e.* to God, see 3^b.

thee. For what profit is it unto us, if there be promised us an immortal time, whereas we have done the works that bring death? . . . And that the glory of the Most High shall defend them which have led a pure life, whereas we have walked in the most wicked ways of all? . . . For while we lived and committed iniquity, we considered not what we should have to suffer after death. Then he answered and said, This is the condition of the battle, which man that is born upon the earth shall fight; that if he be overcome, he shall suffer as thou hast said: but if he get the victory, he shall receive the thing that I say.' 'This is the condition,' says the answer of God—as though there were some satisfaction to be derived from that. And so there might be if man had leave to decline the battle, as misliking the terms of it. But in truth, as Esdras pointed out, men are *compelled* to take up arms against a foe too strong for them, on this 'condition' that, if they *do* pull through, eternal joys and consolations shall be theirs; but if (as seems most likely) they fail, they shall rue it for ever in immeasurable pain.

It is, of course, an obvious thing to reply that this is indeed the logical conclusion of the matter according to the Law—which had no certain consolation or refuge for such as failed to keep it; but that *we* are not under the Law, but under grace. And grace means two things: it means that we have supernatural aid (if we seek it) against temptation; it means that though we fail there is forgiveness and restoration for all that truly repent and turn to Christ. This reply—as true as it is familiar—is of unspeakable worth and comfort to countless individuals *as* individuals, but it scarcely lightens the gloom as far as the general mass of mankind is concerned. For be it observed that 'Esdras,' in his expostulations with the Almighty, is evidently thinking, not of obedience required to an intricate and artificial ritual or ceremonial Law, but of obedience to the moral Law as laid down by Moses and the prophets. Now, we are still bound to that moral Law—cleared, indeed, of some ambiguous elements, but on the other hand made far and away more difficult, more searching, more comprehensive, by the authoritative teaching of our Lord. It is (apparently) as true under the New as it was under the Old, that we are to be judged according to our works; and our works, on any honest estimate, are wretchedly insufficient if

not positively evil. It is true—for we have it on the authority of our Lord—that the broad and easy path leads to the ‘everlasting bonfire,’ and many there be that walk therein: the strait and narrow way leads indeed to life eternal—but few there be that find it. Our Lord’s personal teaching therefore—His Galilean teaching, we may say—had on the face of it the general effect of increasing the sense of difficulty, the probability of loss; in other words, it deepened the gloom of the outlook, or rather of the *outlook*, in religion. If we take the Synoptic Gospels as a whole, and consider their testimony honestly and attentively, we can scarcely help acknowledging that whilst they convey many messages of infinite comfort and confidence to the individual, they do but increase our despondency with regard to the mass of mankind. But it is this ‘mass’ which matters for us to-day, even as it did for Esdras of old. For Esdras is peculiarly ‘modern’ in this respect also, that no assurances of his own salvation would divert his attention from the many that were lost. Again and again the Most High reminds him that he personally is all right, and tries to persuade him that the few righteous are much more worth thinking about than the many unrighteous: much more worth rejoicing over than the others are worth grieving for (see 2 Esdras 7, R.V., including the newly recovered portion, and 8). But although Esdras speaks very humbly before the Most High, yet he is not at all satisfied; the pain that gnaws him is not stilled. Presumably, in former ages almost all Christian people felt as the Most High wanted Esdras to feel. To-day we almost all sympathize with Esdras. We do not want any exceptional treatment; we should hate to owe anything to favouritism, or respect of persons, on the part of God; we want to take our chance alongside all our kith and kin, all our heathen ancestors, all our brothers and sisters by creation. That is certainly the feeling of nine-tenths of our men at the front, as well as of countless others at home. Christians, Moslems, heathens—they fight and fall side by side, with the same valour, the same joyful alacrity. They differ in many ways, but the Christians cannot and do not lay claim to any moral superiority. In the one thing that matters to a soldier they are the same. It would be worse than useless to suggest that they are utterly different for the purposes of the life to come. They are *not* different, it may be said, for

all men will be judged according to their works, and their works will be appraised according to the ability, according to the advantage, according to the conscience, of each; each will be tried by that moral standard which his religion has laid down, or his instinct recognized. Be it so. But that involves two insuperable difficulties. In the first place, it involves the condemnation of *all* Christians. The moral standards set up by our Lord are so high, so difficult, so searching, that no man can or does attain unto them. At the best he can but keep them in sight and strive to get near them. But our Lord, who is to be our judge, *has no other standard* by which to try us. He cannot possibly say, ‘I see that these My commandments are not suitable for the purpose of judging you; we will therefore substitute some easier ones.’ If the judgment is to be a *real thing* He must needs condemn us all. And what we demand is that the judgment be a *real thing*, the same for all, equally searching for all—or else that it be taken away altogether. Our individual fate, though it be for eternity, is as nothing compared with the imperative demand of the soul that God shall be just and the judgment be fair. In the second place, as concerns Christians only, judgment by works is hopelessly inconsistent with salvation by faith, or salvation by character, or salvation by sacramental incorporation in Christ. Take the case of the penitent robber, or of any other individual Christian, and you will easily see. If you want to believe the doctrines of salvation so lovingly taught, so abundantly taught, in the New Testament, you must so far modify your belief in judgment by works, limiting it here, encroaching on it there, that it *ceases to be effective*. It remains a formula which you accept, because St. Paul accepted it—or because it is of use to terrify sinners with—or because it testifies (in a crude way) to something quite different, namely, the ultimate necessity of every soul that is saved being conformed to the perfect pattern of Christ. This is unmistakably the attitude of the great mass of our people who are honest, and are not overridden by official or by popular religious teaching. They stand quite aloof from Christian eschatology, and from all the lore of heaven and hell, believing much that God is good, and acknowledging that man ought to be good too; taking for granted that every one in whom they are personally interested is, or will be, saved; assenting, perhaps, to the

statement that certain others (in whom they are not interested) will be lost. Meanwhile the educated and thoughtful minority, if concerned about religion, is more or less definitely convinced that we shall all go into a kind of 'purgatory'—call it by whatever name you like—and after being purged by repentance and remorse of our sins and shortcomings, shall be delivered thence through the mercy of God, and so pass into the eternal Home. It is easy of course to say, and almost as easy to show, that there is no foundation whatever in Scripture for such a belief. That does not alter the fact that it provides a refuge from a really intolerable difficulty. That difficulty is caused (inevitably) by the persistent attempt to teach salvation through grace and judgment by works as equally fundamental articles of the faith. The attempt involves practically the degradation of 'judgment' to a thing unreal, unfair, arbitrary, and essentially unrighteous, against which the conscience of mankind—once it is enlightened—is bound to protest more and more vehemently. What follows, then, as to the question we started with? It seems

to follow that in dealing with it we have to dismiss 'judgment by works' altogether. There is doubtless such a thing, but it is hopelessly impossible for us to understand either its principles or its methods. We have left to us the doctrines of grace, of the illimitable goodness of God, of the plenary satisfaction made by Christ, of the desire of the Most High that all should be saved. These may lead us to the same conclusion that was reached by Erskine of Linlathen, and before him (practically) by William Law. Or they may be countered and modified by considerations of human liberty and self-determination. Anyhow, the Christian community ought to recognize the pressing need there is for honest and outspoken (as well as reverent and careful) dealing with the subject. There exists to-day a tremendous danger lest the bulk of our people come to believe in the salvation of all men without any moral distinctions, and apart from any need for obedience or self-restraint. That, at any rate, however pleasing to the natural man, cannot be according to God.

Contributions and Comments.

The Royal Law.

'If ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well' (Ja 2⁸, A.V. and R.V.).

The commentators upon this verse are divided between those who, with the Revisers, retain the literal translation of the word βασιλικός, interpreting it in various ways, e.g. as being given by the King (i.e. God or Christ), or as befitting persons who are kings and not slaves; and between others, who regard the word as used figuratively, to indicate that this law 'contains' or 'takes precedence of' all other laws. Weymouth follows the latter interpretation, but translates 'keeping the law as supreme.'

I would suggest that a more striking and appropriate sense would be obtained by translating 'the law of the kingdom'; βασιλικόν being then the exact equivalent of τῆς βασιλείας of v.⁵, to which it points back. Mayor in his commentary shows that the absence of the article before νόμον does not forbid

the translation 'the' . . . (cf. the use of Πνεῦμα without the article for the Holy Spirit). I am not able to bring forward any parallels to show that βασιλικός may naturally be used as the adjectival form of βασιλεία as well as of βασιλεύς; but there would seem to be no inherent improbability in the suggestion. As the ideas of king and kingdom are so nearly related, while kingdom is used in a technical sense in the New Testament, such as it does not bear elsewhere, we would hardly expect to find an adjectival form of βασιλεία outside of the New Testament writings.

The proposed rendering has the following advantages. The Epistle of James is steeped in reminiscences of the teaching of our Lord as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels, and especially in the Sermon on the Mount. The gospel of Jesus was originally and pre-eminently the gospel of the Kingdom, i.e. the Kingdom of God. The prominent position assigned to the Beatitudes and the teaching that follows them in both Matthew and Luke indicate that these sayings were regarded